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David Irving

CHURCHILL'S WAR



II – *Triumph in Adversity*

‘Two books in English stand out from the vast literature of the Second World War: Chester Wilmot’s *The Struggle for Europe*, published in 1952, and David Irving’s *Hitler’s WAR*’

JOHN KEEGAN, *Times Literary Supplement*, 1980

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INTRODUCTION:

Never Forget Your Trade Mark

YEARS AFTER THE Second World War, one of Winston Churchill's wisest advisers would ask, 'Why in 1939 was Churchill almost universally regarded as a gifted, if eccentric politician, lacking in judgement and better out of the government, whereas in 1945 he was regarded as a world statesman and the revered superman of the century?'¹ The possible answer – he won the war – is defeated by the equally possible observation: he forfeited Britain's empire.

He won the war, as we shall see in the final volume of this trilogy, in spite of himself. He had enraged every one of his military advisers on the way. He did not spare the cruel and crushing remarks about his own chiefs of staff: 'You may take,' he rasped, 'the most gallant sailor, the most intrepid airman, or the most audacious soldier, put them at a table together – what do you get? The sum total of their fears!'²

By Victory in Europe Day, in May 1945, the chiefs of staff would be so out of sympathy with their leader that when he sent for them on that day, and again when he said good-bye after losing the General Election in July, and had the whisky and soda brought in, they just sat ruminating. On both occasions the chiefs sat there 'like dummies' and did not even drink to his health.³ After the war the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Field-Marshal Lord Alanbrooke, was angered to find that Churchill had painted himself as a hero in his memoirs; the account which Alanbrooke, the former General Sir Alan Brooke, himself committed to posterity, in a leather-bound and padlocked diary, was less flattering.

'On the whole,' grumbled Churchill, reading the first volume, 'I think that I am against publishing day to day diaries written under the stress of events so soon afterwards.'⁴ Had he seen, as we have, what Brooke omitted, he would have expressed himself rather more forcefully.

THE FIRST VOLUME of this trilogy appeared in 1987, thirty years after Churchill wrote those words.*

It is fitting to commence a second volume, appearing after such an interval, with a survey of what we achieved with the first. We saw how after a 'wilderness period' of ten years Winston S. Churchill, described by Harold Balfour as this 'singularly unlovable' man, came to power on May 10, 1940, to the alarm of his monarch and the dismay of at least three of his cabinet ministers (Lords Beaverbrook and Halifax, and Mr Neville Chamberlain); how, by playing on a non-existent threat of Nazi invasion he entrenched himself in office, and rebuffed the peace settlement which Adolf Hitler repeatedly and secretly offered, and which more than one of King George VI's ministers, his consort Queen Elizabeth, and (on certain dates in May and June 1940 even Churchill himself) seemed disposed to accept;⁵ how having thus sabotaged the prospects of peace, he contrived to prolong the war and, cynics would observe, his own premiership, by propelling Britain and Germany into a campaign of mutual air bombardment. At a time when Hitler embargoed all raids on London, Churchill ordered a 100-bomber raid on Berlin on August 25, 1940, deliberately unleashing a bombing campaign which would reach a climax of barbarism only after the present volume comes to a close.† In his orgy of destructiveness, Churchill even issued orders – never carried out – a few days after the firestorm in Hamburg, for the ruthless saturation bombing of the Eternal City of Rome.

We have seen how as part of the price for his accession to office in May 1940 Churchill gave the 'kiss of life' to Britain's then moribund Labour Party, elevating several of its leaders to un hoped-for cabinet office and paving the way for the socialists' eventual return to power in 1945, a political upheaval which brought in its train the inevitable end of the empire built by three centuries of British endeavour.⁶ The revisionist historians Maurice Cowling and John Charmley have endorsed our first volume's assessment of Churchill's responsibility for the war and his part in the resurgence of socialism in 1945 and Britain's international decline.⁷ Churchill, the warlord, showed himself indifferent to post-war problems, and displayed no interest in the dangerous revival of socialism by labour minister Ernest Bevin and the trades unions.⁸

* David Irving, *Churchill's War*, vol. i: *The Struggle for Power* (Cranbrook, Western Australia, 1987; London, 1988; New York, 1991).

† Vol. i, pages 406–7.

A HISTORY OF Churchill's war years therefore inevitably remains a history of how he directed his war. We have seen how from the first moment he nourished the sinews of Britain's most secret agency, the codebreaking organisation at Bletchley Park, which we have called his 'Oracle,' and guarded that source not only from the enemy abroad but from his senior colleagues at home (while his cronies, often far less suitable, were privy to the secret and on occasion blurted out what they knew to even less suitable recipients).⁹ Knowledge was power, and Churchill clutched ULTRA, the 'most secret sources,' BONIFACE, the 'Bjs' and whatever else he called them, close to his watch-chained waistcoat, dealing these cards in the war game only rarely, to obviate, or sometimes, as some have suggested, even to engineer military misfortunes as and when his strategic poker made it necessary.

We have seen how Churchill worked for many months after his appointment to stifle every overture for peace.¹⁰ In our first volume we portrayed the Duke of Windsor, the former king, as working from his overseas bases to end the war – a portrait which is now widely accepted, though embellished with the unwarranted epithet of traitor.¹¹

There is much that cannot be fully explored even now. We shall see again how close were the secret ties that Churchill maintained, to the chagrin of the foreign office, with the collaborationist regime at Vichy, while still excoriating its leader Marshal Pétain in his public utterances. Aware of the opprobrium that this dual standard might invite, he took steps after the war to remove all trace of this from the files. The secret agreement which he reached with Pétain in October 1940 might never have existed – were it not for the writings of Professor Louis Rougier, the emissary who engineered it.* All relevant correspondence in the papers of Lord Halifax, then foreign secretary, and twenty-eight letters exchanged between him and Jacques Chevalier in 1948 and 1949 about the Rougier mission, are still withheld from public access; so are the letters sent to Pétain by Churchill through the American attaché in Vichy at the end of December 1940 and a month later through Admiral Leahy and Chevalier.¹² As Sir William Deakin, one of Churchill's ghost-writers, wrote after the war to Sir William Strang of the foreign office, the 'Pétainist legend' reflected poorly on Churchill and 'should be suppressed once and for all.'¹³ Strang sealed his own file on Rougier with a cover note that it was not to be used without the consent of the foreign office. This theme, Churchill's ambivalence about Pétain and his unconcealed hostility toward Anthony Eden's *enfant gâté* General Charles

* Vol. i, pages 450–2, 474.

de Gaulle, surfaces again in the present volume; towards its end we produce the evidence, in his own handwriting, that it was Eden who engineered the assassination of Admiral Darlan to appease de Gaulle.

We have seen too in the first volume how Britain's unspoken war-aims, which were at first assumed to be 'to save Poland,' elided invisibly during 1940 to become instead 'the defence of the heart of the British empire against Nazi invasion' although in fact, as Churchill knew, such an invasion was never seriously threatened; how he nonetheless forged an alliance with the Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin, who harboured even less enthusiasm for the perpetuation of Britain's empire than Churchill did in truth himself; and how, when it became opportune to woo the United States, whose president had no love whatsoever for the empire, Churchill subtly shifted his stance and began perforce to portray his war-aim as being to destroy Hitler, the Devil incarnate, or 'anti-Christ.'¹⁴ In fact he was ambivalent about why he was really fighting this ruinous war. At the same time as he was telling Lord Halifax that his intention was to fight Germany until Hitlerism was finally broken 'and the world relieved from the curse which a wicked man has brought upon it,'¹⁵ and he was similarly telling his military guests at Chequers that there was only one aim, 'to destroy Hitler,'¹⁶ he was assuring Edouard Beneš that Czechoslovakia's restoration was a war-aim, like that of Poland.¹⁷ By January 1941 he was refusing all such pronouncements, explaining to his cabinet colleagues that to state his war-aims precisely would be compromising, while anything vaguer would disappoint.¹⁸

'Just shoot at two targets,' we shall hear him declaim in September 1943, and he defines these as 'Prussian militarism' and 'Nazi tyranny.' Nor does he want his people to bother explaining what those phrases mean. 'This will also have the advantage of not committing you to anything definite when Germany is beaten.'¹⁹ For Winston Churchill, as for Adolf Hitler, making war was an aim in itself.²⁰

In April 1943 a London agent of Roosevelt's overseas Intelligence service, the Office of Strategic Services, would report that watching Churchill he often reflected that, just as the Eighth Army owed a great deal to Rommel, so Churchill owed 'a hell of a lot' to Hitler: 'When he turns from Hitler to the home front, he becomes a smaller figure, the dextrous English politician, master of the telling phrase and the useful monetary compromise.' One could tell just when Churchill slipped from one role into the other, continued the agent, by the change in his practised oratorical tone. In domestic politics he revealed his less felicitous nature. 'War,' reported the

OSS agent, ‘open or concealed, seems the only thing in which he is really interested.’²¹



As the summer of 1941 began Churchill was already an old man. To a visiting general he remarked: ‘A man’s life is similar to a walk down a long passage, with closed windows to each side. As you reach each window an unseen hand opens it; but the light that it lets in only increases by contrast the darkness at the end.’²²

Like Hitler he occupied himself with all the smallest details of military campaigns. Like Hitler too, he accepted little responsibility for their failures, dismissing those nominally in command when things went wrong.²³ He drove himself to the limits of endurance – and his colleagues to the end of their tether. He inflicted his merciless working hours on friends and allies. Despite advancing age, this nocturnal regime prevailed during the war’s middle years. Admiral Sir Dudley Pound, the First Sea Lord, would write to Admiral Sir Andrew B. Cunningham in May 1943: ‘I hope your guest [Churchill] has been behaving well this time and that you did not forget to disconnect the telephone!’ – *i.e.*, to stop Churchill from ‘phoning in the middle of the night.’²⁴ ‘For goodness sake,’ wrote Admiral Sir John Tovey to Cunningham, now Pound’s successor, in October 1943, ‘don’t overwork, or let the P.M. persuade you to keep his own unnatural hours.’²⁵

IT IS FLATTERING to find in the more recent biographies by Charmley, Clive Ponting, and others our first volume’s quotations from hitherto unpublished documents (like Ambassador Joseph P. Kennedy’s wondering description of Churchill as ‘a fine two-handed drinker’) served up with all their archival footnote-finery as though the subsequent biographer has followed our footsteps into the dusty repositories where we first found these morsels.²⁶ While adopting (and crediting to Gilbert) our data on Churchill’s enviable literary income in the 1920s and 1930s, Charmley has also taken over the data we retrieved from the university archives in Oregon on Winston’s substantial pre-war earnings for ‘retelling famous stories’ from *Anna Karenina* to *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*; Mr Churchill was paid one thousand dollars apiece for boiling these tomes down into one page of newsprint for the Chicago Tribune syndicate – indeed, he was so preoccupied with rehashing one such masterpiece that he failed to notice Adolf Hitler’s coming

to power in Berlin in January 1933. As Geoffrey Wheatcroft admits, even with Churchill's huge literary income he was often heavily in debt to 'one or another of his shady millionaire associates,' men whom the journalist Wheatcroft does not identify beyond quoting Evelyn Waugh's description of Churchill as 'a professional politician' and 'a Zionist.'

Churchill's finances have long attracted curiosity. We showed in our first volume how, although born of partly Jewish blood, although safely diluted, he turned his back after 1940 on the many friends who had succoured him in his financially barren years. Churchill's unholy involvement with the FOCUS, which we explored, a secret financial support group established in the last years of peace, is now confirmed by Charmley and documented by papers newly released in the Churchill archives. Maurice Cowling also agrees with our first volume's description of the FOCUS, writing of it as 'a broad range of conspirators some of whom were concerned primarily with Jewish persecution [and] one of whom [Wickham Steed] was in the pay of the Czech government.'²⁷

Churchill owed such a debt to the Anglo-Jewish community from 1936 on that Sir Samuel Hoare would describe his 'pro-Zionist attitude' as a black mark against his possible premiership, and another acquaintance would tell Sir Martin Gilbert, the biographer, that 'Winston was too fond of Jews.' He shied away from them however as soon as he was in office in 1940, and this second volume again sees him turning a deaf and callous ear on both the Zionist cause and, it must be said, on the plight of the Jews themselves in Nazi-dominated Europe. He described himself as a Zionist, but only when it suited his purpose; he called himself an outsider in this respect. Defending Leo Amery, another Zionist, against demands that he resign, he would note with irony: 'It is quite true that he has my way of thinking on this point [Zionism], which is no doubt to be deplored.'²⁸ There was one other under-reported bond between Churchill and Amery: each had a part-Jewish mother, and each had successfully contrived to conceal these origins.²⁹

Our first volume argued that because he was half-American, again through his mother Jenny Jerome, he invariably put the interests of the United States, even when they were nominally neutral, above those of his own country and its empire. We have seen him establish the closest of contacts with the Americans' shrewd and courageous President Roosevelt even before coming to office as prime minister, and then conduct his communications directly with him, often to the exclusion of his own king, cabinet and foreign office, through secure telephone links and personal emissaries.

By 1941 Churchill was in frequent telegraphic and telephone contact with Roosevelt. They took many of the war's principal decisions in transatlantic telephone conversations, of which no transcripts have yet been made available. 'I am in almost daily touch with the P.M.,' Roosevelt would write privately in 1941.³⁰ They used both diplomatic channels and the secure radio links of the Secret Service and the F.B.I.; we now have the proof that they used the even more secure ULTRA-secret cypher channel established by 'C,' the head of the British Secret Service, via Bletchley Park, to Washington. Recently released files reveal that Bletchley Park was a vital link in this secret channel of communication: it by-passed the foreign office and cabinet channels, and many messages were forwarded by 'C' to Churchill from FDR himself which have not figured in the anthologies of their correspondence. We wonder how many more there are, yet to be revealed.



It is true that, having been evacuated by his parents to Canada early in World War Two, Sir Martin Gilbert was not privileged to share the sirens, the V-weapons, the air-raid shelter experiences and the other adventures with those who survived the war years in England. It would be churlish however for any historian tilling these archival fields to deny his indebtedness to Gilbert for the chronicles on which he laboured from 1968. We have certainly given due credit to his volumes where they are our sole source of information.

This is not to say that we share his opinions, where any are expressed; nor his belief in the integrity of all the sources which he has used. It was plain to anybody familiar with secondary sources like *The White House Papers of Harry L. Hopkins*, published in 1949, that the controversial and colourful 'diary' which Churchill's physician Lord Moran published in 1966 was not a contemporary record, but written nearly twenty years later, and scandalously padded with material lifted from other post-war authors.³¹ Moran wrote to one of Churchill's ministers years later: 'I have practically no letters or documents of any interest. . . I have just my own testimony undocumented by anything written by him.' He added, 'I found the war years the most difficult . . . I was just a hanger-on and not in on what was happening.'³² Admiral Sir John Godfrey, the former director of naval Intelligence, challenged the diaries' authenticity.³³ Others proved less critical, finding the diaries a rich source of material.³⁴ Gilbert, who is also a leading

Holocaust historian, later conceded that it was only after he finished his work on the Churchill biography that he discovered that the published Moran diary on which he had relied was largely a fraud. In fact Moran's real notes consist of much thinner gruel. 'The mind boggles at how much misinformation may have crept into the history books, mine included, by such routes,' admitted the woebegone biographer.³⁵

It was a belated confession, where perhaps others were also due: the same author occasionally quoted records as though he had researched the original collection – with all the breadth of research and the judgement that this implied – when he no more than leafed through pages published by some other author who had delved into those archives.³⁶ In other cases, regrettably, he quoted documents only to the extent that they were printed in Churchill's own volumes, enriching them only with the archival file number rather than the volume and page number of the published source.

Andrew Roberts, whom we assisted with core material for his biography of Lord Halifax, adopted in that work many of our canons about Churchill as a prime minister aimlessly blundering ('Keep bugging on'), writing of him as a Micawber-like figure whose strategy consisted of waiting for something to turn up. 'Britain finally won,' echoed Roberts, 'but at appalling cost, and ruin for her standing in the world.'³⁷ This too was what we had argued in our first volume, although it is fair to state that A.J.P. Taylor had argued much the same case over twenty years earlier, writing this criticism of Churchill's May 13, 1940 'victory at all costs' speech to the House of Commons: 'This was exactly what the opponents of Churchill had feared. . . Victory, even if this meant placing the British empire in pawn to the United States; victory, even if it meant Soviet domination of Europe.'³⁸



Churchill's fame derived from his role in saving Britain from Nazi Germany. That legend was often revived and polished to a fresh gleam, for example in the late Sir Isaiah Berlin's essay, 'Winston Churchill in 1940,' published in 1949.³⁹ Our first volume dented, if it did not destroy, the myth that Britain was seriously at risk of invasion in the summer of 1940: as the documents show, including the recently discovered 1940 private diaries of Dr Joseph Goebbels, at all material times Hitler was bluffing with *SEA LION*; it was always intended by him as a grand deception, to divert attention from *BARBAROSSA*, his coming attack on the 'judæo-bolshevik' Soviet Un-

ion. Hitler wanted nothing from Britain or her empire, and all the German records uncovered in the last fifty years have confirmed this grim conclusion. Others now echo our view that Churchill knew from codebreaking that Hitler was only bluffing; but for reasons of domestic politics Churchill fostered the fiction in his public speeches ('We shall fight them on the beaches'), and he did the same in his private telegrams to President Roosevelt.

This discovery has been adopted wholeheartedly by Charmley, now professor of modern history at the University of East Anglia, who published a 742-page biography *Churchill – The End of Glory* early in 1993.⁴⁰ He not only voiced doubts about Churchill's character – as had we – but raised the same all-important question – 'what was previously unquestioned' as Wheatcroft puts it – namely 'the wisdom of Churchill's conduct during the "finest hour" of his own phrase and of national myth.'

Was Churchill right to fight on at whatever cost, rather than to accept Hitler's peace offer in 1940? When we first aired this argument in 1987 it was regarded as an unspeakable heresy. Now others have added their voices to ours, and the late Alan Clark, himself an original and independent historian, adopted Charmley's arguments in a widely quoted article in *The Times*, in which he traced Charmley's views back to our own.⁴¹ Clark too accepted that Churchill lost the empire by his failure to accept the peace offered by Hitler.

Now even mainstream academics, never noted for their heroism in print, are coming round to this view. There remain those like Paul Johnson, who stated, and most cogently, that no one ever succeeded in getting Hitler to keep his word.⁴² This is true, and we have several times quoted Hitler's private admission stated in June 1941, justifying BARBAROSSA, that 'for myself I would never break a promise. For Germany's sake, one thousand times!'⁴³

It is however equally true that Britain was the *one* country of which Hitler consistently spoke favourably. From 1918 to the day of his suicide in 1945 he avowed that his one ambition had been to work in unison, even in grand alliance, with the British empire. There is nothing to be found in the archives to contradict our view that he meant it. Britain, in short, surrendered her own empire to defeat a chimera conjured up by Winston Churchill, a putative danger from Nazi Germany – a threat which never existed except when Churchill needed to call upon it. He sacrificed the substance to defeat the myth.

Paul Johnson's attitude to the end of the empire is plain: 'The loss of the British empire,' he submitted, 'was neither here nor there, merely a matter of fashion.' This view would not have been shared by the millions who fought in Churchill's war, nor indeed by Churchill's leading ministers to whom the preservation of the empire meant very much indeed. Churchill's own position may have been much closer to Johnson's: he put his American heritage above his English; he dealt with American statesmen on terms of greater intimacy and awe than with any of his empire colleagues, whose irruptions and interferences he universally resented – with the curious exception of General Jan Smuts, prime minister of South Africa. In a later work, Charmley would adopt many of our views about the wartime transatlantic alliance too, in which a British prime minister allowed and encouraged a streetwise American president to exploit Britain's inventive genius, to plunder her imperial wealth, and thereby reap world-wide geopolitical rewards.⁴⁴

Reviewers of these later works have, it is true, generously pointed to the seminal influence on them of our first volume. One writer, the Hungarian-born American John Lukács suggested that 'whitewash[ing] Hitler' had remained the work of 'fanatical amateur historians such as the English David Irving.'⁴⁵ Geoffrey Wheatcroft, writing in the *Atlantic Monthly*, led his attack on the revisionist biographers of Churchill with the mischievous assertion that there had been no 'concerted and scholarly' attempt to re-evaluate Churchill until recently. 'For one thing,' he believed, "revisionism" was discredited by the work of writers including David Irving – unquestionably a clever and industrious researcher, but one whose undisguised fascist sympathies make it hard to take seriously his attacks on Churchill.'⁴⁶

At least we wrote what we did in a spirit of independence. Wheatcroft and other critics might pertinently have commented that Sir Martin Gilbert's magisterial works were in part funded by the Chartwell Trust established by the Churchill dynasty. Had we been obliged to admit, in the Introduction to our Hermann Göring biography, or to *HITLER'S WAR*, that we were 'indebted for assistance to the Carinhall Foundation' or to the 'Adolf Hitler Memorial Trust' – but of course we were not – it is hard to believe that reviewers would not have mentioned this admission.

FOR A WHILE after the first volume of our *CHURCHILL'S WAR* appeared, its heresies and contentions were automatically challenged by reviewers.

To some it was unthinkable that Churchill had not himself spoken all his famous wartime radio broadcasts, and that some had been delivered by

Norman Shelley, a BBC Children's Hour actor and impersonator. A few years before his death Shelley had himself revealed this harmless deceit to us.* Sir Winston's grandson imputed insanity in us, while Sir Martin Gilbert declared the very idea preposterous. We researched in the BBC Sound Archive, and found the usual signed contracts for his other broadcasts – but not for those we reported as having been delivered by Shelley. Fortunately, a twelve-record set of the speeches had been issued by the English Decca company (now EMI) in 1968, labelled *The Voice of Winston Churchill*.⁴⁷ The voice patterns of twenty 'Churchill speeches' were subjected to computerised analysis by Sensimetrics, a speech research group based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, taking the five which had audience reactions as genuine, and thus as a basis for comparison. The findings were published in May 1991, four years after our first volume. Three of the remaining fifteen speech recordings showed voice patterns different from the genuine five – these were the three broadcast on May 13, 1940, when the prime minister promised 'blood, toil, tears and sweat;' on June 4, after Dunkirk ('we shall fight on the beaches'); and June 18, predicting 'their finest hour.'⁴⁸ Under pressure, the BBC Sound Archive confirmed that the June 4 speech was indeed recorded by Shelley at the old Transcription Service Studios near Regent's Park, though claiming this was for the British Council to send to America.⁴⁹

THE QUESTION WHETHER the words were spoken by Winston or by Winnie the Pooh was not a mere biographical gewgaw. The underlying issue was, of course, whether the king's first minister was in a fit state to broadcast on those critical evenings of 1940. It is now known that many of the members of the cabinet took recourse to heavy drinking during those years. We were however the first to address, in our first volume, on the basis of *unsanitised* official papers and deeply hidden private records, including letters, transcripts, and diaries, the matter of Churchill's difficulties with drink. His alcohol intake was always rumoured to be excessive, but was smiled on indulgently by his peers; yet it and its consequences have seemingly been a taboo subject for historians. Perhaps tongue-in-cheek, Beaverbrook wrote once to a lady friend in Canada describing the P.M. as a hard working and austere man who drank but little, certainly less than he – 'Yet I am known,'

* Vol. i, page 313. Readers of this author's generation will imagine the thrill when our telephone rang, during our 1980s research for this biography, and the unmistakable voice of 'Dennis the Dachshund' and of 'Winnie the Pooh' asked to speak with us.

he exclaimed piously, 'as an abstemious man.' 'I do not know a fault of his life,' he added, 'save only a too strong devotion to his friends.'⁵⁰

The truth about both men is different. 'The Providence which is kind to drunken men, and fools, will in the end preserve us,' wrote Sir P. J. Grigg, roughly at the time our narrative resumes, 'but it [the war] is being so much more costly in every sense than it need.'⁵¹ The prime minister's drinking remained a source of comment and concern to many, but like many of those thus afflicted he ascribed his health both to that and to his equally immodest consumption of cigars. When Amery, a teetotaler, asked for one week off, Churchill chaffed him: 'If only you had drunk and smoked like me you would be both better and happier!'⁵² The issue is developed again in this volume and it will arise again in an even grimmer context in the third.

AT THE TIME our first volume ended, Churchill had finally reached the other side of the darkening abyss and earned for the empire its first victory – the sinking of Hitler's prized battleship *Bismarck* in May 1941. With the German attack on Russia in June, Britain now had an immensely powerful ally in the east. While public satisfaction with his government's conduct of the war was declining, his own personal popularity soared. In June 1941 it was only two points below the all-time peak it had reached in October 1940, at the time of the London Blitz: eighty-seven per cent still approved of Winston Churchill as P.M.⁵³ Neville Chamberlain had never scored more than sixty-eight, a figure which had sunk as low as thirty-two in April 1940, at the time of the military fiasco in Norway. Churchill's position seemed secure: there were no clear favourites to succeed him. Only thirty-seven per cent, questioned in July 1941, would have chosen Eden as a possible successor; only seven per cent Beaverbrook or Bevin, and only one per cent would have chosen Clement Attlee.⁵⁴

It was the narcotic of his oratory that held the British people spellbound, and his mordant and often cruel wit as well. Of Lord Winterton he would declaim, from the sanctuary of the House, 'My noble friend is in danger of lapsing into senility before he is overtaken by old age.'

He was an actor too, from first to last. One Member of Parliament, entering a committee room, was about to open the door for the great man when Churchill stopped him. He fumbled in his pocket for his cigar case, took out a cigar and lit it. After a puff or two he solemnly advised: 'Never forget your trade mark.' The prime minister stepped into the committee room, and onto the stage, wrapped in a halo of blue smoke.⁵⁵

Part I: TRIUMPH IN
ADVERSITY

JUNE — DECEMBER 1941



1: *A Very Big and Very Ugly War*

AT THE BEGINNING of 1941 Mr Winston Churchill had lispied these words to Brigadier Stewart Menzies – otherwise known as ‘C,’ chief of M.I.6, the secret service: ‘In 1941 we shall have a very big, and very ugly, war.’¹ June of this year had witnessed Hitler’s long-prepared onslaught on the Soviet Union. The British empire no longer stood alone. The alliance which now emerged was the partnership toward which Churchill had been steering ever since, as an ordinary Member of Parliament, he had begun inviting the Soviet ambassador Ivan Maisky to clandestine meetings at Morpeth Mansions in a Westminster backstreet in 1938.

With more of an ear for the sound of the words than an eye for the changes in central and eastern Europe since the cynical Ribbentrop–Molotov agreement of 1939, he broadcast that Sunday night, June 22, that he saw the Russian soldiers standing ‘on the threshold of their native land,’ guarding the fields which their fathers had tilled from time immemorial, and the homes where mothers and wives prayed – ‘Ah, yes, for there are times when all pray’ – for the safety of their loved ones and the return of their family’s champion and protector.

He saw, he said, the ten thousand humble villages where there were still primordial human joys, where maidens laughed and children played.

I see advancing upon all this in hideous onslaught the Nazi war machine, with its clanking, heel-clicking, dandified Prussian officers, its crafty expert agents fresh from the cowing and tying down of a dozen countries. I see also the dull, drilled, docile, brutish masses of the Hun soldiery plodding on like a swarm of crawling locusts. I see the German bombers and fighters in the sky, still smarting from many a British whipping, delighted to find what they believe is an easier and safer prey.

By the time of this broadcast, Anthony Eden had arrived at Chequers – perhaps it was even the young foreign secretary's arrival which had unconsciously inspired in Winston that cruel word 'dandified.' Briefly, Eden's Tory conscience was disturbed by Churchill's easy jettisoning of their party's high principles. Half the country, he reasoned, would object to Churchill associating them with an empire no less evil than Nazi Germany.²

Churchill deployed naked emotions in his response. Innocent peasants were being slaughtered, he argued; therefore Britain should turn a blind eye on the Soviet history of repression and the revolutionary ambitions of the Comintern. Eden rapidly came into line.

Others took a little longer to make the change. When General Wladyslaw Sikorski, the stern, unbending prime minister of the Polish government-in-exile, dutifully submitted the declaration that he proposed to broadcast on this solemn occasion, Churchill and Eden jointly requested that he make one change – that he tone down his hostile references to Russia.³

THE GERMANS and their allies plunged into the Baltic states, driving out the Russian forces and their secret-police commissars who had moved in only twelve months before; seeming unstoppable, Hitler's tanks and infantry stormed into the Ukraine. The days of Stalin's reign of terror seemed numbered, but Churchill took no account of it. He made no plans for the eventuality that Hitler would smash the Red Army within weeks. Ever since Dunkirk, in May 1940, he had coarsely defined his forward policy as 'K.B.O.' – to 'keep bugging on.' Meeting with Fleet-street – the national newspaper editors – on the morning of June 26 he would claim to know no more about Hitler's progress than they did, but he did allow that his advisers were baffled that Stalin had had his main troops so far forward, instead of echeloned in depth, for defence.⁴ The alternative rationale, that Stalin had evidently been caught wrong-footed, on the point of springing his own assault on the west, seems to have eluded him.

The prime minister contented himself with tracing the path of Hitler's onslaught through the window afforded him by the G.C. & C.S. (Government Code and Cypher School) in England, and by the F.E.C.B. (Far East Combined Bureau) at Singapore: their products were the cypher messages signalled by the German military and police forces and by Japanese diplomats in Berlin, Tokyo and Washington.⁵ The codebreakers at Bletchley Park were reading other military and diplomatic cyphers, including those of the United States and Soviet Union. On June 24 'C' was already warning

Churchill and the chiefs of staff not to send uncamouflaged decrypts to the Soviets 'in view of the insecurity of their cyphers.'⁶ The intercepts were prefixed 'BJ-' and referred to in some files as 'Black Jumbos.'⁷

By Saturday afternoon, June 28, when he drove down to Chequers again, the raw ULTRA intercepts which Churchill was receiving in special, buff-coloured locked boxes, indicated that Hitler was not having everything his own way.⁸ The Wehrmacht was evidently dismayed by the sheer size and number of the Soviet tanks. 'It now appears on the highest authority,' Churchill informed Lord Beaverbrook, minister of supply, using one of his characteristic euphemisms for the decodes, 'that the Russians have produced a very large Tank, said to be over seventy tons, against which the German A/T [anti-tank] six-pounder has proved useless.'⁹

For a few days Churchill floundered. The British commanders-in-chief in the Far East and China asked how far Britain's co-operation with Moscow would extend. Churchill authorised his chiefs of staff to reply that it would *not* extend to a military alliance – Britain planned to assist indirectly, by heavy air raids on Germany. When Sir Stafford Cripps, his unhappy ambassador in Moscow, saw Stalin's foreign minister on the twenty-seventh, Vyacheslav Molotov inquired whether Britain was willing to sign a political agreement. Cripps replied that Britain contemplated no political agreement 'at this stage.' 'It is better to wait,' he advised Molotov, 'until we have learnt to trust each other.'

Churchill's first instinct was to strike somewhere, anywhere, on the Continent. One suggestion that he had dictated on the day after Hitler's invasion of Russia was for R.A.F. bombers to set the Black Forest on fire. The Soviet ambassador Maisky suggested that he raid the Pas de Calais, the part of the French coastline nearest to England, with thirty thousand troops made up of Commandos and a Canadian division. Churchill approved. 'Make hell while the sun shines,' he suggested, believing despite all the lessons of Gallipoli and Norway that troops needed only to be ferried to a hostile beach for them to fight their way triumphantly ashore.¹⁰

HE TRAVELLED up to Scotland on June 26 taking Admiral of the Fleet Sir Roger Keyes, Director of Combined Operations, with him. 'I can't tell you what we saw,' wrote his private secretary after their return to Chequers, 'except one picturesque incident when a pipe band led the P.M. through the streets of the town past the cheering populace.'¹¹ With Keyes, his World War One friend, now aged seventy, at his side, he watched improvised land-

ing exercises on Loch Fyne, and visited the Combined Operations training centre at Inverary. Keyes was however already the object of much rancour within the service ministries; besides, such raids would not be possible for a long time – Britain lacked the landing-craft, and this shortage would hamstring her grand strategy for over a year.

There was not much else that Churchill could do other than harry the war office to ship tanks out to Egypt throughout the summer. The ill-starred tank battle against General Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps at Sollum, code-named *BATTLEAXE*, had cost two hundred British tanks; there were now only 160 Cruiser tanks in the Middle East, with fifty-six more under repair. At the defence committee meeting on June 25 Churchill had failed to persuade the chiefs of staff to ship one hundred tanks out with a new *TIGER* convoy to Malta. With the enemy air force now present in force in Crete, the navy refused to take the risk. On the twenty-sixth Churchill telegraphed to President Roosevelt a plea for tanks, and he spelt out Britain's urgent needs in a letter to Harry Hopkins, the president's special emissary, the same day: to ward off Rommel in Egypt and the Nazi threat to the oilfields of Iraq and Iran (Persia), Britain must lay claim to six or even nine months of the coming American tank production, he said.¹²

Several times that summer he reverted to his vision of fighting another *TIGER* convoy through to Malta. Twice General Sir John Dill, the solid, four-square Chief of the Imperial General Staff, threatened to resign on this issue. What he as C.I.G.S. still feared (unlike Churchill, who was reading the raw *ULTRAS*) was the early 'Nazi invasion of Britain' of which the prime minister made so much in his public utterances. Alone of the generals, Sir Henry Pownall, Dill's astute deputy, recognised that Winston did not really believe in any invasion, adding in his private diary on the last day of June, 'Of course he can't say that.' (Three weeks later Pownall indicated in the same diary that he failed to share Churchill's confidence that there would be no invasion. 'It will be difficult to prevent him stripping this country, especially in tanks, for the sake of the Middle East.')

Churchill's ministers also hyped the threat of a 'Nazi invasion.' Eden's diary of July 3 records Beaverbrook telling the prime minister after one defence committee meeting that he was anxious that the enemy's 'invasion barges' should be emphasised 'to assist him in his drive.'

ONE OF THE ailments of Britain's military position in the Middle East was the same that Adolf Hitler would diagnose, too late, in 1944 in France: the corrupting effect on a general headquarters of the soft life in the great met-

ropolitan fleshpot capitals. (Launching the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944 Hitler would wanly decree that 'next time' he would not allow any Wehrmacht officers into Paris). As with Paris, so it was with the streets of Cairo and Alexandria; they corrupted the British officers and gentry alike, grasping them in their perfumed embrace. Young Randolph Churchill, Winston's often underrated only son, who was now a Member of Parliament, was also an under-employed Commando officer. His father had sent him out to Cairo a few weeks before, and he spotted at once the debilitating influence of the great Arab metropolis. He recommended in a telegram to his father that the war cabinet station a British minister permanently in Cairo, to provide day to day political and strategic direction to the generals.¹⁴ Gratified by the sudden maturity displayed by his wayward son, Churchill sent a civil reply thanking him for 'your helpful and well-conceived telegram,' and selected Captain Oliver Lyttelton for the job.

We shall often encounter the burly, dynamic businessman Lyttelton (later Lord Chandos) in the chapters that follow. The P.M. had long been wooing him. Weekends spent at Chequers and at Dytchley Park – a millionaire's estate in Oxfordshire where the P.M. took refuge whenever his Oracle foretold a Nazi air raid on London – were not without effect on Lyttelton. Still President of the Board of Trade, he dined at the Annex (Churchill's bunker apartment at No. 10 Downing-street) on June 25. He found a small table laid in the Annex, champagne on ice, and a siren-suited Winston pink and fresh from his pre-prandial bath (his 'siren-suit' was an air-force blue garment shaped like a boilerman's dungarees, with a full-length zip up the front, which his office staff disrespectfully called his rompers).

As the P.M. mapped out his Cairo duties to him, Lyttelton was initially uninspired. In December 1940 Churchill had held out to him the far more appetising prospect of succeeding the late Lord Lothian as ambassador in Washington; the post had gone however to Lord Halifax. Twice in recent months Churchill had dangled the post of Secretary for War before him. Now it was to be Cairo. Saturday June 27 found Lyttelton back, comfortably lunching with Churchill, being told that the cabinet had approved his appointment as 'Minister of State for the Middle East.' At Chequers the next day Winston handed to him a paper, specifying his precise functions in the new post. Instructing him to fly out immediately, he gave Captain and Mrs Lyttelton a farewell dinner, and put them both into a suitably heroic frame of mind by showing them, along with his chief of air staff Charles Portal, the Alexander Korda movie *Lady Hamilton*. Churchill had seen this

story of Admiral Lord Nelson's battles half a dozen times, but never tired of it.¹⁵

WHATEVER HIS private insights from the ULTRAS about the improbability of a Nazi invasion, Churchill refused to countenance any slackening in Britain's home defences.¹⁶ While still weekending with the Lytteltons midst the baronial splendour and the suits of mediæval armour down at Chequers he again prophesied to the war office that as soon as Hitler had finished off the Soviet Union, which might be as early as September 1, he would hurl a quarter of a million paratroops at Britain. 'Everyone in uniform,' the P.M. decreed, 'and anyone else who likes, must fall upon these wherever they find them and attack them with utmost alacrity: "Let every one / Kill a Hun."' Every man, he dictated in this colourful message, must have a weapon, 'be it only a mace or pike.' He wielded that 'mace' again in a minute to Portal and Sir Archibald Sinclair, air minister, about drilling airmen for airfield defence, and he tested the readiness of those defences himself on his drive back into London that night, calling a sudden invasion alert at Northolt airfield and watching the airmen tumbling about – he found some of them still sitting with mugs of tea in the canteen half an hour later and sent them off 'with hives of bees in their bonnets,' as his new stenographer Elizabeth Layton wrote that night.

The Nazi air raids had ended. An uncanny, almost depressing silence now fell across the city each night, and Winston had no fears about remaining in London – he had known since May from the ULTRAS that Hitler's bomber squadrons had departed for the Russian front, and that the city could count on many months of respite.

Back at No. 10, he sat up late with his chief of staff, General Sir Hastings 'Pug' Ismay, dictating to Miss Layton. A quiet, romantic Canadian from the mountains of British Columbia, the girl sat mutely opposite him, her pencil poised, listening to the boom of Big Ben and the answering echo rolling back from the admiralty building on the far side of Horse Guards Parade.¹⁷

The memoranda which he dictated show the by now familiar Churchill, prodding and provoking. In one, he inquired of Ismay how many commanders-in-chief made use of the Secret Information Centre he had set up for them.¹⁸ (He repeated the inquiry in October and the following February). In another, Churchill peremptorily demanded statistics on the length of the British army's 'tail' in the Middle East – the ratio of teeth to tail was to become an obsession with him.¹⁹

The war office hated his interference. Major-General Sir John Kennedy, the director of military operations, remarked to the American military attaché upon the autocratic way that Churchill ran the war. 'There is a good deal of uneasiness,' wrote the American in a private letter on July 4, 'over Churchill's one-man control of *everything*.'²⁰ All the world powers were now in the hands of single rulers – it was an age of Great Dictators.

The more firmly the P.M. gathered the reins the louder the criticism became. Former prime minister David Lloyd George lunched with him on the first day of July, then confided to a journalist that Churchill was wasting time 'looking down the barrels of guns.'²¹ Lord Beaverbrook referred to him out of earshot as that 'old bottleneck' – with emphasis on the word *bottle*. Winston would sit up far into the night over flagons of liquor with his cronies. He made short work of anybody who stood in his way. General Sir Archibald Wavell's removal from the Middle East command,* announced on July 2, 1941, puzzled the Americans and aroused the ire of the House of Commons. Churchill did not deign to explain it, and was testy with the former war minister Leslie Hore-Belisha for even asking why.

Fleet-street read the auguries better: 'Lyttelton,' wrote one editor privately on the third, 'has been sent there [Cairo] as a not too independent-minded civilian to keep the generals and others where Churchill wants them.'²²

IRRITATINGLY FOR Churchill, he had received no reply from Stalin to his bold broadcast offer of assistance. Brief extracts of the B.B.C. transmission had appeared in *Pravda*, the organ of the Soviet Communist Party, but to Churchill the silence that followed seemed almost insulting.²³

While the Germans broadcast a string of communiqués announcing stupendous victories including the destruction of two thousand Soviet tanks, four thousand aeroplanes, and six hundred guns, Churchill cast about for ways of helping Moscow. He instructed the Ministry of Economic Warfare – the 'ministry of ungentlemanly warfare,' as Whitehall insiders termed it – to offer to Moscow their accumulated expertise in destroying oilfields, in case the German thrust approached the Caucasus, and he ordered Sir Maurice Hankey, whose XD-units had destroyed the Dutch, Belgian, and French oil installations in 1940, to draw up plans to do so whether the Russians liked it or not.²⁴

* Vol. i, page 589.

The Russians wanted primarily material aid – and their wants were not modest. Eventually they asked for three thousand fighter and bomber planes, twenty thousand light anti-aircraft guns, and flame throwers; they also demanded Britain's latest airborne radar, and a night fighter prototype equipped with the latest airborne electronics.²⁵ Churchill sat up with Eden until two A.M. on the last day of June discussing ways of satisfying these demands. On July 8 a Soviet military mission arrived at Euston station in London, greeted by the deputy chiefs of staff, a large crowd of fist-clenching, banner-waving communists singing the *Internationale*, and glowing articles in *The Daily Worker*.²⁶ The prime minister made no attempt to see them. The head of the mission, Lieutenant-General Philip I. Golikov – later a Marshal of the Soviet Union – told Eden on the ninth that Stalin wanted Britain to invade northern Norway and France and to keep up the bombing of Germany. His meeting with Captain David Margesson, the secretary of state for war, established only that the war office disliked Russia and was reluctant to regard the Red Army as a worthwhile ally. Lunch with the three chiefs of staff was a strained affair, eliciting only a thin, unhelpful smile from General Dill, ill-tempered outbursts from Admiral Pound, and nothing at all from Air Chief-Marshal Portal.²⁷

Passing through London again two weeks later, on his way to Washington, General Golikov repeated Stalin's requests to Eden on July 23; Eden responded with platitudes. Meetings scheduled with Sinclair and with Harry Hopkins, Roosevelt's confidant, on the following day were cancelled.²⁸ In Washington, Golikov decided that General George C. Marshall, the U.S. army's chief of staff, was head and shoulders above General Dill; moreover he was readily able to confer with everybody who mattered right up to the president.²⁹ Of course the Americans were not yet at war, but the treatment endured in London left a lasting impression on the Russians.

Churchill saw few ways of assisting Stalin yet, other than by diverting still more R.A.F. bombing effort to Germany. He berated Portal for having twice in recent nights targeted Brest, the French naval base from which Hitler's submarines were now operating. 'The devastation of the German cities is urgently needed,' he lectured the chief of air staff, 'in order to take the weight off the Russians by bringing back aircraft.'³⁰ This, the R.A.F. bombing offensive, was to become a recurring theme in his messages to Stalin, and it formed the nucleus of his first-ever letter to the Soviet dictator that day, July 7, 1941. 'About 400 daylight sorties were made overseas yesterday,' he explained to Stalin. 'On Saturday night [July 4] over 200 heavy

bombers attacked German towns, some carrying three tons apiece, and last night nearly 250 heavy bombers were operating. This will go on. Thus we hope to force Hitler to bring back some of his air power to the West and gradually take some of the strain off you.’³¹

Sir Stafford Cripps, his ambassador in Moscow, personally handed the message to Stalin on the eighth. Churchill read the ambassador’s report, though not yet a formal reply from Stalin, some time after midnight. When he reminded Stalin of the P.M.’s recent broadcast promising aid, said Cripps, the Russian leader had eagerly proposed a formal Anglo-Soviet agreement as well as a mutual pledge not to sign a separate peace with Germany.³² At two A.M. Churchill telephoned Eden to ask him to come over and discuss a further telegram to Stalin. The foreign secretary was however in bed, said so, and sulkily remained there. Churchill drafted a reply alone, causing Eden to grouse to his private secretary that Winston liked to take all the decisions and get all the credit.³³ Perhaps because of this, Eden henceforth adopted a strongly different line on signing an Anglo-Soviet treaty. At that evening’s cabinet, July 9, both he and his colleagues spoke strongly in favour, but Churchill and the rest of the cabinet balked at it. Churchill’s new message outlining a looser agreement was approved. As Sir Alexander Cadogan, the austere, Eton-educated permanent head of the F.O. put it, in his often disrespectful diary, ‘The sheep baa’ed in chorus,’ and the telegram went off for Cripps to convey to Stalin.³⁴

Broadly, the agreement bound Britain not to conclude a separate peace with Germany. It would be signed on July 12. Churchill suggested that from now on his secret service ought to furnish the Kremlin with the most important of the jealously guarded ULTRA intercepts, ‘provided no risks are run.’ Even though their actual origin would be completely masked, ‘C’ never felt comfortable about this. Occasionally he objected that Churchill was asking him to transmit Intelligence that could only have come from cryptanalysis. ‘I am always embarrassed,’ he minuted, ‘at sending the Russians information obtainable from this source.’ From the secret signals of the Communist International (Comintern), which Bletchley Park continued to decipher, ‘C’ was aware that the Kremlin had not abandoned its long-term aim of world revolution.



A copy of a letter written in April 1941 by the imprisoned French prime minister Paul Reynaud to Marshal Pétain reached Churchill via Vichy and

Washington. It revealed that at one French council of ministers shortly before the collapse of France in 1940 General Maxime Weygand, the commander-in-chief, had predicted that within three weeks Britain would 'have her neck wrung like a chicken' by the Nazis. The phrase stuck in Churchill's memory. Talking about it late one night with Archie Sinclair, he went on to ruminate about what he proposed to do to his defeated enemies. Benito Mussolini, the Italian *Duce*, he hoped to see strangled like Vercingetorix in ancient Rome; toward Hitler he was more conciliatory, with mellow visions of a Napoleonic banishment to some distant isle.³⁵

A few days later Churchill's costly military adventure in Syria came to an end. He had ordered British troops in, on a pretext, on June 8, to seize control from the Vichy French. On July 11 the opposing French commander, General H.-F. Dentz, asked for an armistice. Oliver Lyttelton sent two generals, Sir Henry Maitland ('Jumbo') Wilson and the Gaullist general Georges Catroux, to negotiate. Dentz however objected to the terms and Lyttelton summarily ordered 'Jumbo' Wilson to threaten to resume hostilities. Aghast at this prospect, Churchill sent an urgent message to Cairo – on no account was there to be any resumption of hostilities. Disenchanted at this meddling from Downing-street, Lyttelton ignored it. The armistice was signed on July 14.

That was by no means the end of the affair. To appease the Moslems, of whom there were many hundreds of millions, the British had promised that Syria, formerly a French protectorate, should have her independence when war ended. Charles de Gaulle, the French brigadier-general whom Churchill had hired to set up the 'Free French' forces, found that the armistice document made no mention of his troops – an omission which nurtured his suspicion that Britain, while talking of 'independence,' was perfidiously plotting to take over the entire Levant. De Gaulle threw a tantrum in Cairo which Lyttelton could only describe as 'womanly.'³⁶

Churchill – by this time on the high seas – had no time for this jumped-up French general, whom he himself had created. He had no intention of permitting his hireling to spoil Britain's relations with the Arab world. 'Tell Anthony [Eden],' he radioed to his deputy, Clement Attlee, 'to be very stiff with de Gaulle, Catroux, and the Free French.' If need be, he ordered, 'Jumbo' Wilson was to use military force against de Gaulle's Free French – the very sanction he had forbidden Lyttelton to use against the Vichy forces. 'It is important to let them realise in good time that they will be made to obey,' said Churchill's uncompromising message.³⁷

HE CAST a discreet veil over the final cost in human lives of Britain's five-week intervention in Syria. In a speech, he put the British casualties at between twelve and fifteen hundred killed and wounded. Robert Menzies, the Australian prime minister, shortly announced however that the Australian casualties alone had exceeded 1,250.³⁸

This was not the only instance where Churchill observed economies with the truth. Broadcasting from County Hall on July 14 he was heard to claim: 'In the last few weeks alone we have thrown upon Germany about half the tonnage of bombs thrown by the Germans upon our cities during the whole course of the war.' The air ministry sent a secret circular round the newspaper editors suggesting that the P.M. must have 'misread his script' – his figures, the ministry continued, were a gross exaggeration.³⁹



He would go down to Chequers late that Friday, July 18, 1941, travelling in his customary three-car motorcade. Since three P.M. the large black cars had waited outside the gate in the wall behind No. 10 – the third car would carry two telephone operators and Churchill's little valet Frank Sawyers, who was almost toothless and bald, although still relatively young.

It was six or seven P.M. before the P.M. stepped out of the cabinet room and gave a nod to the secretary which told her that they were off. Then the little convoy raced away, past Hyde Park and along Notting Hill Gate, running the red stoplights with police bells shrilling imperiously, swaying round traffic islands on the wrong side, then on past the White City and through the towns of Buckinghamshire, while the prime minister dictated to the girl scribbling at his side.⁴⁰ He had been in a foul temper all that week – in large part because Stalin had still not replied. 'Every time I went to him,' his new secretary sorrowed in her diary, 'he used a new and worse swear word.' Then he softened however and rounded off one day by beaming upon her with such a sweetness that she found it hard to bear him malice.⁴¹

In the cabinet reshuffle to which he put the finishing touches this weekend he patronised and promoted friend and family with blithe disregard for rank and competence. He elevated 'the Prof.' – his eccentric but gifted personal boffin Professor Friedrich A. Lindemann – to the peerage; the new 'Baron Cherwell' would loftily initial memoranda 'C,' attracting from

Winston the friendly reproof: 'There is already a C in my circle,' namely the head of M.I.6. (The Prof. continued to sign as 'C.')

⁴²

Duff Cooper, later Lord Norwich, was another such questionable appointment. The Australian prime minister Robert Menzies had described him in his diary as a queer fellow with a dead face and, he added, 'I should think great gifts of indolence.'⁴³ He had seen Duff Cooper, the minister of information, unashamedly dozing at cabinet meetings. Churchill now gave this job to his friend, the redheaded *enfant terrible* Brendan Bracken; instead of retiring Duff Cooper he sent this foppish aesthete out to employ those 'great gifts of indolence' in the Far East. Appointed in this ministerial reshuffle to the post of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, an office richer in dignities than in real power, Duff Cooper's new job would be to co-ordinate the defence of Singapore, the bastion of Britain's empire. Hapless empire: it would be late October before his languid report on the 'fortress' Singapore, crucial for the defence of Australia, arrived in London.

As for Bracken, his appointment as the new minister of information rattled Fleet-street badly. Guy Bartholomew of the *Daily Mirror* put it about that the P.M. wanted to enforce a tighter control on propaganda and censorship. With Bracken, Winston's loyal henchman at Senate House (the ministry had taken over part of London university), he calculated that he could stifle all criticism while keeping the limelight playing steadily on himself.⁴⁴

As a further Caligulan affront to informed opinion, Churchill appointed his young son-in-law Duncan Sandys to the Army Council. The red-tabbed generals spluttered, but confined their outrage to their illicit diaries. 'Everyone is talking about this,' commented the Vice-Chief of the Imperial General Staff, 'and it isn't going down well at all. Almost it would seem that he acts with impish malevolence – e.g., making Lindemann a peer, sending young Duncan Sandys here as F.M. [Finance Member]!'⁴⁵

NOT SATISFIED with embarking upon a personal correspondence with Stalin to the exclusion of the foreign office, Churchill had also begun direct communications with General Sir Claude Auchinleck, Wavell's successor in the Middle East, once again by-passing the war office.*

* He had communed in the same way with Lord Cork and Lord Gort during the Norwegian and French campaigns: vol. i, pages 243 and 284.

As summer turned to autumn he piled a nervous and unremitting pressure upon the British Army of the Nile to begin their offensive against Rommel; but he found that Auchinleck ('the Auk') was made of sterner stuff than he had imagined. On the first day of July the prime minister had sent to the general a broad directive, couched in what he thought to be impeccable language: 'After all the facts have been laid before you,' this said, 'it will be for you to decide whether to renew the offensive in the Western Desert, and, if so, when.'⁴⁶ Auchinleck responded that he needed more tanks first, and that they must also complete the occupation of Syria.⁴⁷

This was not what the P.M. had wanted to hear. He instructed Auchinleck that, Syria notwithstanding, the fight against Rommel remained decisive: they must recapture the airfields in Cyrenaica. If the Soviet Union collapsed, Hitler could move reinforcements to Rommel, 'without diminishing,' as Churchill wrote, 'the menace of invasion [of Britain].'⁴⁸ On July 19 however, while at Chequers, Churchill received a warning from Auchinleck that if Rommel continued reinforcing at his present rate he might be able to 'undertake a major offensive in the Western Desert in September,' against which the British would not field even one complete armoured division.

Awed by the larger picture, the prospect that Hitler might send his armies through a defeated Russia and Turkey into the Middle East, Auchinleck became preoccupied with his northern flank and moved the British army's highly trained 50th division to Cyprus. Since this Mediterranean island seemed largely unimperilled, Churchill was uneasy that this would provide grist to the enemy propaganda mills about the English always sparing their own troops while fighting their battles like Tobruk with soldiers from the Dominions. Unimpressed by these arguments, the general responded: 'I hope you will leave me complete discretion concerning dispositions of this kind.' As for attacking in the Western Desert now, he rebuked the prime minister that it would not be a 'justifiable operation of war.'⁴⁹

Thwarted and angry, Churchill told his cabinet on the twenty-fourth that these exchanges 'revealed a certain difference in outlook.' He decided to summon the new C.-in-C. Middle East home for consultations.⁵⁰

EVENTUALLY STALIN did reply to Churchill, and by July 1945 they would have exchanged over five hundred messages. At tea-time on July 19, 1941 the Soviet ambassador Maisky brought down to Chequers Stalin's first such telegram.⁵¹ Maisky's report on their conversation is in the Moscow archives. 'Churchill,' he cabled, 'was very satisfied . . . and made no secret of it. While

reading the message – which he did slowly and attentively – the prime minister kept turning to the map and searching for the place-names referred to.’⁵² These ‘place-names’ were deployed with characteristic Russian cynicism. Stalin offered this justification for his 1939 pact with Hitler:

It is easy to imagine that the position of the German forces would have been many times more favourable had the Soviet troops had to face the attack of the German forces not in the regions of Kishinev, Lvov, Brest, Bialystok, Kaunas, and Viborg, but in the region of Odessa, Kamieniets-Podolsk, Minsk, and the environs of Leningrad.

Hitler, of course, might have offered equal justification for his incursions into Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, France, the Low Countries, Norway, and the Balkans, not to mention the Soviet Union. Churchill however grinned and read the lines aloud. ‘This is undoubtedly true,’ he exclaimed approvingly to Maisky. ‘I wholly understand the policies which the Soviet government was pursuing before and after the outbreak of the war.’

THE GIST of Stalin’s immediate proposals was once again that Britain should establish theatres of operation in France and the Arctic. Churchill responded to this at length: the Soviet ambassador reported to Moscow that he ‘wholly accepted the concept of a Northern theatre, and even agreed to it enthusiastically’ – so much in fact that he sent for Admiral Sir Dudley Pound, the First Sea Lord, and dictated the orders to him there and then. He spoke of British warships appearing in northern waters later that month, and of a division of troops being sent to northern Norway later that year.

As for landing in France, he was less enthusiastic. He told Maisky that the Germans still had forty divisions there; the coast was fortified; there were only four or five hours of darkness; and not enough landing-craft. ‘It would undoubtedly end in a disaster,’ summarised Maisky. ‘On the other hand Churchill does vest immense hopes in his ever increasing air raids on Germany. . . Nor is he affected by the loss of planes or personnel.’

Regardless of what Auchinleck had warned, he also hinted at an early offensive against Rommel in Libya, and emphasised the necessity of the Soviet Union doing all in her power to ‘effect a joint occupation of Iran’ – to secure the overland supply route to Southern Russia.

They turned to the supply of aircraft. Churchill described the Russian requirements as frankly ‘unrealistic.’ He had no desire, he said, to foster

false illusions. He admitted disarmingly that he had been expecting the German Wehrmacht to make short work of the Red Army, taking a million prisoners or more. 'So far,' he said, 'nothing like that has happened.' Loss of territory, he suggested, was of secondary importance – a remark which showed that Churchill already had a grasp of the fundamental Soviet defensive strategy.



As their conversation ended, Maisky saw an emaciated, pale-faced American clutching a battered hat loping into Chequers. This was Harry L. Hopkins, Roosevelt's special emissary, who had left Washington six days earlier.

There were some who would later accuse him, when he could no longer answer, of having been a Soviet agent all along. Without going into the particularity of this allegation, all that need impress us here is that Hopkins enjoyed the unqualified confidence of both the president and the prime minister, and formed a vital secret link between them.

He was an anæmic, frail, and ailing politician. One British general referred to him disparagingly as 'that diseased prawn.'⁵³ Roosevelt had rightly formed the impression that Churchill had little interest in the post-war period, and he had told Hopkins to deal on this with Eden rather than with the P.M. Visiting Eden a few days later, the American lectured him that Britain was not to commit herself to *any* frontiers for any country before peace came. 'H. said,' the British foreign secretary afterwards noted in his handwritten diary, 'that U.S. would come into the war & did not want to find after the event that we had all kinds of engagements of which they had never been told.' The foreign secretary found himself chilled with 'Wilsonian memories' by the spectacle of an American president talking at large about the future frontiers of Europe.⁵⁴

HOPKINS'S ARRIVAL in Britain was evidence of the deepening personal bonds between the two western leaders. Both Lord Halifax in Washington and John Gilbert Winant, Roosevelt's Lincolnesque and quiet-spoken ambassador in London, had already observed, to their dismay, posses of 'special emissaries' shuttling between their capitals on missions of which the professional diplomats were rarely informed. Averell Harriman, a handsome railroad millionaire and now Roosevelt's Lend–Lease negotiator, was one. Jock Whitney, one of the Lend–Lease staff, described Harriman's rôle as

more of a 'whispering job' between Churchill and Roosevelt, to circumvent Ambassador Winant, who was Cordell Hull's man, whenever necessary (Hull was Roosevelt's secretary of state).⁵⁵ And now Roosevelt had interpolated Hopkins, his extraordinary intimate, as another, evidently instructed to probe what was going on in Churchill's mind about the Middle East; to the suspicious American minds of 1941 that region was still synonymous with 'empire' rather than with oil, which would supplant 'empire' only in 1944.

President Roosevelt's adroit, urbane chief of staff, General George C. Marshall – a disliker of everything that was British – had 'lost no opportunity of impressing the president,' so Hopkins told the British chiefs of staff, that the British strategy of reinforcing the Middle East was governed by unhealthy considerations of imperial prestige, and was therefore 'fundamentally unsound.'⁵⁶ The Americans of course still believed what Churchill had told them about SEA LION – the alleged Nazi plan to invade Britain – and they failed to appreciate the risks that he was taking in sending scarce military resources out to Egypt. Informed of this by the American military attaché, Brigadier Raymond E. Lee, Churchill's private secretary told a story of a gentleman's club in Saint James's which, obliged to expel a member for cheating, recorded delicately in its archives: 'He could not bring himself to leave enough to chance.' The American officer laughed, but still felt that Winston was leaving *everything* to chance by continuing to ship forces to Egypt.⁵⁷ Thus Hopkins eyed Churchill, and the prime minister sized up Hopkins. Hopkins was no match for Churchill. During this July weekend at Chequers the wily P.M. even offered him the unique privilege of meeting Hitler's deputy, Rudolf Hess, his personal prisoner – 'alone.' Hopkins declined, lest rumours spread that he was dealing with the Nazis.⁵⁸

BACK IN London on Monday evening, July 21, Churchill resorted to what was one of Hitler's favourite devices too – a gala 'war conference' staged for the benefit of visiting foreign dignitaries. Hopkins was invited to sit in at the five o'clock cabinet, but only until Item 6. (Item 7 was a discussion of America and Japan, and not suitable for American ears at all). A bogus agenda was prepared on which Item 6 appeared to be the last. That point reached, Churchill rose and declared, 'Well, now we shall adjourn.' Amidst scraping of chairs and shuffling of papers, he ambled with his American guest to the famous front door – but only Hopkins found himself outside in Downing-street.⁵⁹

After he had left, the English ministers turned to Item 7, Japan (a topic to be examined more fully in chapter 6*). 'A long cabinet & a long Defence Ctee after dinner,' wrote Eden irritably in his diary. 'Five to six hours in all, which might have been compressed into one. W. is becoming terribly discursive & verbose. Maybe fatigue makes it worse.'⁶⁰ 'Brendan there for the first time,' recorded Cadogan with amusement: 'This didn't stop Duff from sleeping.'⁶¹ Tempers were evidently fraying.

CHURCHILL TOOK his naps where nobody could see him. Completely worn out after a further session with him on American aircraft deliveries, Hopkins pleaded with Brigadier Lee and Major-General James E. Chaney, the senior U.S. military observer in London, to find out the true facts about the Middle East. A joint meeting was set up on July 23.⁶²

Winston, dewy fresh after his nap, eyed these new inquisitors as they trooped into his cabinet room that afternoon – Hopkins, Lee, Harriman, and several British generals. Margesson, his secretary for war, was ushered out and a butler cleared away the whisky decanter and glasses that had lubricated their deliberations. With his secretaries and General Sir Hastings ('Pug') Ismay, his personal chief of staff, to his right, and with Hopkins, Harriman, and Beaverbrook to his left Churchill comfortably ignited a cigar and let them all wrangle about American tank deliveries. The meeting broke up two hours later, at seven, with Churchill inviting them to a tank shoot two days hence. 'The only person I saw who did not seem to be fatigued at all,' dictated Lee, back at Grosvenor-square, 'was Churchill himself, whose mind was just as alert and whose curiosity was as pressing as it had been at five o'clock.'⁶³

At Hopkins's request there was a further Anglo-American staff conference late on the twenty-fourth.⁶⁴ The Americans stumbled in wearily after dinner at ten P.M., determined to tackle the prime minister on Britain's 'indefensible' position in the Middle East, and to argue the priority of the Battle of the Atlantic. To Brigadier Lee, who arrived with Chaney's naval counterpart, Rear-Admiral Robert L. Ghormley, it seemed ominous that the dinner-jacketed trio Hopkins, Harriman, and Winston arrived together, laughing uproariously and looking 'quite comfortable.' Lee found himself facing the P.M. – 'this little man, with his round, fat bald head, thick short neck, pale skin, and bright blue eyes, who is single-handedly (much too

* Page 95 below.

single-handedly, in my opinion) steering England through its greatest crisis.' Churchill again lit up an eye-watering cigar and the conference began.

Hopkins made the point that most Americans had never even heard of Benghazi or Mersa Matruh or comprehended the inter-relationship of Egypt and India. 'The trouble is,' he said, 'we've gotten in America the notion that the whole Middle East is a rickety, shoestring affair.' He conceded that he now believed that 'a large percentage' of the American supply effort should go there; Churchill smiled broadly at him. The other Americans – Chaney, Lee, and Ghormley – disagreed vehemently with Hopkins, suggesting yet again that the defence of Britain and the Far East was more vital.

Churchill steered the debate well. He boasted that Britain had the 'measure of the Germans' in the Battle of the Atlantic but admitted, 'If the Japanese come into the war there is little we can do unless the United States follow suit.' Invited to explain the significance of the Middle East, General Dill, the C.I.G.S., argued that fighting there had the advantage of keeping the German army out of mischief closer to home. The arguments for Britain abandoning the Middle East had been stronger in 1940, but she had held on and was now much better off. 'The importance of prestige should not be discounted,' he lectured the Americans, but he also emphasised the material losses that would result from even a limited withdrawal from Egypt.

Churchill spoke the last word: 'The Middle East is the meeting point for the armies of the empire.' He carried the day. Hopkins summed up in a message to Roosevelt: 'They are determined to fight it out in that sector [the Middle East] and it seems to me they gave very convincing reasons.'⁶⁵

AFTER THE staff conference with the Americans ended – it was by now around midnight on July 24/25 – Winston invited Hopkins to telephone from No. 10 Downing-street direct to the president. Hopkins spoke for a while, then handed the instrument to him.⁶⁶

We have no record of precisely what was said, and until the British file of censorship transcripts is found and released, or a U.S. president unseals the records of the Bureau of Censorship, which contain the U.S. Navy's transcripts of these vital telephone communications, historians will remain in the dark on this account. As will be seen, it is likely that it was on this occasion that each now encouraged the other to impose fierce economic sanctions on Japan, with their well-known fateful consequences. Churchill, his tongue loosened by the lateness of the hour, also allowed himself an incautious remark to the president about their 'coming rendezvous.'

2: *Prime Minister with Nothing to Hide*

THAT SUMMER OF 1941 Winston Churchill and President Roosevelt would meet – it was their first meeting, so far as the P.M. could remember, but his staff reminded him that he had supposedly met the great American leader once before at Gray’s Inn in London, on July 29, 1918, when Roosevelt was visiting England as under-secretary of the navy. They urged him to abide by that version.¹

The origins of this 1941 meeting, code-named RIVIERA, are obscure. We cannot credit Churchill’s own version that it was only on July 17, when Hopkins ‘sat in the garden’ with him at No. 10, that the idea for a meeting ‘in some lonely bay or other’ was first mooted.² Churchill had already mentioned the project to the king in February, and to Sir Alexander Cadogan on July 16 at a garden party at Buckingham Palace, when he invited him to go too.³ Eden on the other hand seems not to have learned until two weeks later. There may have been a ‘telephone job’* between the two leaders several months before, in which each had wooed the other. Roosevelt had long favoured such a meeting, confiding to William Lyon Mackenzie King, the Liberal prime minister of Canada, on April 20: ‘I am telling it to no one but yourself: I am in constant touch with him [Churchill]. What I feel strongly is that we should have a chance to talk together.’⁴ First however the débâcle in Greece, then Crete, and more recently the disastrous BATTLEAXE tank battle at Sollum had tied Churchill to England.

The United States were still formally neutral. Concerned about the isolationist majority in the United States, Roosevelt had insisted on a rendezvous remote from prying journalists.⁵ Bermuda, Britain’s balmy mid-At-

* As Roosevelt’s personal staff referred to their transatlantic radiotelephone conversations. See vol. i, page 550.

lantic colony, had been considered, but then Newfoundland, on Canada's eastern doorstep, was selected.

Here, at Argentia Harbour in Placentia Bay the American navy was commissioning one of the bases acquired in return for the fifty American destroyers traded to Britain twelve months earlier. At no time did either leader even inform Mackenzie King about their planned rendezvous, let alone invite his participation.

The British files make plain that Churchill took pains to ensure that neither the Canadian prime minister nor New Zealand's Peter Fraser, who was visiting a Scottish town at the very time the prime minister's train passed through, did not accidentally learn of RIVIERA. Nor would even the Governor of Newfoundland, Sir Humphrey Walwyn, learn of the conference until it was almost over. It was a further indication that empire sentiments did not swirl strongly in Winston's half-American blood.⁶

Before departing with a party of American 'observers' to inspect an armoured division at Tidworth on July 25, Churchill dutifully asked His Majesty for permission to leave the kingdom for the meeting. He reassured him that a flying-boat could bring him back in a few hours should emergency arise. He told His Majesty nothing at all of what he proposed to discuss with the president.⁷ He sent the letter round to the palace in a sealed box.

There was little that King George VI could do but assent; he still spoke to Hopkins and other foreign visitors in terms of misgiving about this upstart prime minister who had in effect seized power in 1940.⁸

'I readily assent to your proposals,' he replied to the P.M., 'for I feel that circumstances are very different now from what they were when you first mentioned the idea to me at the end of February.'

The king ended on a note of unconvincing flattery. 'I confess that I shall breathe a sigh of relief when you are safely back home again!'

Churchill then confirmed it in writing to the president:

Am arranging if convenient to you to sail August 4th, meeting you some time 8th-9th-10th. Actual secret rendezvous need not be settled till later. . . Am looking forward enormously to our talks which may be of service to the future.⁹

In a further telegram he proposed adding the 'Middle East' and 'Air' to the possible topics for discussion. 'Looking forward keenly,' he added, 'to this event.'¹⁰

Worried by the worsening war news from the Russian front, Hopkins suggested to Washington that he might usefully travel on from London to the Kremlin.

Everything should be done to keep the Soviet Union in the war. 'If Stalin,' he cabled to Roosevelt, 'could in any way be influenced at a critical time I think it would be worth doing by a direct communication from you through a personal envoy.'¹¹

Roosevelt approved, and Churchill wrote a letter commending Hopkins to the Kremlin – there was, he encouraged Stalin, 'a flame in this man for democracy.'

He is the nearest personal representative of the president. A little while ago when I asked him for a quarter of a million rifles they came at once. The president has now sent him full instructions and he leaves my house tonight to go to you.

He added what would soon become familiar words of promise: 'A terrible winter of bombing lies before Germany. No one has yet had what they are going to get.'¹² (In the second half of July the R.A.F. bombers attacked Hamburg twice, Hanover, Frankfurt, and Mannheim three times, as well as Berlin).

Of course, flowery words about Hopkins's 'flame for democracy' may have cut little ice with Stalin. Both Eden and Cripps fretted about the florid style of Churchill's burgeoning private correspondence with Stalin.¹³ The austere ambassador felt that the P.M.'s style was becoming too sentimental, and from Moscow he pleaded with the foreign secretary to restrain him. 'We think,' concurred Eden's private secretary, 'it will have the worst effect on Stalin who will think guff no substitute for guns.'¹⁴

THE DISPENSING of glorious guff had always been Churchill's *forte*. Obligated to deliver a ninety-minute Production Speech to the House on July 29, he rampaged around Chequers, evoking from his bodyguard Commander C.R. 'Tommy' Thompson the one-word description in his notes, 'bedlam.'¹⁵ The prime minister was now nearly sixty-eight, but the previous week had displayed his astounding hidden reserves of energy. 'He is just as amazing and terrific and full of character in his private life,' marvelled Miss Layton, 'as he is over the radio or in the H[ouse] of C[ommons]. He bullies his servants, but then completely makes up by giving a really charming smile.' More

than once he let fly some Technicolor swearwords at her when she did wrong; but then he would blurt out, 'Oh, don't mind me. It's only my way.'¹⁶

Few dared to take open offence – his gallant courtiers confined their indignation to private letters or to diaries padlocked with brass flaps like those kept by less-than-virtuous spinsters. The Vice C.I.G.S. left one clash on July 25 smarting with anger, went home and recorded: 'He is terribly apt to go off at a tangent.' 'He's a shocking bad *listener*,' General Pownall continued. 'I had to take him up yesterday on some rather unfair and stupid remark and he didn't like it one little bit – kept muttering to himself while I spoke.'¹⁷

The P.M. delivered the Production Speech on July 29. He dealt robustly with his critics.

A handful of Members [he said] can fill a couple of days' debate with disparaging charges against our war effort, and every ardent or disaffected section of the press can take it up, and the whole can cry a dismal cacophonous chorus of stinking fish all round the world.

At the end, he turned to the larger issues. Warning yet again that Nazi invasion was still a danger, he called for 'a superb, intense, and prolonged effort.' Britain, he said, must still reckon with the 'gambler's desperation.'¹⁸ As for the demand for the appointment of a Minister of Production, he met it with biting sarcasm: 'I have not been told,' he scoffed, 'who is to be this superman. . . . When you have decided on the man, let me know his name. I should be very glad to serve under him – provided I was satisfied that he possessed all the Napoleonic and Christian qualities required.'

TO THOSE qualities he might well have added those of a Machiavelli: Churchill was still casting about for ways and means of enticing the North Americans eastwards, and into this European war. Months later, on February 15, 1942, after the United States had finally entered the war, Churchill would broadcast the triumphant admission that he had done everything possible to that end. 'When I survey and compute the power of the United States and its vast resources and feel that they are now in it with us... However long it lasts, till death or victory, I cannot believe that there is any other fact in the whole world which can compare with that.' He added with a candour that caused Lord Halifax and Anthony Eden to wince, '*This is what I have dreamed of, aimed at, and worked for. And now it has come to pass.*'

At the end of May 1941 he had made his first attempt, advising Roosevelt that if Hitler seized bases in southern Spain or North Africa to neutralise Britain's colonial fortress in Gibraltar, or even if the British were only 'sure' that Hitler was about to do so, Britain would send expeditions 'which we have long prepared and [which] are waiting beside their ships' to seize the Spanish and Portuguese islands in the Atlantic – the Canaries, Cape Verde, and the Azores. Like Spain, Portugal was a neutral, but he would invite Dr Salazar, the Portuguese dictator, to ask for British 'help' in protecting these islands. (General Francisco Franco, his Spanish counterpart, was unlikely to be offered this formal courtesy). Churchill suggested to Roosevelt, 'We should welcome collaboration with an American token force before, during, or after occupation of Atlantic Islands and if you wish would turn them over to you as a matter of mutual war convenience.'¹⁹ On July 21 the defence committee discussed a plan to invade these islands in August.²⁰ Twenty thousand troops were earmarked for the job. The operation, code-named PUMA, would be on the agenda of Churchill's forthcoming rendezvous with Roosevelt.

As Churchill was aware from his codebreakers however, Hitler was determined to keep the United States *out*, at least until the Soviet Union was defeated. Learning that his submarine U-203 had even had the American battleship *Texas* briefly in its periscope sights, on June 21 Hitler signed secret orders to every U-boat commander – which were shortly on Churchill's desk – that 'during the coming weeks all incidents with United States are to be avoided. Act in this sense in all conceivable eventualities.'²¹ Disappointed by this, Churchill was even more chagrined to find that one of his own officials had proposed that for strategic reasons American destroyers should be confined to the western Atlantic. He declared that the culprit had done Britain a 'great disservice,' and was to be removed from all American contacts forthwith. 'No question of naval strategy in the Atlantic,' the P.M. defined, 'is comparable with the importance of drawing the Americans to this side.'²²

Using Sir William Stephenson – secret service code-number '48,000,' head of that service in North America, operating from a suite of offices in the Rockefeller Center in New York – Churchill masterminded a slew of 'dirty tricks' designed to help Roosevelt to stir up public feeling. Most of the British files on these are still sealed, but some episodes are known: The British secret service faked a letter from the Bolivian military attaché in Berlin indicating that he was in league with Nazis in La Paz planning a pro-

Hitler coup. Stephenson handed the letter to the U.S. state department, which turned it over to the Bolivian government on July 24. Though spluttering his innocence, Major Elias Belmonte, the attaché, was charged with treason and dismissed from the Bolivian army in disgrace.²³ Bolivia promptly declared war on Germany and interned her German population, and Roosevelt gained one more item to boost the fraudulent claim that the Nazis had designs on the Americas.

By August 1941 the (British-designated) head of Roosevelt's new secret service, Colonel William B. Donovan, was talking about infiltrating American guerrillas into South America.²⁴ Meanwhile, one of Stephenson's agents duped the Governor of Dutch Guyana into believing that a 'German raider' was busy in their waters: the governor appealed for American aid. On August 2 Stephenson's man in Bogotá asked the U.S. embassy there to collaborate in planting forged documents which would squarely place the responsibility for a riot on the German legation. In his most barefaced fraud yet, Stephenson then palmed off onto President Roosevelt a 'secret Nazi map' showing Hitler's ultimate designs on South America.²⁵ By that time a deciphered Japanese dispatch from Ankara suggested that the reverse was true: Hitler was not only restraining his over-eager forces from making war on the United States, but urging the Japanese not to attack them either. 'Germany,' Ambassador Franz von Papen was quoted as saying, 'is taking a very cautious attitude until she has defeated Russia. She is doing her utmost to avoid a clash between the American and German naval forces in the Atlantic.'²⁶

CHURCHILL WAS aware of the need for stealth and concealment so as not to arouse American opinion against him. On July 8 he rebuked General Auchinleck for speaking publicly of the pressing need for American GIs to fight Germany: these remarks, Churchill cabled to him, would provide ammunition to the American isolationists. ('They are also contrary to what I have said about our not needing American Army this year, or next year, or any year that I could foresee.') American law made it illegal for Roosevelt to take warlike action without Congressional approval except in narrowly defined circumstances. American supplies could reach only 'nations whose security is essential to the defense of the United States.'

Despite formidable legal difficulties, Roosevelt had begun shipping four thousand U.S. Marines into Iceland, alongside the British contingent already there. 'The only thing that matters,' the prime minister wrote to

Admiral Pound, 'is that five or six thousand American troops should reach the Island in question.' What counted was what he called the moral effect.²⁷ Seven thousand U.S. engineers had also arrived aboard the seized French liner *Normandie* in Northern Ireland to start building American naval and air bases near Londonderry, including a graving dock for battleships. To Fleet-street the American bases sounded alarmingly permanent: 'It is one thing to get the Americans in,' prophesied newspaper editor Cecil King, 'and quite another to get them out again.'²⁸ Churchill took a more pragmatic view.

AS HE prepared to cross the Atlantic to meet the great American president, he was, in the vivid phrase of his young private secretary Jock Colville, as excited as a schoolboy on the last day of term. 'My master,' wrote his other secretary John Martin in his scrappy notes, 'was as excited as a boy planning all the details of the entertainment of the other fellow.'²⁹

Churchill felt that he had grounds for optimism. The mere fact that President Roosevelt was half emerging from his shell of neutrality was a positive sign. The strategic balance was shifting in Britain's favour in the Middle East: in the summer of 1940 Churchill had had barely eighty thousand ill-trained troops there; denuding the British Isles he had now packed in nearly a quarter of a million soldiers, and British generals controlled Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Abyssinia, Eritrea, and both Somalilands. Stalin was confident, reported the British military attaché in Moscow, Lieutenant-General Sir Noel Mason-Macfarlane, that he could prevent further Nazi penetrations; and deciphered Luftwaffe signals showed that the German squadrons were encountering supply problems as the distances on the Russian front increased.³⁰

Only the Battle of the Atlantic gave cause for concern. By July 1941 Churchill's secret insight into the enemy cyphers had expanded as enemy U-boats, weather ships, and patrol boats were captured and the code books and components for the different ENIGMA cypher machines were recovered: his codebreakers had by now 'unbuttoned' the Germans' main naval cypher, HYDRA, and were reading the U-boat operational codes as well; but this good fortune might not last for long.³¹ The latest intercepts revealed that, just as the erstwhile Deputy Führer Rudolf Hess had emotionally warned Sir John Simon in June, Hitler had many more submarines already in service. Only recently the admiralty had appreciated that there were seventy-four; the new figure was already 125.³² Churchill told Admiral Pound that he now felt 'very anxious indeed' – this unexpected increase showed

that Hess had not been bluffing. He demanded a full inquiry, and even threatened to send the Prof., his personal auditor, to go over the admiralty's figures.³³ Pound apologised that a considerable amount of the new Intelligence on submarine production came 'from a secret source of which you are aware.' One bleak fact could no longer be overlooked: the Germans were now producing submarines faster than the British were destroying them.³⁴

Codebreaking also established however that Rommel, in North Africa, was encountering problems with his supplies. At the end of June, Bletchley Park's 'Hut 8' had broken a medium-grade Italian administrative cypher produced by the Swedish-built C38m code-machine, and from now on this betrayed to Churchill's experts the sailing dates, routes, and composition of all Rommel's supply convoys crossing the Mediterranean.³⁵ Sinkings increased. From reading Rommel's radio traffic with Rome and Berlin, it was obvious that the Afrika Korps was now seriously embarrassed. The prime minister hinted at this to his defence committee on Friday, August 1. 'All our information tends to show,' he said, 'that the Germans are having difficulty over supply.'

Summoned home from Cairo, General Auchinleck had arrived in England, and Churchill pleaded with him to mount an immediate offensive to recapture Benghazi. 'To do nothing for three months —,' Churchill had written on the day before, 'August, September, and October — except train and prepare the armies for the offensive, may well be to lose forever the golden opportunity.' He wanted Auchinleck to engage Rommel now, 'and thus force him to fire off his limited ammunition and burn up his exiguous supplies of petrol.' To sit quiet until November, as Auchinleck was planning, seemed 'incompatible with the cruel, relentless demands of war.'

Auchinleck cannot have enjoyed the rude taunt of 'sitting quiet.' A man of commanding countenance, with ice-blue eyes and a jutting chin, he combined wit, charm, and frankness. He needed all three qualities as the defence committee on this August 1 wasted five hours listening to the P.M. lecture him on strategy. Auchinleck still declined to launch an offensive immediately, quite simply because he had not enough tanks — he and Rommel each had about 230, he said, and he wanted a two-to-one superiority before attacking. At this Churchill became 'very rude' to the general, but Auchinleck remained implacable. The prime minister found it impossible to browbeat this tall, dignified army officer. The Auk had a far better grasp of the minutiae of tank warfare, and each knew it.

DEFEATED, CHURCHILL invited him down to Chequers. ‘Pug’ Ismay briefed Auchinleck for the ordeal, asking him to dismiss the notion that the P.M. was ‘rude, arrogant, and self-seeking.’ From this country mansion the prime minister ‘phoned Eden to come and join them for a further defence committee meeting. The foreign secretary reluctantly abandoned his own weekend at Frensham and drove over to Chequers at high speed; he arrived at six P.M. to find Winston relaxing in deck-chairs with Auchinleck, and showing no inclination to get down to business until later.

‘Yes,’ the P.M. apologised with an unconvincing show of penitence, ‘I’m afraid sometimes I do talk rather a lot. I’m quite ashamed of myself!’ He added nonchalantly, ‘I’m afraid you will be very cross with me but I’ve put off the defence committee till after dinner, as I think I’ll now go off and have a sleep!’³⁶

Left to his own devices, Eden probed Auchinleck’s intentions in the Western Desert; the general explained that he was not going to risk ‘another fiasco’ like BATTLEAXE. If an opportunity presented itself before the end of October he would seize it; but if not, he intended to muster all the tanks he needed to strike a really effective blow.³⁷

After dinner Churchill at first announced: ‘I don’t want to do any more tonight.’ He demanded to see the Nelson movie *Lady Hamilton* again. The projection staff had already set off back to London. He insisted upon their recall – if necessary cordons must be thrown across every main road to the capital. The men had got away however and there was no option but to work. He sat down with his yawning, heavy-lidded guests at midnight, and wrangled with them until two A.M. His heart was already on the high seas, and nothing more was accomplished that weekend.

THERE WAS one other matter raised at these committees. Stalin had suggested in mid-July that Britain and the Soviet Union should jointly occupy Iran on the pretext of the small number of Germans in the country. Churchill had told Maisky on the nineteenth that he agreed, and a provisional date in August was set for an invasion, particularly of the oilfields in the south, by one and a half British divisions; the chiefs of staff had decided on July 28 that if the Iranian government resisted they would ‘threaten Teheran with bombardment from the air.’ Perhaps Churchill hesitated to resort to methods for which he had so strongly criticised the Nazis: whatever the reason,

by the last day of July he was expressing misgivings, at least about going in simultaneously with the Russians who would, he wrote, be invading from the North 'with the customary Soviet methods and regime in conquered areas.' 'I cannot,' he continued, 'feel that this operation, involving war with Persia [Iran] in the event of non-compliance, has been studied with the attention which its far-reaching character requires.' He was primarily concerned with the safety of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and other British residents. 'Is there any danger of the oil-wells being destroyed?' he inquired, and he added the injunction: 'We must be very careful not to commit an atrocity by bombing Teheran.' It was all very awkward. He was still in favour of an invasion, as he wrote, but he wanted it properly surveyed first.³⁸



There was something often childlike about this statesman. Once Churchill cautioned Brigadier Menzies, chief of the secret service, and pointed to his Persian cat, Nelson, looking out of a window: 'He's in touch with the pelicans on the lake,' he said, 'and they're communicating our information to the German secret service!'⁴⁰ He often used schoolboy imagery. 'This is a half holiday,' he told his private secretary, after keeping him up until two A.M. with Hopkins on July 26. 'We must work tomorrow.'³⁹

Flashes of mature insight were spoiled by patches of behaviour that witnesses could only describe as infantile. General Sir Alan Brooke, wearily watching yet another tantrum, remarked *sotto voce* to Hugh Dalton, minister of economic warfare: 'One feels that a nurse should come and fetch him away.'⁴¹

Some of his fetishes must have had their roots in his unsettled infancy. He had a whimsical habit of exposing himself, just like a naughty child, not only to his young male secretaries but to his elders and betters. Each thought he was being uniquely privileged, but this happened so frequently that it cannot have been fortuitous. No matter how high ranking the victim – with the exception, it seems, of His Majesty – he was likely to find himself received by Britain's prime minister in a state of total nudity on one pretext or another. He received his ministers or staff officers while sitting in or stepping out of the bath – these blessed folk being referred to afterwards as his 'Companions of the Bath.'⁴² Wrapped in his silk dressing gown, a lavish green and gold affair emblazoned with red dragons, he resembled, in the words of Menzies, a 'nice pink pig.' 'Sometimes,' recalled 'C,' 'I had to talk

to the P.M. when he was undressed and once when in the bath he mentioned he had nothing to hide from me.'

Not even foreigners were spared this ordeal: in August 1941 he asked the butler at Chequers to bring Elliott Roosevelt to him. 'I knocked on his door,' wrote the president's son, 'and entered. Churchill was dictating to his male secretary with a large cigar in his mouth. . . He was absolutely starkers, marching up and down the room.'⁴³ Others were treated with scarcely greater mercy – he would wear 'his white linen undergarments' to receive the Canadian prime minister Mackenzie King in May 1943: 'He really was quite a picture but looked like a boy – cheeks quite pink and very fresh.'⁴⁴

AS CHURCHILL now, on August 3, 1941, set out from Chequers for his transatlantic adventure he had three broad purposes – to make friends with the president; to lure the United States into the European war, and to extract a public declaration committing them to aid Britain against Japan. He was quite willing to offset these desiderata against theirs. When the chiefs of staff sent him an inquiry as to what was to be discussed, he scribbled in red ink in the margin only the most minor of issues – 'PUMA' (the plan to seize the Atlantic Islands), 'Persia,' and, oh yes, 'How to win the war.'⁴⁵ Replying to a letter from Her Majesty the Queen, wishing him Godspeed, he expressed optimism: 'I must say I do not think our friend [Roosevelt] would have asked me to go so far for what must be a meeting of world-wide notice, unless he had in mind some further forward step.'⁴⁶

Seldom, in fact, can an international summit conference have been more casually prepared by either side than Operation RIVIERA, as Churchill's staff code-named this meeting at Placentia Bay. His critics would view it as one more example of his obeisance to Washington's interests. Roosevelt, for his part, concerned about repercussions from European immigrant minorities in his own polyglot nation, again asked Churchill to confirm that Britain had made no secret deals with the governments-in-exile based in London.⁴⁷ Into his luggage Churchill therefore packed all the agreements currently binding Britain, of which only one was secret – an oral promise made by his Minister in Belgrade just before the British-inspired coup d'état of March 1941, promising to return Istria to Yugoslavia after the war. (He made no attempt to include the secret annexe to the Anglo-Polish Treaty of August 1939, or a similarly secret protocol to the Syrian armistice recently signed by generals Wilson and Dentz).

Unwilling to be separated from his 'most secret sources' even for a few days, Churchill instructed his London staff just before his departure to ensure that the plane bringing Lord Beaverbrook out to the conference a week later carried not only the most important F.O. telegrams but also 'if possible an assortment of BONIFACE,' as he termed the ULTRA intercepts. These were to be carried in a weighted case which would sink with the plane if it and his Lordship should go down on the way over.⁴⁸ Two days later Leslie Rowan, newly attached to his private office, notified him that 'C' would make the BONIFACE selection, while Major Desmond Morton – Winston's bibulous pre-war crony who now liaised with the Intelligence services on his behalf – would sift and select the 'BJs,' the crucial diplomatic and Japanese intercepts emanating from Bletchley Park and its outstations in Singapore and Melbourne.⁴⁹

The transatlantic crossing would be made aboard Britain's newest battleship, *Prince of Wales*. The prime minister left Chequers at midday on the third, and boarded a special train at Wendover wearing his grey-blue denim rompers. The whole party was in an exuberant mood. 'Rueful disappointment at lunch,' recorded John Martin, his young secretary, 'when [the] Prof. with the aid of the slide rule which always accompanied him calculated the volume of champagne consumed by the P.M. throughout his life and found it was less than that of our railway coach.'⁵⁰ Among his retinue were Cadogan of the F.O. and the chiefs of staff; Air Chief-Marshal Sir Wilfrid Freeman, the Vice-Chief of air staff, took the place of Portal who was being left behind with 'Pug' Ismay to mind the store in London.

They lunched on lashings of an excellent sirloin of beef. This voyage was to be as much a gourmand's vacation as a summit meeting. At one northern railroad station the train took on board a quantity of grouse – a delicacy not to everybody's taste, but the open season had been brought forward to enable them to bag several brace as a gift for the president.⁵¹ Such were the hidden perquisites of absolute power. To assist the Americans in their deliberations, Churchill had also ordered *Prince of Wales* munitioned with several tons of delicacies provided by the government hospitality fund with the assistance of Messrs. Fortnum & Mason. He was taking otherwise as gifts only some illuminated cards of the inspiring verse of Arthur Hugh Clough ('But westward, look, the land is bright!') which he had had printed, and a number of signed photographs of himself.

Upon arrival in northern Scotland a car took him to Thurso harbour, a launch to a Royal Navy destroyer, and this out to the battleship which loomed

formidably out of the dull mist at Scapa Flow. She still bore the honourable scars of her duel with *Bismarck* in May.

Harry Hopkins met them on board. He was just back from Moscow by flying-boat, bringing several cases of vodka and caviar. He looked ill, and the captain sent him to bed. Suffering from pernicious anæmia, he needed regular transfusions of something more durable than Winston's champagne, but he had misplaced his medicine. He told Churchill he had had three conferences with Stalin, who had assured him the Soviet Union could hold on.⁵² The Russians had told him they were manufacturing two thousand five hundred planes each month, and already had twenty-four thousand tanks. 'Harry,' the P.M. immediately cabled to the president, 'returned dead beat from Russia, but is lively again now. We shall get him in fine trim on the voyage. We are just off. It is twenty-seven years ago to-day,' he continued, 'that Huns began their last war. We must make a good job of it this time. Twice ought to be enough.'⁵³

The battleship eased slowly out of the anchorage, picked up her destroyer escort and set sail for the bright land across the Atlantic, heading westwards into the setting sun.

CHURCHILL WAS NOT a seaman, for all his enthusiasm at being photographed in naval garb. Asked once by a Tory Member of Parliament, a former naval commander, what he thought of the sea, his one-word reply said it all: 'Detestable!' 'When I get inside a big ship for some days,' he added, 'I tend to get slightly headachy.'⁵⁴ Aboard *Prince of Wales*, Churchill and his valet coaxed his portly figure into a strange naval garb which enthralled the Royal Navy officers but which Lieutenant-Colonel Ian Jacob eventually identified as the mess dress of the Royal Yacht Squadron. One day he gatecrashed a session of the chiefs of staff, who had arrayed themselves around a polished, map-strewn mahogany dining table for the benefit of photographers; he turfed out Joe Hollis and Colonel Jacob, struck a pose in the centre of the group, and put on 'his special bulldog look' for the cameras.⁵⁵

He was provided with roomy quarters over the battleship's screws, with a little mess to share with his party. He was photographed in a naval-style cap with his hands on the guard rail and one foot on the railing below, using it like a bar-room foot-rail. Any of the ship's company doing that would have been keelhailed by the captain. Hers was however a good, proud crew, and Colonel Jacob noted that same day their 'fine and jolly aspect,' adding:

'The *Prince of Wales* seems altogether to be a very happy ship.'⁵⁶ There are reasons why we speak well of this ship and her young and valiant crew.

That night, an ominous report was brought to Churchill: the German radio had announced at 8:15 P.M. that he was about to meet Roosevelt somewhere secret 'in the western hemisphere.'⁵⁷ Bracken was instructed to warn Fleet-street editors not to speculate. Photo-reconnaissance planes were sent out to locate Hitler's mighty new battleship *Tirpitz* – just in case. Since the German communiqué had mentioned a Washington announcement that Roosevelt was vacationing aboard the presidential yacht *Potomac* there was alarm in Pennsylvania-avenue, and some surprise as well since Roosevelt had not even informed Henry L. Stimson, his secretary of war, of the coming meeting.⁵⁸ Cordell Hull, secretary of state, wanted to put out a denial but, before departing, Roosevelt wrote dissuading him: 'My Dear Mr Secretary,' he advised, 'Any statement now is a direct invitation to the Germans to attack the prime minister and his party both going and returning. *When in doubt say nothing!*'⁵⁹

An inquiry from the cabinet arrived in the battleship's radio room, proving that Churchill had made equally little attempt to notify the empire leaders of what he was up to. 'Should not the telegram to the three Dominion Premiers be sent now?' the radiogram inquired. The telegram remained unsent.

IF CHURCHILL'S staff had hoped that this August 1941 crossing would be a summer's cruise, they were disappointed. The North Atlantic seas crashed and foamed across the quarterdeck. There were reports of enemy submarines, causing the battleship to zigzag.⁶⁰ Their stomachs gyrated in the opposite direction. Unable to sleep in the quarters provided above the pounding screws, Churchill transferred to the quieter Admiral's sea cabin on the bridge. John Martin was sick for the first few days; Churchill ministered to him personally with Mothersill sea-sickness tablets. During the days of radio silence, he spent the hours of unaccustomed idleness reading C. S. Forester's *Captain Hornblower RN*, which Lyttelton had given him, or sparring with a now recovered Hopkins over a backgammon table – Hopkins taking him for several guineas each time.

When Winston retired to write state papers, the army stenographer proved unfamiliar with his florid style; there were difficulties when the P.M. dictated one rebuke to his ministers, about the shortcomings of aircraft-carriers, because when he launched into the dictation with a growled

preamble, 'This is a melancholy story —' the sergeant gasped out loud, 'Oh dear, how unfortunate!'

A number of movie films had been brought aboard to be shown in the wardroom. The first was a film about Russian spies, *Pimpernel Smith*, which the more fastidious members of Churchill's staff enjoyed rather less than he, being unaware that even coarser fare awaited them — *Comrade 'X'* and *The Devil and Miss Jones*, for example, and Humphrey Bogart in *High Sierra* ('Awful bunk,' sniffed Cadogan like a governess in his diary. 'But the P.M. loves them, and they keep him quiet.')

On the eighth Churchill called yet again for *Lady Hamilton*. He knew its lines by heart, but he was still moved to tears: 'Gentlemen,' he declaimed, 'I thought this would be of particular interest to you, many of whom have recently been under the fire of the enemy's guns on an occasion of equal historical importance. Good night.'



Placentia Bay was a rocky inlet on the southern coast of Newfoundland. To the British it might have been a Hebridean loch; to the Americans it smacked more of Alaska. There were no towns here in August 1941, and even Placentia, a two-centuries-old fishing settlement, had barely five hundred inhabitants; but since the American base had arrived all the younger womenfolk were wearing silk stockings, while the local men were grumbling that it was the 150 American Marines who had bought them.⁶³ Battle-grimed and drab with her wartime camouflage paint and the already rusting scars, *Prince of Wales* stood slowly into this natural harbour on the ninth, while an American destroyer led her through the mineswept channel. There were the inevitable misunderstandings, without which no historic meeting seems to be complete. As the British battleship proudly swept in, with a Royal Marine band playing and a guard of honour with fixed bayonets standing at attention, stiff as a white picket-fence, on the quarterdeck, somebody realised that the Americans were keeping different time. The loudspeakers announced that all clocks were to be put back ninety minutes immediately; the ship put out to sea again, and repeated the performance at the properly appointed hour.

By nine A.M. they were anchored not far from the president's flagship, the cruiser *Augusta*, standing out in her peacetime paint with brass rails gleaming and colours fluttering brightly in the sun. Through glasses, Churchill could make out the figure of the president under an awning, waving his

hat to them. As the U.S. Marine band struck up *The Star Spangled Banner*, Churchill stood to attention, cap doffed at his side, his blue eyes surveying the bay and its surrounding terrain.

Roosevelt's naval aide came over to discuss arrangements, and left taking Hopkins with him.

Two hours later, at eleven A.M., the prime minister and the more privileged members of his staff crossed by barge to *Augusta*. John Martin carried a message which King George VI had penned to the president. It was couched in language which, it might be thought, displayed rather less than unalloyed enthusiasm for Churchill: 'I am sure,' the monarch had written, 'that you will agree that he is a very remarkable man.' As they covered the last few yards they could see the crippled president, leaning on the arm of one uniformed son and escorted by another; he was flanked by the American chiefs of staff, the Joint Chiefs, and by the state department's Sumner Welles, who had last seen Winston in a somewhat sorrier condition in the admiralty in March 1940.*

Here at Placentia Bay things were different. Indeed, as Colonel Jacob noted, all American warships were 'dry,' while the Royal Navy had written its history on a famous regime of 'rum, sodomy, and the lash.' 'The American Navy visits the British Navy in order to get a drink,' remarked one American officer in Jacob's hearing, 'and the British Navy visits the American Navy in order to get something to eat.'⁶⁴ That seemed to summarise the state of Anglo-American relations in the summer of 1941 quite nicely.

* See vol. i, page 225. Sumner Welles had reported that he found the prime minister in an incoherent and alcoholic haze. Roosevelt had for a while thereafter referred to the British prime minister as 'that drunken bum.' These lines were tactfully omitted from the published version of U.S. state department papers.

3: *The Charter that was Never Signed*

WHAT TRANSPIRED BETWEEN August 9, 1941 when the two western leaders met, and August 12, when they parted? The material outcome was meagre. The real benefit was the personal friendship which the two men now cemented.¹ When he left however Churchill seemed little closer to drawing the United States into his war.

There is no direct record of what was said in the several confidential meetings between Churchill and Roosevelt.² The British and American chiefs of staff were aware that the real decisions were being taken by their two leaders. Noting in his diary the meals the two men took alone together, General H.H. 'Hap' Arnold, the thick-set, jovial commander-in-chief of the U.S. army air forces, would make the wan admission: 'What the president and the prime minister had to say when together – I know not.'³

At a lower level, the British chiefs of staff were as united in their approach to global strategy as their American colleagues, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, were not.

It is plain from the record of the latter's conference held aboard *Augusta* two days earlier, in preparation for this meeting, that Washington was indifferent to any Japanese advance into neutral Thailand, however direct the threat this must pose to British Malaya, at the southern end of the peninsula. After hearing Roosevelt stipulate this on August 7, Arnold had laconically summarised their formal position in his notes: 'Turn deaf ear if Japan goes into Thailand but not if it goes into Dutch East Indies' – because there was oil there, and Britain and the United States had just pronounced an embargo on oil supplies to Japan.

Ostensibly as a deterrent to Japanese expansion into the Dutch East Indies, Roosevelt had ordered the reinforcement of the Philippines with heavy bombers – 'So that there will be some "bite" to any ultimatum which

we may send to Japan,' recorded Arnold, 'in general B-17s [heavy bombers] and P-40s [pursuit planes], tanks and anti-aircraft guns.'⁴

At their first meeting on August 9 the two leaders went into an immediate huddle over lunch. 'At one of our first conversations,' recorded Churchill five days later, 'the President told me that he thought it would be good if we could draw up a joint declaration laying down certain broad principles which guide our policies along the same road.' To Churchill, Roosevelt seemed a sick man – he had suffered badly from the sweltering Washington summer, and the elderly naval physician tending him had little knowledge of modern medicines.⁵ Churchill was not an uncritical admirer of the president. During the president's first term Winston had occasionally spoken harshly of him, for example to *Life* magazine editor Daniel Longwell.⁶ Years later, however, after the president's death, he would mistily reminisce: 'I grew to love Franklin Roosevelt. I still love him.' That feeling became mutual; from the moment of this Atlantic meeting, Churchill captured the president's imagination, just as he had planned. Averell Harriman would shortly write to his daughter Kathleen: 'The P.M. has been in his best form,' and he would comment that Roosevelt was 'intrigued' by him.⁷

THE CONFERENCE would result in a wordy declaration known as the Atlantic Charter, and a joint communiqué uttering a mild reproof to Japan. More far-reaching were the products of those secret sessions. From the subsequent reports made by Roosevelt and Churchill in their respective capitals, it is possible to surmise accurately what was and what was not agreed.

First, Churchill uttered a veiled imprecation to the president: he thought it right, as he would boast to his cabinet colleagues upon his return to London, to warn that if the Soviet Union were compelled to ask Germany for an armistice, and if hope died in Britain that the United States would ever come into the war, then he 'would not answer for the consequence.' Roosevelt, he said, had taken this very well, and had promised to 'work for an incident' to justify opening hostilities.⁸ 'Roosevelt,' Churchill informed his colleagues, according to the diary of the Vice C.I.G.S. who attended the cabinet, 'is *all* for coming into the war, and as soon as possible. . . But he said that he would never *declare* war, he wishes to provoke it.' The American plan was to 'create an incident that brings war about,' in order to gain the full support of the American people. 'As C.-in-C. of the armed forces Roosevelt can do what he likes with them and is, therefore, going to trail his coat until a *de facto* war occurs.'⁹

There is little doubt that Churchill did make this astounding claim about the president's secret intentions. He would say much the same to King George VI on the same day, namely that he had 'several talks with him alone' and had put Britain's position to him 'very bluntly.' Roosevelt had, he again maintained, assured him that he would seek an 'incident' which would justify him in opening hostilities, meaning against Germany; Roosevelt had made the distinction that he would not 'declare' war – he could not without Congressional consent – but he would 'wage' it, as witness his order that the U.S. navy now take over all convoy duties in the western Atlantic.¹⁰ Weeks later, Churchill told the South African prime minister that at Placentia Bay he had said that he would rather have an American declaration of war on Germany now, and no supplies for six months; Roosevelt had called this 'a hard saying,' but had gone so far as to reveal, again according to Churchill's recollection: 'I shall never declare war – I shall *make* war. If I were to ask Congress to declare war they might argue about it for three months.'¹¹

So much for Churchill's verbal account of his achievements. It is to be feared that he may have been reporting what he had *hoped* to hear the president say. Such, alas, is the dictate of human nature, as we have already observed in May, June, and July 1940 when he had wrongly predicted, after telephone conversations with Roosevelt, that an American entry into the war was imminent. Winston's account does not entirely mesh with what Roosevelt would tell his own cabinet colleagues afterwards. 'At no time,' wrote agriculture secretary Claude Wickard in his hand-written record of that reprise, 'did the president indicate that he was contemplating the sending of [an] expeditionary force to Europe, nor did he indicate that he thought it was admirable to declare war.' He did however indicate concern over 'American lethargy.'¹² That remained the root problem throughout 1941. American public opinion was still set against entering Churchill's war.



What about the Far East? There are solid clues in contemporary private records that Churchill asked Roosevelt during their secret talks to join with Britain in a pre-emptive strike against Japan, but that the president's response was that the time was not yet ripe.¹³ Cadogan suggested to Sumner Welles on August 9 that the P.M. believed that Japan was now willing to take on everybody – the Soviet Union, the Dutch East Indies, the British empire, and the United States.¹⁴ An odd passage in Wickard's diary, never

printed before, quotes President Roosevelt as making plain to his cabinet weeks later that Churchill 'in their Atlantic meeting' had urged him to 'go in with England and the Dutch East Indies in an attack on Japan.' 'The president indicated,' continued the agriculture secretary, 'that he had refused because he wanted to delay such actions as long as possible.'¹⁵ The same record adds that early in November 1941 Churchill mooted this idea to Roosevelt again. Cordell Hull also claimed to associates that Roosevelt had agreed to an unspecified, hasty proposal of military action against Japan but that he, Hull, had blocked it.¹⁶

All in all, the net outcome of the Atlantic meeting would be hard to define. 'I had,' Churchill wrote to his son Randolph – now attached to the British general headquarters in Cairo – 'a very interesting and by no means unfruitful meeting with the president . . . and in the three days when we were continually together I feel we made a deep and intimate contact of friendship. At the same time,' the prime minister continued, 'one is deeply perplexed to know how the deadlock is to be broken and the United States brought boldly and honourably into the war.'¹⁷



In that strict sense the meeting was a failure. For the British guests there was compensation enough in the repast which from the first day took even the Prof.'s dietary fads into account. There were almonds, olives, broiled spring chicken, buttered sweet peas, omelettes, candied sweet potatoes, mushroom gravy, currant jelly, sliced tomatoes, chocolate ice cream, cookies, cup cakes, cigarettes, and cigars. On Roosevelt's instructions, two thousand Presidential gift boxes of cigarettes, fresh fruit, and cheeses were brought over by launch to the British sailors.

That evening, August 9, the P.M. returned to *Augusta* for a formal dinner with the president. The speech which he delivered here was not one of his best, according to Cadogan; the grim discovery that American ships were 'dry' disaffected Winston. It was however an improvement on the brief headings jotted aboard *Prince of Wales* a few days earlier ('How to win the war' was one). 'This is a mechanised war,' he said, according to Arnold's useful record. 'It is not a war of 1917-18 where doughboys in the mud and trenches fought it out to a conclusion.'¹⁸ After speaking highly of the bomber as the means of bringing home to the Germans 'the horrors of war' he addressed the sceptics who questioned the British people's endeavours to

hold on to the Middle East, explaining that ‘they would lose too much prestige if they gave up their present positions.’ Britain, he continued, according to other notes taken by Lieutenant-Colonel C. W. Bundy, had too much invested out there to back out now. She could never evacuate the ‘600,000 men’ and mountains of war material. In his further remarks, the P.M. dwelt rather more on Britain’s bases in the Nile Valley and the Red Sea than had his chiefs of staff whose eyes slanted more to the east, toward Syria, Iraq, and Iran.¹⁹ Churchill described the Atlantic as the war’s crucial theatre. The prime minister hinted, according to Bundy, that he had ‘positive knowledge that the Germans would not take any action which would bring us [the United States] into the war with Russia still active.’ He demanded American aid in personnel, ships, tanks, and anti-aircraft guns. (‘I found,’ dictated Stimson after General Marshall briefed him on this conference, ‘that [the British] have no idea at all of how the cupboard was bare so far as the United States was concerned.’)

Churchill explained that with the limited British forces available his strategy would be to attack only at points where the enemy’s lines of communication were longest. ‘By constant hammering,’ he suggested, ‘it will be possible to prevent Germany from spreading and ultimately ought to aid in breaking her morale.’

Turning to the Far East, he stated this demand according to General Arnold: ‘The United States, England, and Russia must send an ultimatum to Japan’ (Bundy’s note refers only to ‘a firm warning’) –

this ultimatum to cover in general [a] statement that if Japan moves south in[to] the Malay Peninsula, or into the Dutch East Indies, it will be necessary for the United States, Britain, and Russia to use such means as are necessary to make them withdraw, and they will use force if it is required.

Finally, Churchill added a plea for some kind of post-war organisation to prevent wars like this from breaking out again. ‘We must form a League of Nations, or some similar body for the purpose of maintaining order throughout the world, and preventing recurrences of any such terrible tragedies as we are now witnessing.’ ‘He indicated,’ wrote Bundy, describing this fine peroration, ‘the hope and belief that the British – and ourselves – were trying to create a condition in which there might be years of peace, a Golden Age in which all the peoples of Europe might live in Freedom.’

Churchill had expressed the belief that if there had been an effective League, with a 'constabulary' to enforce peace, the present situation might not have arisen.

During dinner Roosevelt had warily agreed that they might issue a joint declaration and a warning to the Japanese.²⁰

THE NEXT day August 10 being Sunday, Churchill had organised a joint Anglo-American Divine Service aboard *Prince of Wales*, a ceremony to which he had given much thought. The evening before, Captain John Leach had broadcast instructions to the ship's company, calling on them to 'raise an extra head of steam' when they came to sing the hymns. The service was, Churchill decreed, to be fully choral and 'fully photographic.' Drying himself off after taking his bath that Sunday, he sent for young John Martin and had him read out loud the selected prayers. He himself had chosen the day's hymns – *O God Our Help in Ages Past*; *Onward Christian Soldiers*, and *Eternal Father Strong to Save*. If there was one device that he had learned from the former U.S. ambassador Joseph P. Kennedy it was that 'all that God-stuff' went down well with Americans.

Then he donned the Royal Yacht Squadron uniform, clambered up the ladders on to the bridge and instructed Cadogan, over breakfast, to prepare drafts of the two declarations.

At eleven A.M. an American destroyer arrived alongside *Prince of Wales*, bringing the president. He was hoisted aboard in his wheelchair. Two hundred and fifty American servicemen were mustered with the now battle-hardened British sailors in a hollow square on the quarterdeck. After the guard of honour had sloped arms, Roosevelt abandoned his chair, stood up, and inspected them, dragging each foot painfully past the other on the longest walk he had managed for many years. The word had gone out that the president was never to be photographed when walking or in his wheelchair but only when standing still or seated; it was nonetheless a field-day for the cameramen – the sort of thing, said one, which the average press photographer would dream of only 'after a good dose of hashish.'²¹

THE QUARTERDECK ceremony left an indelible impression on them all, as was Churchill's intent. John Martin felt that a man would have to be hard-boiled indeed not to be moved by the sight of these hundreds of stalwart young men sharing hymn sheets and singing lustily side by side, facing a pulpit draped with the flags of their two nations – 'It seemed a sort of

marriage service between the two navies,' wrote the normally unemotional Downing-street civil servant.

For lunch that day the British offered smoked salmon, caviar, vodka, mock turtle soup, roast grouse, potatoes, peas, rolls, ice cream with cherry sauce, and real coffee; since this was a Royal Navy ship there were champagne, port wine, and brandy as well.²²

The Americans had brought with them stacks of American glossy magazines, which seemed to English eyes to be filled with articles on movies, baseball, and Bible prophecy. The writers had only wounding words for Britain and her generals. Wavell was described as having failed in Greece and Crete; Auchinleck was 'best known for his failure to hold Narvik.'²³ The war still seemed somewhat remote from the Americans. From Hollywood to Madison-avenue, theirs was still a nation on furlough. As the ships' companies parted, none could have foreseen that within four months nearly half of all these hundreds of British sailors present would perish horribly in a naval folly for which, once more, Churchill would not be wholly innocent of blame.

THE ATLANTIC Charter, that banal propaganda pamphlet, began to take shape.²⁴ An English typist hammered out the draft on crested Downing-street notepaper; Churchill gave Roosevelt this 'tentative outline' on the tenth, and it is now in the presidential files.

The president of the U.S.A. and the prime minister, Churchill, representing H.M.G. [His Majesty's Government] in the U.K., being met together to resolve and concert the means of providing for the safety of their respective countries in face of Nazi and German aggression and of the dangers to all peoples arising therefrom, deem it right to make known certain principles which they both accept for guidance in the framing of their policy and on which they base their hopes for a better future for the world.

First, their countries seek no aggrandisement, territorial or other;

Second, they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned;

Third, they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live: they are only concerned to defend the rights of freedom of Speech and Thought without which such choice must be illusory;

This was changed in the final text to read: '. . . will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them.'

Fourth, they will strive to bring about a fair and equitable distribution of essential produce not only within their territorial boundaries but between the nations of the world.

This was also shortly changed to read rather less agreeably for the British, whose very empire was founded on trade preferences: 'Fourth, they will endeavor to further the enjoyment by all peoples of access, *without discrimination and on equal terms, to the markets and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity.*' Churchill recorded on the fourteenth: 'I pointed out that the words "without discrimination" might be held to call in question the Ottawa agreements.' He was, he said, in no position to accept them without consulting London and the Dominions. The offending words were accordingly soon excised.

Fifth, they seek a peace which will not only cast down forever the Nazi tyranny but by effective international organization will afford to all States and Peoples the means of dwelling in security within their own bounds, and of traversing the seas and oceans without burdensome armaments.

Roosevelt would expand point 5 to create a sixth and seventh too: 'Fifth,' he dictated, 'they hope to see established a peace, after the final destruction of the Nazi tyranny, which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in security within their own boundaries, and which will afford assurance to all peoples that they may live out their lives in freedom from fear.'

Sixth [*Roosevelt continued*] they desire such a peace to establish for all safety on the high seas and oceans.

Seventh, they believe that all of the nations of the world must be guided in spirit* to the abandonment of the use of force. Because no future peace can be maintained if land, sea, or air armaments continue to be employed by nations which threaten, or may threaten, to use force out-

*The words 'must be guided in spirit' were changed in Roosevelt's hand-writing to read 'for realistic as well as spiritual reasons must come.'

side of their frontiers, they believe that the disarmament of such nations is essential. They will further the adoption of all other practicable measures which will lighten for peace-loving peoples the crushing burden of armaments.

Uppermost in Churchill's mind that Sunday, August 10, was the threat posed by Tokyo, who had now, under their shotgun agreement with Vichy, begun moving troops into the orphaned French territories of Indo-China. With Cadogan's help he had that morning drafted a savage warning for Roosevelt and himself to issue to Japan. It was very blunt, stating: 'Any further encroachment by Japan in the South-West Pacific would produce a situation in which the United States government would be compelled to take counter-measures, even though these might lead to war between the United States and Japan.'²⁵ Roosevelt agreed to append these phrases to a note he intended to hand to the Japanese ambassador in Washington. (Two days later, Churchill radioed to his cabinet in London the suggestion: 'We should try to get the Dutch to come in, in full agreement.' He added, though only as an afterthought, that the Dominions 'should also be told about it.'²⁶

Churchill gave Roosevelt copies of the two documents before he returned to his flagship after the Divine Service. He impressed upon Sumner Welles that some such declaration with respect to Japan was of the highest importance. 'He did not think,' minuted the state department official, 'that there was [otherwise] much hope left . . . of preventing Japan from expanding further to the south, in which event the prevention of war between Great Britain and Japan appeared to be hopeless.' If such a war did break out Japan could immediately use her large number of cruisers to destroy all the British merchant shipping in the Indian Ocean and Pacific and to cut the lifelines between the British Dominions and the British Isles.²⁷

His visitors gone, Churchill was in a genial mood that afternoon. He changed into his air-force blue angora wool 'rompers' and asked, 'Who would like to go ashore with me?' A crew of bluejackets pulled his party over to the beach in a whaler – Martin, Harriman, 'Tommy' Thompson, and the Prof., still rather comically clutching his bowler hat. Each one perhaps imagining himself a modern Pilgrim Father, they set foot on the deserted shingle of Newfoundland. Winston wandered about, collecting a fistful of the local flora – there was not another soul in sight. Once, he clambered up some boulders like an urchin and joyfully dislodged rocks from where they had rested for a hundred million years, and rolled them down the cliff.

A squall blew up, and he was soaked to the skin, but he had seldom enjoyed himself as much as that afternoon.

He dined with Roosevelt aboard *Augusta*. As the roast turkey and cranberry sauce were served to the two leaders – and to Roosevelt's loathsome dog 'Falla,' from whom he proved to be as inseparable as Churchill was from the Prof., or the Prof. from his bowler – their conversation roamed across the whole brutal enterprise of war. Roosevelt was still inclined to propose a period of standstill to Japan; Churchill knew this anyway from the 'BJ' intercepts, but he felt it unlikely that the Japanese would agree.²⁸ The president also informed him that the Portuguese prime minister had agreed to permit the British, or if they had their hands full elsewhere, the Americans, to occupy the Azores. He gave his blessing to PILGRIM too, Churchill's plan to seize the Spanish Canary Islands immediately after the mid-September full moon. Precisely why PILGRIM should ever have been contemplated is still shrouded in mystery, because Churchill himself conceded that it would oblige the enemy to seize Gibraltar, and this in turn would render the whole Middle East position untenable.²⁹

BEFORE RETURNING for lunch in *Augusta* on August 11, Churchill reported all this to his chiefs of staff and to Attlee, deputising for him, in London.

To the former he explained that the American offer of 'protection' to the Azores would bring their troops and ships even closer to the eastern Atlantic. 'Any step in this direction is to the good,' he said. The only discordant note so far was that the Joint Chiefs had revealed that morning that in order to build up the American strength in the Pacific, they proposed to 'rearrange' Lend-Lease so that the B-17 heavy bombers earmarked for Britain would stream across to the Philippines instead.³⁰ To Attlee he reported that F.D.R. had agreed to append a 'very severe warning, which I drafted' to the end of a message that he was planning to hand to the Japanese.

The P.M. was piped aboard the American flagship at eleven A.M. Several shocks awaited the British party.

The first was a mild setback on Japan. The 'warning' was not going to go off as drafted, after all. Sumner Welles, like Roosevelt, preferred to string the Japanese along, playing for time. Discussing it with the president, Churchill saw clearly that he had decided that he could not promise to ask Congress for authority to 'give armed support.' Maintaining economic pressure was the most he could do. Roosevelt promised to hand a stiff message to the Japanese ambassador on his return to Washington. 'I later asked for a

copy of the message' wrote Churchill, 'but I was told, at the time of our departure, that it had not yet been drafted.' Roosevelt also undertook to include in it one phrase by which Churchill set great store, about Japan producing a situation which might lead to war with the U.S.; the prime minister decided that the president would surely not tone it down. 'We didn't get 100 per cent of what we wanted on F.E. [Far East],' noted Cadogan in his diary, 'but we must remember that it must be read in conjunction with the joint declaration [the Atlantic Charter] which will give the Japanese a jar.' On a personal level, as he cabled to Eden in London later that day, the two leaders appeared to have 'hit it off' very well – but there still remained 'a great many imponderables.'³¹

A more serious disappointment for the British followed. The press statement which Roosevelt had prepared on this Atlantic meeting was short and bland. It would merely announce that they had met at sea to discuss the workings of Lend–Lease, and that the accompanying naval and military discussions had in no way involved any future commitments other than as authorised by Act of Congress. Churchill was deeply shocked at this proof of how far Roosevelt was in fact shackled by Congress and the law. Roosevelt argued that it would take the wind out of the Isolationists' sails, but he allowed the prime minister to talk him out of it and the offending sentence about 'no commitments' having been made was dropped.

The third upset came when Sumner Welles handed to Winston the joint declaration, as redrafted overnight by the president. Point 4 now read:

Fourth, they will endeavor to further the enjoyment by all peoples of access, without discrimination and on equal terms, to the markets and to the raw materials of the world, which are needed for their economic prosperity.

According to Roosevelt's own chuckling description a few days later, the P.M. went 'up in the air' at the new wording.³² This wording would have spelt the end of imperial preference – the end, in short, of the British empire. President Roosevelt, we now know from the American state papers, was just trying it on. Unaware of this, Churchill was in a quandary. While he had always regarded himself as a free-trader, and he would confide to Mackenzie King two weeks later that he had no sympathy for the Conservative Party's position on tariffs, he was their leader and had the duty to stand up for them.³³ 'I myself,' he now conceded to Roosevelt and Sumner

Welles, aboard the *Augusta*, 'am heartily in accord with your proposal. . . I have always been, as is well known, emphatically opposed to the Ottawa Agreements.' It looked however very much as though this redrafted Point Four was intended to strike at the heart of those agreements.

'It is,' confirmed Sumner Welles. 'We in Washington have been trying for nine years to smash these artificial trade barriers.' Two years later Churchill would claim to have 'rebuked' Welles for announcing that he was 'out to smash Ottawa.'³⁴ He was certainly angry at this attempted *fait accompli*. He spoke with some heat about Britain's eighty-year battle for Free Trade in the face of steeply rising American tariffs. On his insistence the words 'without discrimination and' and 'to the markets and' were crossed out. The words would raise considerable difficulties, he said, especially in the Dominions – he would eventually have to refer it to them, and to his cabinet in London, and this would take at least a week.³⁵

He offered an alternative phrasing:

Fourth, they will endeavour with due respect for their existing obligations to further the enjoyment by all peoples of access on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity.

Churchill later claimed that the president was 'obviously impressed' by his arguments and the forceful manner in which he set them out.³⁶ The U.S. state department's files show however that he was conceding far more than Roosevelt had dared to hope. The president congratulated Sumner Welles in secret after the P.M.'s party had left *Augusta*. The British approval of Point Four, even in its truncated form, was, he said, 'far broader and more satisfactory,' as Welles minuted, 'than the minimum which the president had instructed me, after our conference of the morning, to accept.'³⁷ It is no surprise that Roosevelt boasted a month later that he thought he was doing a better job of 'handling the British' than President Wilson had done.³⁸

Churchill wirelessly drafted the declaration to London. Shortly after midnight, after dining with Roosevelt once more, the cabinet's considered reply arrived in *Prince of Wales*' radio room.³⁹ Colonel Hollis brought it to his cabin. 'Am I going to like it?' asked Winston, grimacing like a small boy at a spoon of medicine. It proved unobjectionable. Attlee's deliberations in London had resulted in a suggested variation to Point Four – which Churchill disregarded – and the inclusion of some platitudes about 'improved labour

standards, economic advancement and social security' after the war, to which President Roosevelt could hardly object.

FOR THE final morning of the conference, August 12, 1941, little remained except to celebrate new friendships and say farewells. 'Hap' Arnold came aboard at eleven A.M., and Winston beckoned him into his cabin for a glass of port wine. The prime minister installed him in the Admiral's cabin with Hopkins, Harriman, and Lord Beaverbrook who had just arrived from Gander Lake after flying over by seaplane from Scotland.⁴⁰ Something was evidently irking the prime minister, because he stepped outside once to ask if the chiefs of staff meeting had been arranged, and when Joe Hollis lazily replied that 'C.N.S.' – Pound, the chief of naval staff – had asked their American colleagues over, Churchill took him aside and spoke sharply to him for referring to the First Sea Lord as 'C.N.S.' The final chiefs of staff meeting began at eleven-thirty, presided over by Admiral Sir Dudley Pound – a 'Mr Magoo' character slowly fading away with a tumour on the brain. Flagons of sherry were passed around to lubricate their exchanges.

Churchill and Beaverbrook went over together to see the president at midday. They now proposed to title the joint declaration 'Atlantic Charter' – perhaps because anything even remotely sounding like a declaration of war grated horribly to Roosevelt's ears. It was only now that the Canadian-born Beaverbrook, a tenacious defender of the empire, saw the wording. He expressed loud dismay at Point Four. 'That wipes out imperial preference,' he said succinctly. Roosevelt was amused to see this Canadian putting up a belated, one-man defence of the empire against the Americans on the one hand and his own prime minister, Churchill, on the other. (The president would recall six months later, quite accurately, that 'so far as Churchill himself was concerned, he had no interest in the Ottawa agreement . . . but that other members of the [British] cabinet adhered to that agreement and could not be persuaded that it should be scrapped.')

Churchill recorded two days later that he was not willing to upset Roosevelt by pressing the point. He drew attention to the significance that the United States, though 'still technically neutral,' was joining with a belligerent Power in making such a declaration. Beaverbrook found himself alone. He would not forget Churchill's negligence here at Placentia Bay.⁴²

The original intention had been for a formal signing of the Atlantic Charter.⁴³ In the event, neither Roosevelt nor Churchill did – they would both slink away from Newfoundland, leaving the document unsigned, with noth-

ing more than the character of a highfalutin communiqué. It remained a propaganda instrument.⁴⁴ In London Leo Amery sighed with relief when it was broadcast, finding the economic points to be in fact 'meaningless verbiage'; he hoped that the reference to 'having regard to existing obligations' might yet salvage something of the imperial dream. He did foresee, however, that Point Three, with its high-minded Churchillian guff about peoples choosing their own form of government, was likely to compound the empire's problems. 'We shall no doubt pay dearly in the end for all this fluffy flapdoodle,' wrote Amery in his private diary.⁴⁵

THE ABSENCE of any signatures was not made public for several years, but word did leak out. In December 1944 Roosevelt was challenged about it at a press conference: 'Mr President,' asked a journalist, 'did Churchill ever sign the Atlantic Charter?'

Roosevelt leaned back in his chair, caught perhaps off guard. 'Nobody,' he drawled, 'ever signed the Atlantic Charter.'

He ducked and sidestepped, but the question kept coming up.

'It's one of the things that was agreed to on board ship, and there was no formal document.' Pressed harder, he recalled 'a scribbled thing,' partly in his and partly in Churchill's and partly in Cadogan's handwriting that was sent off as a press release. 'That,' he said, 'is the Atlantic Charter.'

He tried to pass on to an anecdote, but the journalist persisted. 'Mr President, that statement that was issued [after the Atlantic meeting] to the press said it was a statement 'signed by yourself and by the British prime minister...'

'It isn't a formal document,' replied Roosevelt airily, 'and I don't know where it is now.' 'I was just trying,' said the newspaperman, 'to clarify whether that document actually had signatures on the bottom of it?'

'Oh,' said the president breezily, 'I think it's probable, in time, they will find some documents and signatures.' At this there was a ripple of laughter.

'The *spirit* is still there, Sir?'

Roosevelt dodged the question. Another journalist, a Mr Godwin, tried to rescue him: 'You stood for it, and you stand for it now?'

Again Roosevelt did not reply.⁴⁶

Four days later Churchill was asked by a Member of Parliament whether he would comment on Roosevelt's statements, which 'cast doubt on the genuineness of the Atlantic Charter.' He avoided direct answer. The *Daily Telegraph* summed it all up in one headline: 'THE ATLANTIC CHARTER WAS

NEVER SIGNED,' it said.⁴⁷ The document had become even more of an embarrassment to Churchill than to the president – he would tell Roosevelt's roving ambassador Patrick Hurley in April 1945 that Britain no longer stood by the charter's principles.⁴⁸

DRAFTED FOUR months before Pearl Harbor, proclaimed before Hitler's crippling reverses at the gates of Moscow, the Atlantic Charter was neither fish nor fowl. It even squibbed in Fleet-street – 'The joint British-American peace aims,' chortled Cecil King, 'were so vague that they were even attacked by the *Daily Sketch*!'

Like many such hasty instruments, it caused more headaches than it cured. There were painful ambiguities, perhaps designed to help Churchill to obscure from the Czech, Polish, and even German peoples what lay in store for them.

Point Two stipulated that there should be no transfer of territory without the consent of the population – yet the Allies would soon be planning to evict the Germans from East Prussia 'where they have lived for 600 years,' as an internal U.S. embassy memorandum pointed out in 1942. As for Point Three, about the right of all peoples to choose their form of government, the same memorandum remarked that the Allies proposed to allow the Czechs to reassert their questionable rule on the German Sudeten regions. And suppose the natives of Nigeria or East Africa or India should take to heart the other sovereign rights there spoken of, like the right to self-government?⁴⁹

Worse, suppose the Arabs believed that Churchill's Atlantic Charter entitled them to assert their lost sovereignty over Palestine? On August 20, 1941, the day after reporting to his cabinet on the Atlantic meeting, he was already worried enough by this latter thought to communicate it to the Zionist Leo Amery, the India Secretary; and one year later the fear still haunted him: 'Its proposed application to Asia and Africa requires much thought,' he would write to Roosevelt on August 9, 1942. 'Here,' he added, 'in the Middle East the Arabs might claim by majority they could expel the Jews from Palestine, or at any rate forbid all further immigration. I am wedded to the Zionist policy, of which I was one of the authors.'⁵⁰

By early 1943, his ministers would have devised their own shifty solutions. Eden would communicate to Churchill's secretary that Point Two, which committed Britain to heeding the wishes of the population, was only 'one factor' to be taken into account.⁵¹ His mind was necessarily already

displaying some of the devious ways of Napoleon the Pig, the character in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*.

THE BRITISH military staffs left Placentia Bay with the clear and disturbing impression that their American friends were *not* eager to fight any war in Europe. Their eyes were trained on the Pacific.

This held true particularly for the U.S. navy who thought, as Colonel Ian Jacob of the Defence Staff surmised in his diary, that it would suffice for Britain not to lose the war at sea. As for the American army they were beset with equipment shortages. 'Not a single American officer has shown the slightest keenness to be in the war on our side,' he recorded on the eleventh. 'They are a charming lot of individuals, but they appear to be living in a different world from ourselves. The war certainly seems very remote over here.' A week later he described the American navy and army unflatteringly as being like reluctant bathers – with the U.S. navy standing on the brink, dipping one toe at a time into shark-infested waters. 'Their ideas, however, have not got beyond how to avoid being bitten; they have not yet reached out to thoughts of how to get rid of the sharks.'⁵² In this respect he recognised that Roosevelt and his immediate entourage were far ahead of their military staffs – '[They] intend to keep pushing forward until the time comes when the Germans can no longer disregard American provocation.'

BY TWO-FIFTY P.M. on August 12, 1941 the whole event was over. Churchill took his staff onto *Augusta's* quarterdeck to bid farewell to Roosevelt. A band played the British anthem as Churchill and his staff walked down the American line of officers shaking hands. The notes pencilled by air-force General 'Hap' Arnold describe the scene as the visit ended. 'Flags and pennants flying from the *Prince of Wales*. Low hanging clouds cutting off view of shore. Fog forming – the *Prince of Wales*, with decks lined with sailors, pulls up anchor. Band playing Star Spangled Banner. Winston Churchill, Pound, Dill, and Freeman standing on afterdeck. The *Prince of Wales* steams out of the harbor.'⁵³

From the American ships floated once again the sweet brassy harmonies of the British anthem in reply. The ships slowly faded into the summer fog.

4: *Shall We Dance? asks Mr Churchill*

CHURCHILL RETURNED to London from the Atlantic Conference having failed in his primary aim – to secure a promise that Roosevelt would soon declare war on the Axis Powers. In return for empty assurances, he had compromised broad principles upon which the empire was founded, and his war was dragging Britain heavily into debt. Yet he refused to agree that these things were coming to pass. At one cabinet meeting in 1943 he would admit that he had spent forty years opposing imperial preference – ‘It had done,’ he maintained, ‘nothing but harm.’ He was indignant at those who wondered how Britain could survive. ‘He was furious with O. L. [Oliver Lyttelton],’ wrote one minister after that cabinet session, ‘who said that we were no longer a creditor-, but a debtor-nation. The P.M. vehemently denied that we should owe anybody anything at the end of the war. On the contrary, we should send in a bill to the whole world for having defended them.’¹

The Americans had already disclosed a predatory interest in Britain’s imperial possessions in 1937, when Roosevelt had ordered U.S. Marines to seize the mid-Pacific islands of Canton and Enderbury, in the Carolines; Pan American Airways needed a staging post, and the British had refused to oblige.² The British file on this incident was only recently unsealed.³

Churchill however made things easy for his American cousins. Scarcely had he become prime minister when he allowed Roosevelt (‘in a single gulp,’ as Adolph Berle of the state department disarmingly put it*) to establish bases throughout Britain’s western Atlantic possessions – bases for which the United States had no real need in history, as events (and the captured Nazi archives) subsequently showed. Churchill would propose al-

* See vol. i, page 400.

lowing Dublin, as a reward for coming into the war against Germany, to annex Ulster. At Placentia Bay he had conceded far more than even Roosevelt had expected on imperial preference.⁴

It was in his affronts to the Dominions that his scorn for the empire was most manifest. Constitutionally, their prime ministers were his equal in the eyes of their king and emperor. Yet he would keep them in ignorance of his plans, while using their troops and paraphernalia to advance them. He had informed only Jan Smuts in advance of de Gaulle's ill-fated attempted seizure of Dakar in 1940 – 'It is not necessary to tell all the others,' Churchill had notified 'Pug' Ismay. 'We cannot carry on the war if every secret operation has to be proclaimed to every Dominion.' The Australian prime minister Robert Menzies first learned of Dakar from the newspapers, and protested at this 'humiliating' treatment.⁵ Churchill held out strongly against Lord Cranborne's advice in January 1941 that the Dominions be represented in his cabinet: 'It would certainly not be possible,' he argued, 'to consult the Dominions . . . about any direct military operation, even where their own troops were liable to be engaged.'

Canada felt the humiliation even more deeply than Australia. Mackenzie King referred in his diary to Canadian government anger that Churchill and Roosevelt had 'decided to plan the war themselves' and ignore them.⁶ All this contrasted vividly with Churchill's childlike openness toward the American President, to whom he had already *deferred* in strategic matters like WILFRED, his 1940 plan to lay mines in Norwegian waters.

In England the Atlantic Charter had now been broadcast by Attlee. Eden described it contemptuously to his staff as a terribly woolly document, full of all the old clichés of the League of Nations period. The king was apprehensive, and wrote to his mother, Queen Mary, that he was uneasy at the parallels between this new document and the ill-famed Fourteen Points of President Wilson; to Margesson, the secretary for war, the king remarked on August 18 that the Americans had deserted Britain after the first World War, and might do so again if they did not come in now and 'feel the effects of war.'⁷ In short he too felt that Winston had conceded much at Placentia Bay, and received little or nothing in return.

CHURCHILL WAS back on the high seas, making his way back to England. One evening *Prince of Wales* passed at twenty-three knots through the centre of an England-bound convoy plodding eastwards from Halifax; to these seventy-two elderly, grey-painted tramps and freighters the prime minister

had a signal hoisted reading, 'Pleasant voyage, Churchill.' After a day spent being greeted by a cheering throng in Iceland – occupied by British troops in 1940, and now garrisoned by Americans as well – his party reached Thurso on August 18, 1941. His wife Clementine was waiting there, with members of his personal staff including Major Morton and Jock Colville.

Colville brought word of mounting impatience in Parliament with the P.M.'s methods. Harold Balfour would tell Halifax months later that Winston was 'a singularly unlovable man.' Churchill was uncomfortably aware from the Gallup polls that his only real power base was his exceptional popularity in the country, but that this was hardly reflected in Parliament. On that same day Beaverbrook was telling Lord Halifax in Washington: 'If anything were to happen to Winston, which heaven forbid, there might well be a great difference of opinion between the House of Commons and the country.' And Colville, while still aboard the train down from Thurso, would record that it was unfortunate that Winston was in danger of losing friends because of his impatient manner.⁸

Churchill tucked into lamb cutlets and bacon for breakfast before the train hauled into London through its grimy, impoverished northern suburbs the next day. At King's Cross the entire cabinet had assembled on the platform, though not entirely by choice – cabinet secretary Sir Edward Bridges had circulated a memorandum 'suggesting' that they greet their prime minister upon his arrival at eight-fifty A.M.⁹ The reception party had expected his coach to be near the engine, but it was not. As the Churchill coach, at the rear of the train, pulled up, the waiting journalists, cameramen, politicians, and diplomatists scrambled down the platform looking for the man to be greeted. 'Winston & party all looking very well & in great form,' rejoiced the loyal foreign secretary; he kept to himself how Chaplinesque the farcical scene had been.¹⁰

TOWARD MIDDAY the prime minister reported formally to his cabinet on the Placentia Bay meeting. He voiced his pleasure about the intimate contact which he had established with the president. 'On *his* showing at any rate,' wrote General Pownall, 'they had had most friendly talks.'

As for the high principles espoused in the charter, these were but short-lived. At this same cabinet Churchill formally approved the plans laid by Eden and Amery for the invasion of Iran, to secure the oilfields and the supply route to Russia, under the pretext of expelling the few hundred German 'technicians' there.¹¹ Talking it over with Eden that evening, Church-

ill expressed impatience with the 'slowness' of the generals in preparing this invasion: 'Winston anxious we should go in at once,' noted Eden, 'but I told him we must keep step with the Bear, whose strength will anyway be greater.'¹² 'The Bear' was Stalin, whose troops would invade Iran simultaneously from the north. It all smacked of the 1939 German-Soviet invasion of Poland – and Anthony Eden's staff cynically dubbed it their first act of 'naked aggression.' 'A. E. rather ashamed of himself,' wrote his secretary. 'So too is P.M.'¹³ Using words of unaccustomed directness, Churchill would write to his son admitting that the operation rather took 'a leaf out of the German book.' His excuse was no less lame for being couched in Latin – *inter arma silent leges* (once the guns speak, lawyers hold their tongue).¹⁴

After reporting to his cabinet on August 19, Churchill lunched at Buckingham Palace and gave the king a 'very full account' of his confabulations with the president. 'W. was greatly taken by him,' recorded the monarch, '& has come back feeling that he knows him. He had several talks with him alone, when W. put our position to him very bluntly: if by the Spring, Russia was down & out, & Germany was renewing her blitzkrieg [bombing] here, all our hopes of victory & help from U.S.A. would be dashed if America had not by then sent us masses of planes, etc., or had not entered the war. F.D.R. has got £3,000m to spend on us here.'¹⁵ As for the general situation, Churchill assured the king that the Battle of the Atlantic was 'much better,' and he predicted that Japan would remain quiet in the Far East.

NOT EVERYBODY was as contented as he. From Moscow came sounds of displeasure that the Atlantic Charter had been drafted without consulting the Soviet Government. Molotov would telegraph to Maisky about the growing feeling in the Kremlin that the two western leaders were using the Red Army as cannon-fodder.¹⁶

The Australians and the Canadians felt the same way about their own bruised contingents. Robert Menzies, the Australian prime minister, began agitating for an imperial cabinet, and he seemed bent on returning to London to convene it. South Africa opposed this as impracticable, but Smuts still sent a courtesy copy of his telegram to Ottawa for Mackenzie King.¹⁷

The Canadian prime minister was particularly offended. Although Churchill had eventually invited the Governor of Newfoundland to lunch in *Prince of Wales*, he had not extended an equal courtesy to the Dominion of Canada. Ottawa had learned of the meeting only fortuitously, on August 8, when intercepted messages indicated that Churchill and Roosevelt were

coming together the next day. 'It is all a very strange business,' recorded Mackenzie King, and he expressed his chagrin to both the Governor-General and the British High Commissioner. The Canadian prime minister was too well-mannered to make difficulties, but he took note that this latest episode was 'on all fours with what has thus far been done between Britain and the United States,' and it was moreover precisely what Adolf Hitler had warned him of when they had met in Berlin in June 1937.¹⁸

To soothe his ruffled feelings, an invitation went to him to visit England immediately. Mackenzie King made such prompt plans that Lord Beaverbrook had to 'phone him to persuade him not to arrive in Britain before Churchill did – because that would look as though he were slipping in 'through the back door.'¹⁹ Before leaving for England and Chequers the Canadian prime minister – surely one of the most enlightened characters in this darkening canvas of war – resolved to forswear all alcohol for the duration of this war. He took this stern resolve, he wrote a few weeks later, 'knowing how much sherry & wine was consumed there [at Chequers], and that Churchill would want me to drink with him, as he did.' He later told Roosevelt that Churchill indeed kept pressing him, again and again, to take a drink. It was amazing, agreed Roosevelt, rolling his eyes to the sky, what Churchill got away with.²⁰

CHURCHILL HAD returned invigorated from his Atlantic cruise, but back in England the old faces and routines and criticisms cast him down.²¹ The news from the Russian front was uninspiring. On August 21 the cabinet discussed the plans Lord Hankey had now laid for the destruction of Stalin's Caucasus oil wells before the Nazis overran them. Britain would have to compensate the Soviets, it was felt; but Churchill, informed that Soviet agriculture was wholly dependent on the oil of Baku, was loath to press Stalin. He told Ambassador Winant that he felt that Stalin himself must decide whether to destroy Baku. 'It would be a grim decision.'²²

Mackenzie King had now arrived in Britain, crossing the North Atlantic in a bomber aircraft. Churchill invited him to attend the next day's cabinet and take lunch with him afterwards.²³ There was still little joyous to report. From ULTRA it was clear that Rommel was packing reinforcements into Cyrenaica, yet General Auchinleck was refusing to bring forward CRUSADER, his November offensive. When Eden 'phoned, Churchill expressed himself very perturbed at that.²⁴ Eden told him that the Soviet ambassador had confirmed the date for invading Iran as the twenty-fifth. The wily President

Roosevelt now disowned all knowledge of the operation, although he had been informed in secret. Churchill again remarked uneasily to Eden that they were behaving just like Nazi Germany in 1940. Taken aback, since Winston had only just exhorted him to 'get on with it,' the foreign secretary retorted that how the world viewed their invasion of Iran would depend on how well they did the job, and 'that we knew [the] Shah was hand in glove with [the] Germans & now taking his orders from them, etc.' An hour later the prime minister 'phoned him again, and blurted out: 'You spoke very well this morning about Persia.' As though this made any difference, Eden confessed to his private diary that he hated the whole business – but they could hardly hold back until Hitler reached the Caucasus.²⁵



Before leaving on the afternoon of Friday August 22 for Chequers, where he intended to work on a broadcast to the nation, Churchill invited the newspaper editors to No. 10 Downing-street for one of his regular war briefings. He remarked on how impressed he had been with the way that President Roosevelt had triumphed over the paralysis which had wasted the whole of his body below his shoulders. On a larger scale, the Soviet resistance had also amazed him. He dropped a hint about the coming Anglo-Soviet invasion of Iran, but warned the newspapermen that for Britain to land troops anywhere in northern France would 'inevitably lead to a minor Dunkirk.' He was 'very anxious' that the United States should declare war, for its psychological effect – 'He would rather have America in [the war] and no American supplies for six months,' he reiterated, 'than double the present level . . . [with the United States] as a neutral.' He had concluded, he said, that this was 'a psychological war,' a race between the Germans persuading the Europeans to submit to their New Order, and the British convincing them of their ability to set them free.

While not revealing his source, the prime minister disclosed that Germany currently had thirty-nine submarines at sea – 'And,' he boasted, 'we know where each one is.' (The true figure, he had been told on July 2, was 125). 'I assume,' he continued, 'that Hitler does not want to risk a clash with Roosevelt until the Russians are out of the way.' As for the Japanese, he now ventured the prophecy, just as he had to the king, that they would bully and bluster, but not otherwise move. (Colonel Ian Jacob would note in December that the prime minister had not believed that the Japanese

intended to come into the war and therefore did not see the point of Roosevelt keeping large forces in the Pacific.²⁶)

‘Asked how he proposed to win the war,’ recorded editor Cecil King, ‘C. said he had no more idea than he had after two years of the last war.’²⁷

MACKENZIE KING was the honoured guest at Chequers that weekend.²⁸ By now one-fifth of the troops in the United Kingdom were Canadians, so it was important to humour him and repair damage done to feelings by the Roosevelt meeting. ‘We had been writing each other love-letters for some time,’ WSC apologised to Mackenzie King, explaining his furtive dealings with the president. ‘It was of the utmost importance that we should talk.’

Mackenzie King was different from any other statesman Churchill had met. Only a year younger, he had already served for sixteen years as his country’s prime minister. A quiet, unassuming figure, he was a Scriptures-toting, Bible-quoting, superstitious, and abstemious statesman, proud of Canada and fiercely protective of her constitutional rights.²⁹ When Churchill twice chose Québec for summit conferences, it would irk Mackenzie King to see him putting on airs as though he were ‘more honourable or worthy than those born in Canada itself.’³⁰ He was however easily reached by Churchill’s courtly manner – when Winston murmured ‘My dear old friend,’ Mackenzie King would blush furiously and dictate the words into his diary.

That diary record has only partially been published. The original record, partly transcribed by a secretary from daily dictation, partly written in a fine, cramped hand, reveals that this Canadian visitor was a mystic and a believer in the occult. He was careful to keep these proclivities to himself and to others of like disposition, notably Sir John Dill and Sir Hugh Dowding. He had frequent conversations with his dead wife Joan through a medium. Weird dreams and intricate visions troubled him. A few days before arriving at Chequers he had dictated: ‘Before waking had a curious vision of seeing a motor car driven I thought by Joan with a cord trailing behind and my hat at the end of the cord. Later when I was looking to see where it was I found it was on my head.’³¹ He could subsequently remember these visions with a rare clarity – like the wartime dreams in which he found himself telephoning Hitler for advice.³² Before reaching cabinet decisions he took counsel not only from the Holy Scriptures and what he called his ‘little books,’ evidently almanacs of mystic sayings, but from his mother and his dog as well, who were both dead; throughout his working day he ran

diagnostic checks on his decisions by glancing surreptitiously at any convenient clock: if the hands were open and in a straight line, that was a good omen; but if the big hand obscured the little, it was the reverse.*

'There were three times today,' this great and kindly Canadian would inscribe in his diary, visiting Churchill again in 1944, 'when I have looked at the clock and the hands have been in a straight line. This is a comfort in the midst of the confusion which surrounds one here.'³³

CHURCHILL WAS planning to broadcast from Chequers that Sunday, August 24. The blank pages of the unfinished radio script hung over his weekend. He intended it to be part report on Placentia Bay, part warning to Japan – the warning that Roosevelt had declined to utter. Talking with Mackenzie King he had tried out one motif. Britain had suffered one hundred thousand casualties, he said, and he did not want to 'place a greater burden on John Bull.' 'Without the United States,' he wanted to say, 'we cannot win this war. I would rather have the United States make a declaration of war tomorrow . . . than to have the declaration delayed and to continue to receive the assistance we are getting.'³⁴ The Canadian reassured him that Roosevelt and his colleagues, Stimson, Hull, and the secretary of the navy Colonel Frank Knox, all wanted war, but that Congress would surely stand in their way. The isolationist broadcasts of the hero-aviator Charles Lindbergh had not been without effect. Churchill admitted, perhaps a trifle enviously, that Lindbergh was a popular idol with a great following.

Churchill also outlined the use that he envisaged for the Canadian troops: to send them to the heat of the Middle East would be wrong, he suggested; so he was thinking of a raid on Norway to encourage the Russians. 'We may begin,' he said, unfurling a chart of Scandinavia, 'to roll down the map from the top. I feel we should give the Norwegians encouragement.' He warned however that it would be 1943 before they could attempt a proper invasion of Europe. 'Until the people themselves begin to rise,' he explained, 'it would be running far too great a risk.'

Later that day, surrounded by his friends, he mellowed, and talked expansively of politics and power. 'I am a Tory,' he insisted to the Canadian.

'I always thought you were rather Liberal minded,' replied the latter, mildly surprised.

* See vol. iii, in which we shall see Mackenzie King baffle Mr Churchill by refusing his plea for several thousand cases of Canadian whisky at Québec in August 1943, because it was 7:35 P.M.

‘Certainly Liberal minded, but Tory as regards Crown and Parliament. . . I hate autocracy. I am a servant of the people. There can be no prouder privilege than to be a servant of Parliament.’

Mackenzie King saw him that evening still labouring on the radio script. ‘I don’t believe,’ Winston remarked, looking up at one stage, ‘that the Japanese will fight the United States and Great Britain.’

Fountain pen clutched in one fist, he kept changing the wording but nothing looked right. He considered saying that if Japan attacked America, she would have war with Britain too. Australia, he explained to Mackenzie King, had approved this line – would Canada agree? The Canadian felt a pang of disquiet, said half-heartedly that he would concur, but pressed Winston whether this was what President Roosevelt really wanted them to say? The script still unfinished, Churchill invited his house guests to watch the newsreels of Placentia Bay – ‘A terrible exhibition of egotism,’ he confessed, seeing how large he bulked in the newsreel.

As he retired to bed Mackenzie King heard a distant gramophone wheezing *The Sailor’s Wife*, and a live and raucous chorus joining in below. Before he turned out the lights he glanced at the time: 1:33 A.M. The hands of the clock were wide open, in a straight line, which was a good thing.

AT CRACK of dawn on Sunday August 24, Churchill resumed his tinkering with the script. Here he replaced the bland particle ‘one’ with a hint of the God-stuff that he knew his American listeners would like, ‘Him’; there he elided the emotive word ‘war.’ If Japan now attacked the U.S.A., he proposed to say, they would find ‘Britain ranged at the side of the United States.’

Telegrams arrived from Washington reporting Roosevelt’s rather mild reproofs to the Japanese ambassador.³⁵ Mackenzie King had awakened with a start – it was a quarter to nine, and both clock hands were sinisterly entwined. He sat facing the empty fireplace in the Hawthth room, reading the revised script which Churchill had sent down to him. It was less belligerent, and he welcomed that. When Churchill appeared later that morning the Canadian advised him to omit one ponderous attempt at levity – he said that Placentia Bay had reminded him of Scotland, or of Iceland, but ‘not of Ireland.’ The Canadian reminded him of the risk of offending Irish opinion in North America. Still brooding on the Far East, Churchill assured him: ‘We shall soon have four more powerful ships out there.’

The ancient and inconvenient country mansion filled with guests for Sunday lunch – Lady Horatia Seymour; the Lords and Ladies Cranborne and Bessborough; a Rothschild and his wife; and an R.A.F. officer – these were among those who gathered at the well-endowed lunch table. Their conversation roamed around the world and its leaders – including Robert Menzies, about whom Churchill had little generous to say, and Charles de Gaulle, whom Lord Bessborough called a ‘male Joan of Arc.’ ‘He had better be careful,’ said someone, ‘not to be burned by the British.’

Mackenzie King did not join the guffaws. As brandies and liqueurs were served, he retired to his room, and found himself brooding that evening upon Churchill, and upon his own resolution not to touch alcohol.* As he had these thoughts the hands of his watch seemed to be applauding him – it was ten past eight, they were in a straight line.

TWENTY MINUTES later Winston Churchill delivered his broadcast, seated before a B.B.C. microphone installed in his upstairs study at Chequers. Mackenzie King joined the other guests to listen to it on the radio in the library downstairs, seated on sofas or perched on the arms of chairs in front of the crackling log fire (necessary in this bleak mansion even in summer). Beaverbrook had also arrived, looking crumpled after a bomber-ride back from Washington. Mackenzie King was particularly struck by Mary Churchill, ‘an exceedingly pretty girl with lovely sweet manners,’ kneeling on a cushion beside the radio. Unlike her siblings, she had been brought up by a

* They consumed on this weekend two bottles of champagne, one of port, a half bottle of brandy, one of white wine, one of sherry, and two of whisky. In file PREM.4/69/1 at the Public Record Office is a table of alcohol consumption at Chequers during 1941, from which this is an informative extract:

<i>Principal Guests</i>		<i>Champagne</i>	<i>Port</i>	<i>Brandy</i>	<i>White wine</i>	<i>Sherry</i>
Jul 18	Mr Hopkins & US party	3	2	1	2	2
Jul 27	Mr Winant & US party	2	1	½	1	1
Aug 22	Mr Mackenzie King, Capt Elliott Roosevelt	2	1	½	1	1
Sep 26	Mr Winant, Mr Hanson & party	½	½	Whisky	½	½
Oct 11	Mr Harriman & party	1	½	½	½	1
Oct 17	Burmese PM	¼	¼	1	¼	
<i>Total consumption since July 7, 1940:</i>		<i>47</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>23 35</i>

governess. Still a teenager, she spent her evenings in a helmet with London's anti-aircraft guns; but the enemy bombers now rarely ever appeared.

In his broadcast, Churchill spoke of the Americans, interspersing frequent references to the Scriptures, and he lauded the Red Army.

The Russian armies and all the peoples of the Russian Republic [he said] have rallied to the defence of their hearths and homes. For the first time Nazi blood has flowed in a fearful torrent. Certainly 1,500,000, perhaps two million of Nazi cannon-fodder have bit the dust on the endless plains of Russia.*The tremendous battle rages along nearly two thousand miles of front. The aggressor is startled, staggered. For the first time in his experience mass murder has become unprofitable.

He retaliates by the most frightful cruelties. As his armies advance, whole districts are being exterminated. Scores of thousands – literally scores of thousands – of executions in cold blood are being perpetrated by the German troops upon the Russian patriots who defend their native soil. . . . And this is but beginning. Famine and pestilence have yet to follow in the bloody ruts of Hitler's tanks.

CHURCHILL HAD just been shown a summary by 'C,' relating the murderous activities of Heinrich Himmler, the Reichsführer of the S.S., and his police units operating in the rear of the German armies.³⁶ According to this report by the codebreakers Himmler was 'taking an extremely active part in the campaign,' and had attached a special police force commanded by an S.S. lieutenant-general (*Gruppenführer*) to each sector of the front – Hans-Adolf Prützmann in the north, at Riga; Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski in the centre, and a third, as yet unidentified, at Lvov (Lemberg) in the south.

It was astonishing how much detail the British secret service had already garnered about these murderous activities – and no less remarkable, the ravenous interest that Churchill secretly took in the raw, unedited intercepts. The 'cleansing' operations had begun on July 14 with Bach-Zelewski's

* This was evidently Churchillian hyperbole. On August 16, 1941 Dr Goebbels privately recorded, 'I have now obtained more accurate [casualty] statistics. We had about 60,000 fatalities in the first six weeks.' (Two days later Hitler estimated to him that the Soviet killed totalled three million). On October 8 German records would show 564,727 killed and injured out of the 3,400,000 fighting men in Hitler's eastern armies (Joseph Goebbels diary, National Archives film T84, roll 267).

move into his forward headquarters at Baranowice. His signals to his units spoke of the 'special tasks' [*besondere Aufgaben*] ahead of them. 'This phrase,' recalled the experts at Bletchley Park grimly, 'last appeared in our decodes after the cleaning-up in Poland, when participants were told that they were strictly to hold their tongues as to what the *besondere Aufgaben* had been.' (One message intercepted on July 4, addressed to the authorities in Bialystok, Baranowicze, and Minsk had asked for the provision of movie-projectors, as these were needed to help the troops in view of their *besondere Aufgaben*).

By the time of Churchill's broadcast, the scope of these 'tasks' had become clear. On July 18 Bach-Zelewski's headquarters signalled that 1,153 'Jewish plunderers' had been shot at Slonim that day. On July 27 there had been a meeting at Lvov of the commanders of German police battalions, at which S.S. *Obergruppenführer* Friedrich Krüger ('who played a prominent part,' as Churchill's experts noted, 'in the cleaning-up operations after the Polish campaign') was present. On August 4 Bach-Zelewski informed Berlin that the S.S. *Reitbrigade* (Cavalry) had 'liquidated 3,274 partisans and Jewish Bolsheviks' near Lake Sprowskie. The commander of Police Battalion No. 316 reported that since the villagers of Pazyc had fired upon the returning battalion's first company, 'I ordered the entire male population of the place to be evacuated by this company.' There was no need to decode the euphemism. 'The operations of the S.S. *Reitbrigade* continue,' Bach-Zelewski was heard reporting on August 7. 'Up to today midday a further 3,600 have been executed, so that the total of executions carried out by the *Reitbrigade* up to now amounts to 7,819.' This brought total executions in his area to over 'the 30,000 mark,' he bragged.

'The tone of this message,' commented the experts, 'suggests that the word has gone out that a definite decrease in the total population of Russia would be welcomed in high quarters and that the leaders of the three sectors stand somewhat in competition with each other as to their "scores".'³⁷

These intercepts were all the product of their special German police section – codebreakers working exclusively on the S.S. and police cyphers. It is an unsung tale of British expertise and we make no apologies for singing it loudly here. Long before the war London's Metropolitan Police had quietly established the nucleus of this unit. It had spent the war's first months in France and lost its entire files in Hitler's invasion, but easily resumed operations in England in August 1940, since the German police had not changed their cyphers. Its experts had initially benefited from security lapses – for example, the telegrams were slavishly prefaced with the same ad-

dresses, e.g. ‘*An den Befehlshaber der Ordnungspolizei in Frankfurt am Main*,’ and there were other easy ‘cribs’ like the daily reports on the rise and fall of the Elbe, which in the words of the codebreakers’ secret history ‘made the cryptographer’s life a happy one.’ Eventually Berlin did crack down on the clumsier breaches of security, like messages which exceeded the 180-character maximum, and for Hitler’s operation BARBAROSSA, his invasion of Russia in June 1941, they had introduced a separate key and new frequencies; in August they introduced two sets of keys for each day, but nothing could deter the British codebreakers, and they were currently turning out between thirty and one hundred decodes every day.

Two days after Churchill’s broadcast a further German police report, this time from the Berdichev–Korosten area, was shown to Churchill, which mentioned that the Russians were still retiring and burning the villages. ‘Prisoners taken number forty-seven, Jews shot 1,246, losses nil.’ Churchill, who had like Hitler a voracious appetite for statistics, ringed that figure ‘1,246’ in his trademark red ink.³⁸ The next day S.S. *Gruppenführer* Friedrich Jeckeln, commanding in the Ukraine, signalled that his task force attached to Police Battalion No. 320 had shot 4,200 Jews near the town of Kamienets-Podolsk; four days later he announced the shooting of 2,200 more. On September 12, Churchill read these statistics too. The scale of these executions was, suggested Bletchley Park’s historian later, ‘a clear indication of the utter ruthlessness of the Germans in Russia.’³⁹

CHURCHILL’S ANGRY revelation of this slaughter, in his radio broadcast from Chequers, had one immediate consequence. On September 13 the radio monitors heard S.S. *Obergruppenführer* Kurt Daluege, Hitler’s top police general (‘alarmed perhaps by our evident awareness of the unspeakable activities of his police in Russia’⁴⁰) signalling this warning to the three *Höhere SS- und Polizeiführer* commanding police forces on the Northern, Central, and Southern Russian fronts: ‘The danger of decipherment by the enemy of wireless messages is great,’ this stated. ‘For this reason only such matters are to be transmitted by wireless as can be considered open.’ In future, information classified CONFIDENTIAL or SECRET could still go by radio, but ‘not information which, as containing State secrets, calls for especially secret treatment.’ ‘Into this category,’ ruled Daluege, ‘fall exact figures of executions.’ These execution-figures were to be sent by courier.⁴¹

Since it was the prime minister’s broadcast which had evidently resulted in this Nazi security clampdown, ‘C’ sent him a summary of this message

too. 'On September 13,' the Bletchley Park paraphrase read, 'the three officers were reminded that the danger of their messages being decoded was great. Among other secret matters that should not be sent by wireless was the number of executions carried out.'⁴² Churchill, unabashed by the consequence of his own security lapse, sidelined each sentence in red ink.

From now on the intercepted messages contained euphemisms like 'action according to the usage of war' under the heading which had formerly contained the figures for executions. Inevitably, the 'frontline' S.S. commanders still committed *bêtises*: on September 11, the S.S. police commander South reported that in an 'action according to the usage of war . . . Police-Regt. South liquidates 1,548 Jews.'⁴³ As Churchill's codebreakers reported, 'A touch of somewhat macabre humour emerges from the warning recently issued to Senior Officers that executions were not to be reported by W/T. The order has been variously interpreted – some report "Action according to the usages or war", while others report that so many partisans are "dead" – as distinct from "shot".'⁴⁴

BLETCHLEY PARK'S cryptanalysts were in little doubt as to the damage done by Churchill's *faux pas*. 'The anxiety [of Daluege],' their historian wrote, 'may have been increased by a speech by the prime minister drawing the attention of the world to this carnage.' The result, that summer of 1941, was that the German authorities had instituted a complete change of their police cypher: in mid-September they dropped the existing double-transposition code, a straightforward system which Bletchley Park had found relatively simple to break, and replaced it with one known to cognoscenti as 'Double-Playfair,' completing the changeover by November 1.⁴⁵

The result was not what the Nazis had intended. If their police cryptographers had only retained double-transposition, coupled with still further splitting-up of keys, said the experts, they would 'soon have put B.P. out of business.' As it was, Double-Playfair proved to be a readily breakable cypher, and scarcely a day passed when the British failed to do so. Whereas prior to the change only three of the 'Russian' police keys had been broken, subsequently only one had not. *Le mieux est souvent l'ennemi du bien*, as the experts commented with a chuckle: *better is often the enemy of good*.⁴⁶

Throughout the winter this police and S.S. radio traffic was one of the few sources of reliable Intelligence that Churchill had about the eastern front. For a while the Russians joined in, and from the spring of 1942 they provided high quality raw intercepts of the German police messages; in

return the British supplied decrypts and daily keys. This co-operation continued until the end of 1942 when relations finally broke down. In November 1942 the German police made another cypher change. By February 1943 however the British were again achieving four or five hundred German police-signal decodes a week, with five hundred experts working on them, including those at the 'Y' (radio monitoring) stations dedicated to this traffic. The task became easier in July 1944 when the German police flying squadron in Poland started sending in a standard daily report, providing another regular 'crib.' There were setbacks, like when the Germans introduced their new RASHER cypher on September 1, 1944; it was the best hand-cypher they ever devised – the time-lag before translation would then increase from twenty-four hours to a week or more, but still the keys were eventually broken by the unassuming wizards at Bletchley Park.

'The content of the messages was, naturally, of increasing interest,' their own unpublished secret history tells, 'and provides as a whole a singular picture of the last days of the Nazi regime and of its individual leaders.' For this reason they continued their decoding work long after victory in Europe.⁴⁷ We have however been lured far ahead of our own narrative, to which we now return.

Once or twice, delivering that broadcast from Chequers in August 1941, the P.M. had seemed to cough or choke. 'When the speech was over,' wrote Mackenzie King that night, 'no one said a word for some little time. We waited for Mr Churchill to speak. There seemed to be unanimity of feeling that it was the best broadcast he had made.' There was a ripple of applause as Churchill came downstairs. Mackenzie King stepped forward to congratulate him on the broadcast – particularly the bit about the hymn-singing on the quarterdeck. The prime minister replied that he knew the religious angle was one which particularly appealed to Americans. The Canadian took him literally. 'Churchill's nature,' he wrote in his diary, 'is deeply religious. It would be strange if it were not, with his love of truth, love, and justice, and his profound hatred of cruelty, barbarity, and wrong.' Over Sunday dinner Clementine remarked upon Winston's coughing during the broadcast, and predicted that the morning's post would bring bottles of syrup. To Mackenzie King the P.M. seemed 'like a boy out of school,' relieved that he had the dreaded broadcast behind him. 'Everyone at dinner seemed to be feeling deeply concerned about what he said over the radio. It seemed to bring home the awfulness of the war. There were several moments when there was a complete silence at the table.'

Now the radio was tuned to dance music; Winston began to perform a solo jig, and finally, enlivened by the spirits, he invited his Canadian guest to waltz around on tiptoe with him.⁴⁸ 'Whereupon,' wrote Mackenzie King, 'I joined him and the two of us took each other by the arm and performed a sort of dance together.' Everybody went into hysterics of laughter, except for Clementine, who shortly made her excuses and retired for the night.

By one A.M. Winston had also disappeared, without having said Goodnight to anyone.

How to inveigle the United States into his war? This was the question which kept him awake now. On Saturday evening Mackenzie King had asked him innocently about the future.

'I have no ambition,' growled the British P.M. in reply, 'beyond getting us through this mess. There is nothing that anyone could give me or that I could wish for. They cannot take away what I have done. As soon as the war is over I shall get out of public life.'

'You should write the story of the war,' volunteered his artless guest.

BRITISH EMPIRE and Soviet troops were invading Iran that Monday, August 25, 1941 as Churchill and his guests were chauffeured back to London.

He had arranged an afternoon cabinet, and expanded there on the prospects of luring the Americans further into the shark-infested oceans of war. The cabinet minutes of course survive, but they were no longer necessarily an accurate record of what had been said. 'I have repeatedly told you,' Churchill had written to Sir Edward Bridges, the cabinet's secretary, 'your records are far too lengthy.' Charging that they were 'a most imperfect and misleading record,' he had forbidden Bridges to furnish extracts to Menzies, the Australian prime minister. When Bridges, the perfect civil servant, proposed to print Churchill's comment too in the cabinet minutes, but worried lest this 'induce in future readers of these Minutes a greater degree of distrust than you would probably wish to convey – with resulting confusion in the minds of historians,' Churchill firmly instructed: 'Keep unprinted.'⁴⁹

Fortunately, Mackenzie King was a guest at the cabinet; his diary and those of Amery, Eden, Dalton, and many others provide important supplements to the often suspect cabinet minutes.⁵⁰

Beaverbrook warned his colleagues that the Americans were 'getting wobbly,' and he was quite outspoken on the need for Britain to take 'some dramatic action' to bring them in immediately; Churchill ought to address the recalcitrant Congress himself. That fired Churchill's imagination, and

he remarked that the American public was suffering all the inconveniences of war, the taxation and the shortages, without what he called its 'commanding stimuli.'⁵¹ It is worth noting that the prime minister argued, on this afternoon, that the best solution would be 'through an attack by Hitler on American ships.'

Mackenzie King remained sceptical. Neither Hitler nor the Americans wanted war with each other; Roosevelt had fought and won the 1940 election campaign on the assurance that he would keep out of the war. 'I do not think that the British should bank on the Americans coming in too quickly,' he observed. As for the Far East the Americans would be quite happy to see Britain start the fighting there – and it would still take some time there before the Americans would come in.

Later in this cabinet meeting, echoing his Sunday broadcast, Churchill remarked upon the brutality of the Germans, who were murdering tens of thousands of Russians behind their advancing armies. He declared himself pleased with the casualties they were taking. 'The P.M.,' wrote Hugh Dalton, 'thinks that the Russians are doing very well indeed, and jeers at all the experts who [said] it would all be over in a few days or weeks.'

On August 28 retreating Soviet troops would blow up the hydroelectric dam on the River Dniepr at Zaporozh'ye. Churchill cabled his admiration to Stalin about his 'splendid resistance,' and promised that forty Hurricane fighter planes were on route to Murmansk, in northern Russia, with the prospect of four hundred to follow. 'Hitler,' he furthermore promised, 'will not have a pleasant winter under our ever-increasing bombardment.'⁵²

The Führer however hardly noticed the current R.A.F. bombing operations. He told Goebbels that they 'did not particularly bother him.'

CHURCHILL NOW received from the Prof. a short letter which told him that if a particular scientific gamble came off, Britain would possess a weapon that would enable her to change history – the atomic bomb.

'I have frequently spoken to you,' Professor Lindemann wrote on August 27, 1941, 'about a super explosive making use of energy in the nucleus of the atom which is something like a million times greater, weight for weight, than the chemical energy used in ordinary explosives.' Britain, the United States – and, he warned, 'probably' Germany – had been working on this uranium explosive, and it looked as though such bombs might be produced within two years. 'If all goes well,' continued the Prof., 'it should be possible for one aeroplane to carry a somewhat elaborate bomb weigh-

ing about one ton which would explode with a violence equal to about 2,000 tons of T.N.T.' The Germans, he feared, had sufficient uranium in Czechoslovakia, and this was why Lord Cherwell felt that Britain too must proceed: 'It would be unforgivable,' he suggested, 'if we let the Germans develop a process ahead of us by means of which they could defeat us in war or reverse the verdict after they had been defeated.'⁵³

Churchill read the letter at Chequers, and replied: 'Although personally I am quite content with the existing explosives, I feel we must not stand in the path of improvement.'⁵⁴

Normally the chiefs of staff were slow to take up outlandish propositions, but on this occasion they swiftly wrote to the prime minister asking to speak with him about this most secret weapon ('as they think that the less put on paper . . . the better'). Meeting with him on September 3 they urged that no time, labour, material, nor money should be spared in pushing forward the bomb's development, and 'in this country and not abroad.' The necessary trials of this colossal bomb could be carried out on 'some lonely, uninhabited island' when the time came. Churchill asked Sir John Anderson, the highly capable Lord President of the Council, to take charge.⁵⁵ Although the Prof. put the odds on ultimate success as about ten to one, this was the kind of longshot that inspired the gambler in Winston.

The American scientists had begun a parallel effort under the overall direction of Dr Vannevar Bush of the Office of Scientific Research and Development. On October 11 Roosevelt would write to Churchill suggesting that they co-ordinate their two countries' efforts, and identifying a Mr Hovde in London who was empowered to answer all the British questions about the American effort.⁵⁶

This was the beginning of an important area of scientific co-operation and, later, of the bitterest of disputes between Britain and the United States.

THE DILATORY American attitude toward entering his war depressed Churchill. He had summoned Lord Halifax back from Washington for consultations about getting supplies from America; dining with him in the Edens' apartment at the foreign office, Halifax found Winston 'in very conversational shape.'

'He is,' he mused in his diary, 'the strangest creature I have ever met.'

Churchill discussed with him the recent pronouncements by Roosevelt designed to reassure his public that the U.S.A. was no closer to war. Through the American embassy he sent a worried telegram to Hopkins. 'I ought to

tell you,' this read, 'that there has been a wave of depression through cabinet and other informed circles here about [the] President's many assurances about no commitments and no closer to war, etc. . . If 1942 opens with Russia knocked out and Britain left again alone, all kinds of dangers may arise. I do not think Hitler will help in any way,' he continued, referring to the hope that the Germans might sink American warships. 'Tonight he has thirty U-boats in line from the eastern part of Iceland to northern tip of Ireland. We have lost 25,000 tons yesterday (27th) and to-day (28th) but he keeps clear of 26th Meridian. You will know best whether anything more can be done,' the P.M. concluded, perhaps even darkly hinting that the time had come to stage a *Lusitania*-type incident. 'Should be grateful if you could give me any sort of hope.'⁵⁷

Even though they displayed no perceptible readiness to enter the war, the Americans were already upping the political ante. Cordell Hull now wanted to issue a 'Declaration about Meaning of the Fourth Point of the Charter,' in which the two governments would make a 'forthright declaration' of their intention of reducing trade barriers and eliminating all 'preferences and discriminations.' Churchill himself did not care, but he asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Kingsley Wood, to arrange a meeting with Eden and other ministers to consider 'the political issues involved.' 'My own view is,' he minuted, 'that there can be no great future for the world without a vast breaking down of tariffs and other barriers.'⁵⁸ Gil Winant, the American ambassador, would bring the document down to Chequers that Sunday. Churchill asked only that the words 'preferences and discriminations' be altered to 'vexatious discriminations as part of a general scheme'; Winant then substituted 'harmful' for 'vexatious.'⁵⁹

Before leaving for the country that Friday, August 29, Churchill lunched alone at the Soviet embassy; Maisky inquired about Randolph and asked to be remembered to him – a wistful echo of their clandestine pre-war meetings.* Randolph Churchill however was out at Cairo, where he had transferred from the Commandos to the Information and Propaganda staff at Auchinleck's army headquarters. Winston wrote to him privately that day, mentioning Maisky's good wishes. There was much bad blood between father and son, and Randolph's domestic and gambling debts were still substantial, although Winston was chivalrous enough never to mention them to Pamela, Randolph's young wife.⁶⁰

* See vol. i, pages 51 and 92.

CLEMENTINE WAS missing from Chequers that weekend. The worry of her husband's transatlantic voyage had beset her so much that she retired to a local home to recuperate.

'We motored over to Chequers,' wrote Lord Halifax in his confidential diary on the thirtieth, 'for a late tea, and had some talk over it [Point Four] with Winston, who developed his views about the post-war Parliament and [the] problems of post-war Election. He discussed very freely the pros and cons of trying to get a common programme with Labour.'⁶¹ Seated over their tea cups in the Long Gallery, the aristocratic, lanky Lord Halifax spoke highly of the boys of Britain's lower-class secondary schools who now formed the backbone of the R.A.F. 'They have saved this country,' agreed Winston. 'They have the right to rule it.'

He was skewed much further to the left than History might now believe. He remarked 'with evident sincerity,' as Halifax recorded, that when the war ended he would be in a much stronger position than Lloyd George had been in 1918 – 'Older; able to make as much money as he might need by writing; and, after pulling the country through, with a very powerful position. But above all,' he concluded triumphantly, 'quite independent of popular favour or disfavour.'

After dinner, over several brandies, Churchill delivered yet another appeal to the American ambassador to realise how much hung upon his country's entering the war immediately. 'The P.M.,' recorded Jock Colville, 'said that after the joint declaration [the Atlantic Charter] America could not honourably stay out. She could not fight with mercenaries' – a reference to the number of American volunteers now serving with the British armed forces. If Roosevelt declared war now, Churchill continued, they might see victory as early as 1943; but if he did not, the war might drag on for years, leaving Britain undefeated but civilisation in ruins.⁶²

Winant had heard it all before, and knew he would hear it again.

5: *'We Did It Before – and We Can Do It Again!'*

ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS when Churchill had found himself momentarily cut off by the rising tide of military events – at the time of Dunkirk; when the Blitz began; and again when the empire's troops were being hounded out of Greece – his friends in the world Zionist movement had spoken to him. On their behalf, their leader Dr Chaim Weizmann had publicly declared war on Germany on the day that Hitler invaded Poland, and in 1942 he would announce that Jews through occupied Europe were the 'Trojan Horse' that would defeat the enemy.*

The Zionist desiderata, at this stage, were two: to persuade Britain, who had the thankless task of exercising the League of Nations mandate in Palestine, to allow more Jewish immigrants into that territory and to allow those immigrants to form a Jewish Fighting Force. This demand was stubbornly refused by Churchill – though less from any concern for the rights of the wretched, disenfranchised Palestinians than from a desire not to anger the empire's hundreds of millions of Moslem believers.

There were, as shown in our first volume, many honourable English men and women who supported the Zionists in their historic cause. What was remarkable was the zeal with which they continued to pursue this narrow aim at a time when the world as a whole was girding itself for war against the Axis powers. Until the spring of 1941 the alternatives which the Zionists had offered to Churchill had been more stick than carrot – for example the threat that they could foment further unrest throughout the Middle East. In September 1941 however they began to sing a more alluring melody, promising to use their influence in Washington to bring the United States into the war.

* We are indebted to the Weizmann Archives for providing copies of his papers.

'We did it before,' they said to Churchill. 'We can do it again.'

The British prime minister, to their enduring anger, continued however to dandle them along. He had no real alternative; he was beholden to public opinion, and nobody in authority could overlook the rising anti-Jewish sentiment in wartime England. There were few officers of his government who did not display in private some strains of this fashionable trait. The stereotype of the lazy, artful, racketeering Jew is to be found in many of their confidential writings, particularly those of Beaverbrook, Halifax, and Eden.¹ In part it was a cross-fertilisation from the Nazis' pernicious propaganda; but in part it was the independent perception of the native English, who had seen the penniless refugees arrive, with their cunning eastern European ways, and rise rapidly to affluence.

'The growth of antisemitism in Britain is partly . . . the result of Jewish refugees,' Robert Bruce Lockhart, the shrewd director of Britain's psychological warfare apparatus, would note, commenting on public reports of black-marketeering cases; and he would remark in one wartime diary entry on the large numbers of taxis 'filled with Jews' making for the horse races at Ascot.² In March 1941 it struck him that Lord Beaverbrook had inquired whether Air Vice-Marshal John Slessor was 'a Jew' or 'a defeatist.' In July Eden's secretary observed: 'The war hasn't made people more pro-Jew,' to which he added three weeks later: 'The Jews are their own worst enemy by their conduct in cornering foodstuffs and evacuating themselves to the best billets.'³ Newspaper proprietor Cecil King described finding himself sharing a first class rail-compartment from Euston in September 1941 ('in the third year of a war against Germany') with a German Jewess whose baggage tags showed her to be a Mrs Schumann, thus evidently married to 'one of her own kind.' 'She divided her attention between a couple of thrillers and a longhaired dachshund which she fed on chocolate.'⁴

The insidious trickling feed of this anti-Jewish sentiment had not escaped Churchill. It was regularly reported on by his Intelligence authorities, who carried out systematic checks on the mails to determine what His Majesty's subjects, and Churchill's electors, were thinking; this postal-censorship revealed much bitterness toward the Jews, on whom the public willingly blamed their material sufferings. 'Publish the names of the racketeers,' demanded one letter-writer. 'Only the Jews' shops have them,' cursed another, complaining of the shortage of one particular item, 'and, damn 'em, they will not serve anybody but their own people.' Such remarks proliferated in the letters. 'It's time they rationed the Jews, we could do with

less of them.' 'Our friend Churchill spoke well,' wrote one Londoner to Dublin after the prime minister's June 22 broadcast, 'but I wonder how the cash boys will react.' 'The curse of the country is the Yiddish control of finance,' wrote another Londoner. 'They exercise the control and unfortunately have no social responsibilities. Money first, and everything else also-ran.' True, the British people condemned Hitler for driving the Jews out, but only because 'they came here and damn them they control every jolly thing.'⁵ A year later the Home Office would comment that the growth of anti-Semitism was being reported from all over the country. 'One thing Hitler has done,' was one typical reported comment, 'is to put those damned Jews in their places.'⁶

THOSE ENGLISHMEN familiar with the Arabs, like Lyttelton in Cairo, were much impressed by the dignified bearing they maintained while Europe's warring tribes trampled across their soil. Churchill would have nothing of it; he seemed to have drawn his knowledge of Arabia from his friendship with the eccentric 'Aircraftman Shaw' – T. E. Lawrence – and he remained fatally prejudiced against them. The prime minister, Lyttelton would recall in his memoirs, 'with his strong Zionist inclinations,' felt that every British officer in the Middle East 'ended up being partisans of the Arabs.'

This did not make it easy for Churchill when the Zionists resumed their pressure on him early in 1941. He had recently appointed his wealthy friend Lord Moyne – one of his pre-war benefactors, and a member of the ill-starred Guinness brewery family – as colonial secretary. The Jewish Agency seized on this momentary hiatus to write on February 7 to the British prime minister direct. After apologising that it distressed him to 'have to add to your burdens at this moment,' a recurring theme in his letters to Churchill, Dr Weizmann appealed for immigration certificates for Palestine to be allocated to Jews who were in danger of being massacred in Romania. 'Even if the policy of the White Paper, 1939, is to be strictly adhered to,' he pleaded, 'there are still almost 40,000 certificates available.' He temptingly promised that many of these Romanians would enlist in the planned Jewish Fighting Force – which might in itself have seemed sufficient explanation for the Romanian fascists to want to eliminate them – but he also added an unmistakable threat. Britain faced two alternatives: either the stream of Jewish refugees could be peacefully canalised and allowed by the British into Palestine – or every boat-load would 'become a problem giving rise to painful incidents which we would all wish to avoid.'⁷

Nervous about making any negative response himself, Churchill detailed one of his secretaries to reply. Unable to make headway against the anti-Zionist sympathies at the Colonial and India Offices, on March 10 he privately advised Lord Moyne, 'I have always been most strongly in favour of making sure that the Jews have proper means of self-defence for their Colonies in Palestine. The more you can get done in this line,' he added vaguely, 'the safer we shall be.'⁸ Meanwhile he gave the Jewish Agency a humiliating run-around. When Weizmann appeared at No. 10 two days later Churchill told his secretary to say he could only spare a few minutes, and then fobbed off the world Zionist leader with unctuous platitudes.⁹ 'The prime minister said,' wrote Weizmann in a third-person memoir for his own files,

that there was no need for him to have a long conversation with Dr Weizmann: their thoughts were ninety-nine per cent the same. He was constantly thinking of them [the Zionists], and whenever he saw Dr Weizmann it gave him a twist in his heart. As regards the Jewish Force, he had had to postpone it, as he had had to postpone many things. He would however not let Dr Weizmann down; he would see the thing through.

Off the record, Churchill told him he was thinking of a settlement between Zionist and Arab leaders after the war. 'The man with whom you should come to an agreement,' he advised, 'is Ibn Saud' – the king of Saudi Arabia, felt Churchill, should be made lord of all the Arab countries. 'But he will have to agree with Weizmann with regards to Palestine.'¹⁰

Weizmann left later that March for an extended stay in the United States, where he spent four months. Upon his return he had listened to Churchill's broadcast from Chequers at the end of August, and was dismayed to hear no reference whatsoever to the Jews. 'Even the Luxembourgers were mentioned!' he protested, outraged, over lunch with Eden's secretary.¹¹ It was now that he hinted for the first time at the leverage that the American Jewish community could exert on President Roosevelt: the Jews were an influential lobby in Washington, he said; the secretary of the treasury, Henry H. Morgenthau Jr, was particularly keen for Britain to allow more Jews to settle in Palestine. '[The] President's entourage is very Jewish,' agreed Oliver Harvey. However, the Zionist leader could not get near Churchill; no appointment was listed on the P.M.'s engagement card for several weeks.

On September 10, 1941 Weizmann therefore wrote an outspoken letter to the prime minister in which he recalled how the Jews of the United

States had pulled their country into war before; he promised that they could do it again – provided that Britain toed the line over Palestine. Two years had passed since the Jewish Agency had offered the support of the Jews throughout the world – the Jewish 'declaration of war' on Germany; a whole year had passed, he added, since the P.M. had personally approved his offer to recruit Jews in Palestine for service in the Middle East or elsewhere.

For two years the Agency had met only humiliation. Ten thousand Palestinian Jews had fought in Libya, Abyssinia, Greece, Crete, and Syria, he claimed, but this was never mentioned. 'Tortured by Hitler as no nation has ever been in modern times,' Weizmann continued, 'and advertised by him as his foremost enemy, we are refused by those who fight him the chance of seeing our name and our flag appear among those arrayed against him.' Artfully associating anti-Zionists with the other enemies populating Churchill's mind, Weizmann assured him that he knew this was not of his doing – it was the work of those responsible for Munich and the 1939 White Paper on Palestine. 'We were sacrificed, in order to win over the Mufti of Jerusalem and his friends who were serving Hitler in the Middle East.'

Then Weizmann came to his real sales-pitch: 'There is only one big ethnic group [in the USA] which is willing to stand, to a man, for Great Britain, and a policy of "all-out aid" for her: the five million Jews. From Secretary Morgenthau, Governor [of New York State] Lehmann, Justice [Felix] Frankfurter, down to the simplest Jewish workman or trader, they are conscious of all that this struggle against Hitler implies.' British statesmen, he reminded Churchill, had often acknowledged that it was these Jews who had brought the United States into the war in 1917. 'They are keen to do it – and may do it – again.'¹² All that he and the Jews of the United States were asking for, therefore, was the formation now of a Jewish Fighting Force.

Two days after writing this letter, Weizmann and his friend David Ben-Gurion buttonholed Leopold Amery, the secretary of state for India (and a covert fellow-Jew). Amery, a half-Jew, was sympathetic to their cause, but advised that only the prime minister could help them. Winston would not help, retorted Weizmann: he had a bad conscience.¹³ He had a long talk that day with Eden too, who wrote afterwards in his diary the unfeeling reflection that there was 'nothing new' in this tale of woe – 'it is indeed two thousand years old.' Weizmann accused the foreign office of 'appeasing' the Arabs. He argued that the Jews made great fighters, why not recruit them instead of the Australians? Eden however noted laconically that the war office took a different view of their fighting qualities.¹⁴

CHURCHILL'S PRIMARY concern at this moment in September 1941 suddenly became not so much to entice Roosevelt into his war as to keep Stalin from dropping out; the Australian government was also proving awkward.

A late summer heatwave had begun, and his ministers had abandoned London for their country cottages. In Iran the Anglo-Soviet invasion had passed off smoothly, but there was still a German Legation in Teheran, causing Cadogan to write resignedly after attending the first defence committee meeting of the month that it was now 'quite plain that the prime minister was 'planning grandiose warfare' in Iran, and would even threaten to occupy their capital. Iran was soon solidly in British and Russian hands, and on the third Churchill spent several hours examining with his advisers ways of increasing the capacity of the country's railroads.¹⁵

That day, Cadogan found Churchill with Beaverbrook basking in the sunshine behind No. 10, wearing his rompers. He had decided to send Lord Beaverbrook out with Harriman later that month to see Stalin, to discuss aid and co-operation with the Soviets. To tickle Stalin's curiosity, Churchill asked Beaverbrook to pay a visit to his prisoner, Rudolf Hess, and talk to him about Hitler's further proposals for a separate peace and an Anglo-German alliance against Bolshevism; that would give Beaverbrook something to 'hold over the head of' the Russians.

Stalin however suddenly revealed that he was quite capable of making a separate peace with Hitler.¹⁶ Late on September 4, Maisky appeared unexpectedly at the foreign office and demanded to see Churchill at once for a formal meeting, with or without the foreign secretary present.¹⁷ Eden was summoned by 'phone from his cottage at Frensham. By ten P.M. they were all assembled at No. 10, and the Soviet ambassador handed over a long, angry telegram from Stalin. Throughout the ninety minutes that this disagreeable meeting lasted, Eden did not speak: he had conducted a bland, inconclusive conversation with Maisky a week earlier which may explain Stalin's surly tone.¹⁸ The telegram amounted to blackmail. Stalin warned of 'serious changes,' since the situation in the Ukraine had deteriorated. He had now lost the iron ore of Krivoi Rog and the aluminium plants on the Dniepr river and at Tikhvin; German armies were battering at the gates of Leningrad, birthplace of the Marxist revolution. Hitler had transferred thirty-four fresh divisions to his eastern front, recognising that the threat of British invasion in the west was only what Stalin called a 'bluff.'

The Soviet dictator demanded an immediate Second Front in the Balkans or in France, capable of drawing thirty or forty German divisions off the eastern front. He also asked for thirty thousand tons of aluminium and a monthly supply of four hundred planes and five hundred tanks from Allied factories. 'At this point [it is] permissible,' Stalin wrote, 'to raise the question, what is the way out of this highly critical situation?' The Soviet Union might have to give up the fight against Hitlerism. 'Experience,' he ended, 'has taught me to face realities however unpleasant they may be...'¹⁹

Tears welled up in Churchill's eyes as the little Soviet diplomat added terse verbal comments underlining the blackmail character of Stalin's telegram. 'This message,' Maisky described in a dispatch to Stalin, 'had visibly a strong, indeed emotional effect on the prime minister.' He rubbed it in: for eleven weeks Mother Russia had borne the brunt of three hundred enemy divisions. Hitler would triumph and the British empire would be doomed, because who could then stop the Wehrmacht from steamrolling on into Egypt and India? It was an unusual display of concern by the Soviets for the welfare of the empire.

'I said I was not one for high-sounding language,' continued Maisky in his dispatch, 'but I thought I had the right to say that this meeting with Churchill . . . might mark a turning-point in world history.'²⁰ The significance of the phrase *turning point* was not lost on Churchill, Eden, or Cadogan. All regarded it as an explicit Soviet threat to conclude a separate peace with Hitler (as Eden confirmed in cabinet the next day).²¹

IN HIS memoirs, Churchill would claim to have reminded Maisky that barely four months earlier it had seemed that Russia might fight against Britain on Hitler's side. 'Whatever happens,' he had said, 'and whatever you do, you of all people have no right to make reproaches to us.'²² This sturdy note is not evident from the Russian record. 'He swore,' reported Maisky, 'that he was prepared to sacrifice fifty thousand British lives if he could draw at least twenty divisions off our front.' This more than generous offer is also mentioned in Eden's report to Cripps. The prime minister reiterated however that his chiefs of staff were unanimous that to attempt a cross-Channel attack on France now would be suicidal. As for the Balkans, the British had neither the forces nor the weapons – it had taken them seven weeks to disembark three to five divisions in Greece in the spring, he pointed out.

Maisky's argument was one of despair. 'I retorted,' he wrote, 'that in 1914 [General Aleksandr Vasilievich] Samsonov's army was not prepared to

attack East Prussia. But attack he did: he suffered a defeat, but he saved Paris, and the war. In war,' Maisky argued, 'one cannot always make cool calculations like an accountant.'

As for supplies to Russia, Churchill could offer equally little cheer. 'I do not want to mislead you,' he said, echoing his words of July. 'We cannot offer you any real help before winter.' 'I hate to say it,' he added. 'But there is at the moment unfortunately nothing else I can say.'

Afterwards Churchill discussed the situation with Eden and with Dill, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff. 'I argued all I could,' recorded Eden, 'for landing in France. The case against it is very strong, above all German air strength if Portal has it estimated right, but I thought one could not accept [a] negative answer just now without every examination, amateur as well as professional.' Churchill agreed with him, and ordered a further examination of such an operation at a defence committee meeting. 'I have not much hope we shall find anything,' wrote Eden, 'but we three agreed real help in supplies must be sent.'²³

ON THE next morning, September 5, Churchill had planned to set off early to inspect the fortifications at Dover with Mackenzie King, but the undertones in Maisky's voice had shocked him; he ducked out of the outing and invited Maisky to state his case to the chiefs of staff instead. 'Neither side shaken in their positions,' wrote Eden after the meeting, 'tho' I think Maisky has clearer perception of our weakness & limitations at finish.'²⁴ Churchill repeated Stalin's telegram in a dispatch to Roosevelt, warning here too: 'We could not exclude the impression that they [the Soviets] might be thinking of separate terms.'²⁵ He had matured since the frantic French spring of 1940, when similar appeals from Paul Reynaud had persuaded him to make promises of aid he could not fulfil. Cadogan privately considered that Stalin was laying it on 'a bit thick,' since Britain's secret sources provided no real evidence of any imminent Soviet collapse. The cabinet easily decided that Britain could not mount a diversionary cross-Channel assault. As for supplying aid, Beaverbrook felt that the foreign secretary should travel to Moscow at once. Eden – by nature a wandering diplomat – was eager to depart, but on balance his colleagues decided that he should stay.

Returning from Dover that evening, Mackenzie King found Eden sitting with Winston in the garden of No. 10, balloons of brandy at hand, hazily deliberating on what to do.²⁶ Churchill had planned to weekend at Dytchley Park in Oxfordshire, but fresh telegrams arrived from Moscow that Friday

evening. One reported, to Churchill's vexation, that Ambassador Cripps was packing his bags and planning to return home at once.²⁷ Churchill ordered him to stay put, however close the Germans were to Moscow, and began drafting honeyed words to soothe the Soviet leader. While he snoozed, Beaverbrook and Dill hacked away at his draft, then deputed Eden to see him with their suggestions. 'He had only just finished his sleep,' Eden found, '& was explosive about them at first.' Summoning Maisky, the prime minister first spoke to him bluntly about the problems being caused by the increasing Soviet agitation in Britain for a Second Front. He now knew from his 'secret sources' that the Comintern had issued orders to its underground followers in Britain to foment discontent over her inadequate support for the Soviet Union in order, he suspected, to overthrow his government when the time came.²⁸

Maisky looked pleased with the draft response.²⁹ In this telegram, which would be dispatched to Moscow at midnight, Churchill insisted that the information at his disposal (he was not, of course, more specific) persuaded him that the 'culminating violence' of Hitler's onslaught was over, and that winter would bring the Soviet armies a respite. He undertook to supply one half of the tanks and planes demanded by Stalin – Roosevelt would have to make up the balance. 'Meanwhile,' he added, 'We shall continue to batter Germany from the air with increasing severity and to keep the seas open and ourselves alive.'³⁰ Telegraphing separately to Cripps, Churchill repeated his own willingness to raid France, 'even at the heaviest cost.' He added however: 'All our generals are convinced that a bloody repulse is all that would be sustained.'³¹

Relieved at having got these messages off, the prime minister invited Beaverbrook and Eden to the Ritz. They dined on oysters and partridge, with the P.M. at the top of his form, and revelling in talk about events long past.

Winston said [recorded Eden in his handwritten diary] that he would like best to have F. E. [Smith, later Lord Birkenhead] back to help him. Not F. E. of last sodden years, but F. E. of about '14 or '15. Next he would like A. J. B. [Balfour]. Max [Beaverbrook] told Winston that if he had played his cards well when he was at Admiralty early in last war, especially with Tory party, he could have been P.M. instead of George. Winston agreed. He described as toughest moment of his life when he learnt that George did not propose even to include him in his cabinet.

Beaverbrook added that by the same token Eden could have replaced Chamberlain as prime minister in 1938. 'I thought,' noted Eden, 'as I listened to Max & Winston revelling at every move in these old games and even Winston, for all his greatness, so regarding it all, that I truly hate the "game" of politics – not because I am better than these, God forbid, but because I lack the "spunk".' He enjoyed his evening thoroughly all the same, despite the lowering clouds of war.³²

They worked until nearly three A.M. 'I feel the world vibrant again,' Churchill said to John Martin, his secretary.³³



On the drive over to Oxfordshire the next morning – Saturday, September 6, 1941 – Churchill called in at Bletchley Park to see the codebreakers at work.³⁴ Under conditions of maximum security, two thousand specialists were now staffing this extraordinary institution and enjoying dramatic successes despite shortages of clerical labour and equipment.³⁵ Churchill must also have called at Lavendon Manor nearby, where the Diplomatic Section was working on American, Hebrew, Spanish, Italian, Russian, Vichy-French, German, Japanese, and other diplomatic cyphers, because Cadogan's diary refers to Churchill and Eden 'both happen[ing] to see an intercept which makes it look as if we might get [the] Germans out of Afghanistan.'³⁶ One section was even working on American cypher messages, and Commander Alastair Denniston, their chief, would recommend that ('in view of ultimate peace negotiations') they keep abreast of Washington's code changes, despite the current superficially 'intimate' relations.³⁷

On Churchill's insistence, 'C' was forwarding this Oracle's whisperings to Stalin, though in a heavily disguised form, through their military mission in Moscow. In June the experts at Bletchley had begun sporadically breaking a cypher which they called *VULTURE*, used between the German Army High Command (O.K.H.) and its field commands.³⁸ On August 26 this revealed that Hitler was about to turn his armies against Kiev; the Russians were warned, but all the Intelligence in the world could not help them avoid disaster. On September 9 the codebreakers sent to Churchill the outline of Hitler's plan to destroy three Soviet armies on the central eastern front. On the twentieth Bletchley Park would provide warning that the Germans' offensive against Moscow was to begin on October 2. Worried perhaps by his recent assurances to Stalin that the 'culminating violence' of

Hitler's eastern offensive was over, Churchill would instruct 'C': 'Show me the last five messages you have sent out to our missions on the subject.' Colonel Menzies had sent nine such messages between September 20 and 24, but Churchill still pressed him: 'Has any of this been passed to Joe?'³⁹

At that time, with Churchill's encouragement, G.C. & C.S. was the leading codebreaking organisation in the world, mounting a far more serious attack than the United States, where General Marshall had so far assigned less than two hundred men to the task. The codebreakers of Bletchley Park knew that they could count on Churchill however. Late in October he received a letter from four of them, who had decided, at a secret meeting at a local public house, that only he could provide them with urgently needed clerical manpower. 'Dear prime minister,' their appeal began,

some weeks ago you paid us the honour of a visit, and we believe that you regard our work as important. You will have seen that, thanks largely to the energy and foresight of Commander [Edward] Travis [their station chief] we have been well supplied with the '*bombes*' [special mechanical computing machines] for the breaking of the German ENIGMA codes. We think, however, that you ought to know that all this work is being held up, and in some cases is not being done at all, principally because we cannot get sufficient staff to deal with it. . . We despair of any early improvement without your intervention.⁴⁰

Stewart Milner-Barry, one of their number, brought the letter up to Downing-street in person. He found his path blocked by George Harvie-Watt, Winston's new parliamentary private secretary, who undertook to hand the letter to the P.M. unopened. Churchill responded vigorously. On the twenty-second he sent one of his familiar squares of notepaper, with a menacing blood-red ACTION THIS DAY label gummed onto it, winging through 'Pug' Ismay's office to 'C': 'Make sure,' this said, 'they have all they want on extreme priority and report to me that this has been done.'

AFTER THAT VISIT to his secret Oracle on Saturday, September 6, Churchill spent the weekend at Dytchley Park with the film actor David Niven – to whom, like Leslie Howard (born László Horváth), a minor rôle had been given in Britain's espionage services – among the house-guests. Since the chief of air staff and Niven both had their young and attractive wives with them, Churchill returned to London invigorated on Monday.⁴¹

He found a woeful telegram from Cripps. The ambassador had gone over to the Kremlin late on Saturday with Churchill's reply. He had found Stalin depressed and tired. 'There was some return to the old attitude of suspicion and distrust.' Asked if Russia could hold on until the spring, if given the supplies, the Soviet leader had responded with evasions: 'One cannot see what the Germans will do, as they are acting entirely without . . . regard for the West.' If Russia now lost the Donetz industrial basin, he warned, and the Germans captured Moscow and Leningrad – 'And,' Stalin warned, 'this might happen' – the Soviet Union would then have to withdraw its forces behind a defensive line along the River Volga.⁴²

ON THE GREAT island-continent of Australia all faith in Britain's war leadership had collapsed. Robert Menzies had resigned as prime minister on August 28. Churchill was crushed by the step which the incoming prime minister Arthur Fadden now took, uneasy about the wastage of Australian troops in North Africa. Fadden asked for the Australian division to be returned home – it was to be pulled out of the Libyan coastal fortress of Tobruk, beleaguered since April by Rommel's Afrika Korps. For two weeks Churchill tried to persuade the Australians not to 'quit the line,' as he put it. On Saturday September 6 he sent Auchinleck this telegram from Chequers:

I am pretty sure the Australians will play the game if the facts are put before them squarely. . . . Australia would not tolerate anything shabby.⁴³

He set before Fadden the grave consequences of insisting on pulling the Australian contingent out. Auchinleck, he said, even had plans for the Australians to make another 'sortie' from the fortress. Fadden was unimpressed. Forced to comply, Churchill growled angrily that he found himself 'at war with almost every country, including Australia.'⁴⁴ 'I have long feared,' he wrote in a hectoring telegram to Auchinleck, 'the dangerous reactions on Australian and world opinion of our seeming to fight all battles in the Middle East only with Dominion troops.'⁴⁵

It knocked all the weekend joy out of Churchill. Delivering his war review to Parliament on Tuesday he stood there, as one member described, stroking the palms of his hands down across his stout, black frame – 'beginning by patting his chest, then smoothing his stomach, and ending down at the groin.' He did not venture any oratory of his own, but recited lines by Rudyard Kipling with such emotion that he choked and could not go on.⁴⁶

He was an accomplished actor, and knew the knack of winning any audience. During one otherwise uneventful cabinet meeting two days later, Lord Woolton outlined his ministry's scheme to ration all tinned foods. The assembled ministers, more than one of them accustomed to oysters and partridge at the Ritz, uttered the appropriate lamentations; the prime minister however rose above their hypocrisy, murmuring more than once during the rest of the deliberations: 'I shall never see another sardine!'

THAT SAME day there was one small glimmer of hope from the west. President Roosevelt announced that any German or Italian warships venturing into waters deemed necessary for America's defence would 'do so at their own peril' – he had ordered his forces to 'shoot first.' Churchill gleefully informed the war cabinet that the U.S. navy would take over active convoy escort duties west of the 26° Meridian. 'The president's disposition,' he remarked, 'will almost certainly lead to a conflict with German U-boats and result in a rise in tempers!'⁴⁷ 'Hitler will have to choose,' he triumphed to Smuts three days later, 'between losing the Battle of the Atlantic or coming into frequent collision with United States ships and warships. . . The American public,' he continued, clearly approving of Roosevelt's deceit, 'have accepted the "shoot at sight" declaration without knowing the vast area to which it is to be applied.'⁴⁸

On September 15 there was better news from Stalin. Maisky asked if he could bring the telegram round to No. 10. Churchill fixed an appointment at six-thirty P.M., and agreed to let Eden attend, then mischievously brought the interview forward to four-thirty, no doubt to prevent Eden getting there in time.⁴⁹ In the telegram Stalin made the extraordinary suggestion that the British inject twenty-five divisions into the southern Russian front via Archangel (in the far north) or via Iran. It was patently absurd – Britain could neither have raised nor spared nor transported such an expedition. Maisky's avowed purpose however was to get Britain to commit a token force to Russia, just as to France in 1914. 'I recollect,' boasted Maisky to Stalin, 'Lloyd-George once telling me that before the 1914 war the French ambassador to London, Monsieur Cambon, had urged that in the event of war between France and Germany the British move at least a small armed unit to the Continent: . . . "A few squadrons will inevitably draw regiments, divisions, and corps after them." "And do you know what?" concluded Lloyd-George. "This is just what happened. . . We ended up with seventy divisions or more under arms [in France]."'

Unwilling to give Stalin any excuse to make peace with Germany, Churchill cordially agreed – in principle. ‘He even considers,’ Maisky reported to Moscow that night, ‘that it would be an honour for Britain.’

The P.M. did mention that he would of course have to consult the chiefs of staff, and this was a ploy, Maisky admitted, which did ‘sow doubts in my mind’; he feared that the chiefs of staff would quash the proposal – ‘The mountain will bring forth a molehill.’⁵⁰ His proposal was that Churchill divert forces from the Middle East and Britain to Russia.

The P.M. explained that he was planning an offensive in Libya, and he would also have to consult the Dominions – as though this consideration had weighed with him before. He also pondered whether British troops, who would be better suited to fight in the temperate Ukraine and Caucasus, would actually be able to get down there from the North Russian ports. ‘Churchill suddenly remembered Norway,’ reported Maisky. ‘Perhaps it might be better for the British to strike jointly with us in that direction?’⁵¹ The prime minister promised to put these projects to his war cabinet, but advised Maisky not to raise Moscow’s hopes. ‘Sad though it is to admit,’ said Churchill, ‘in the next six weeks – which will probably be difficult weeks for you – we shall be unable to assist you in any practical way.’ He did however offer to the Soviet Union any German warships surviving at the end of the war. ‘He is also partly prepared,’ reported Maisky, ‘to compensate for our naval losses with *British* warships.’ ‘I believe in Comrade Stalin,’ Churchill had assured him. ‘Firstly, because our interests coincide. . . Secondly, because the Soviet Union has always kept its word.’

AVERELL HARRIMAN, who was to head the American half of Beaverbrook’s supply mission to Moscow, arrived at Hendon airfield on September 15. Churchill sent Beaverbrook to meet him and invited Harriman round for dinner that evening. He was once again impressed by this tall, angular, fifty-year-old American millionaire and his diplomatic and strategic ability.⁵²

The talks in London revealed the extent to which any aid for Russia would be delivered at Britain’s expense. Because of this, and Washington’s recent decision to strengthen American aircraft strength in the Pacific, Britain would by the middle of 1942 receive 1,800 fewer American aeroplanes than expected, quite apart from the 1,800 British fighter planes which Churchill had undertaken to send to Russia. The chiefs of staff begged Beaverbrook to draw this shortfall to the P.M.’s attention – the effect on the strategic air offensive against Germany would be ‘particularly grave.’⁵³

Churchill's attitude was however that any sacrifice was worthwhile if it helped to keep Russia in the war.⁵⁴

On September 19 Churchill hosted a luncheon at No. 10 for the Soviet embassy to meet the Beaverbrook–Harriman mission. They ate in a big upstairs room with empty walls and broken window frames. Facing him, the American military attaché Brigadier Lee was impressed once again by Churchill's pink, rubicund features. 'He rose,' recorded Lee, 'and with his immense command of the appropriate word made a very moving speech.' He compared their supply mission to Moscow with a lifeboat bringing succour to the Russians. He offered a toast to 'The Common Cause,' and when he looked around the table his bright blue eyes were brimming with tears.⁵⁵

The notion of sacrificing Britain's tanks and planes, not to mention American Lend–Lease supplies, to a possibly already mortally injured Soviet Union met with strong opposition. At six p.m. the defence committee examined the question. Only Churchill, Beaverbrook, and Eden argued in favour. The chiefs of staff felt that Britain's own needs must be paramount.

IN THE past, Beaverbrook had often found it advanced his own cause to disagree with Churchill's policies. An awkward and uncompromising minister, still instinctively seeking ways of toppling Churchill while proclaiming to others that they were old friends, Beaverbrook now argued before the defence committee that the Soviets had earned the moral right to annex the Baltic States and Finland permanently. (Churchill had often spoken warmly of the latter country: 'Only Finland,' he had said in January 1940 after the Russians attacked her, 'superb – nay, sublime – in the jaws of peril, shows what free men can do.') Lord Beaverbrook had also circulated a report on his talk with Harriman; Beaverbrook was scathing about the production methods he had just witnessed in the United States and spoke about the 'failure' of their programme. Churchill snarled at him for using disparaging language, and ordered the word amended to 'retardation.' Roosevelt, he said, had just telegraphed to him that he hoped to increase American tank output to fourteen hundred a month by May 1942.

Since many of these would now go to Russia, the British army would still be receiving sixteen hundred fewer than expected between now and June 1942.

The defence committee elaborated a 'directive' to guide Beaverbrook for his Moscow talks. This empowered him to hold out to Moscow a 'justifiable hope' that Britain would be able to supply more war goods in future.

Britain had however no intention, Churchill instructed him to make plain, of landing in France in 1942, let alone with twenty or thirty divisions.

In vain Beaverbrook tried to obtain agreement on what specific supplies he might offer to the Russians; unless he could name binding and indeed colossal figures, he believed that the Russians would give up the struggle. 'We can greatly increase our present production if we try,' he insisted.

Churchill disagreed. 'It would be unwise to be too specific, knowing as we do that the war may easily swing back in our direction at any time.'

EVEN SO, a heated argument raged. Harold Balfour, one of the ministers present, described how by seven-thirty the atmosphere of reason and logic had been replaced by assertion, denial, and exhortation. 'Churchill's shoulders became more hunched,' recalled Balfour. 'A scowl on his brow deepened. His interjections were more frequent and impatient.' Finally he adopted the tactics of the Papal Conclave. He rubbed out the last appointment on his desk calendar and announced that they would stay there all night if need be until they agreed (meaning, of course, with him).⁵⁶

They adjourned for dinner. When they reassembled wearily at ten-thirty he was beaming, and had changed into his blue rompers, his 'siren suit.' He led Balfour into the anteroom where a new imitation Queen Anne cabinet still stood, inscribed, 'A Tribute of Admiration from the President and People of Cuba.' The Cuban envoy had brought it as a gift for him that same afternoon – packed with bundles of long Havana cigars. Churchill extracted a bundle of the cigars, and offered them around the table. 'It may well be,' he announced, enjoying each word he spoke, 'that these each contain some deadly poison. It may well be that within days I shall follow sadly the long line of your coffins up the aisle of Westminster Abbey – reviled by the populace as the man who has out-borgia'd Borgia!'

The stated perils were willingly ignored, because – for his guests and the general public at least – such cigars were a rarity in 1941. Within half an hour they had all reached agreement.

A few days later the Prof. told Winston that there was a large Nazi contingent in Cuba; the Prof. arranged for one cigar from each bundle to be sent to Lord Rothschild, of the secret service, for forensic analysis; or so he said. Sir William Stephenson's little 'sideshows' had their uses.

6: *Carry a Big Stick*

WITH ONLY THE most superficial knowledge of Japan and the Japanese, which he had derived from newspapers, caricatures, and occasional meetings with Oriental personalities, Churchill saw them in simple stereotypes.¹ In the nineteenth century, he learned, the Japanese army had been instructed by the Germans, and the Japanese navy by the British, to which he attributed the inevitable consequences that the former was arrogant, nationalist, adventurous, and predatory, while the latter was cautious, moderate, far-seeing, conservative, and restraining.

Since 1931 Japan had been at war, one way and another, with China. While harbouring nothing of the sentimental attachment to the Chinese that pervaded the United States, Churchill still inclined toward them on the principle that they were the enemies of the enemies of his friends. Japan pursued a more active diplomacy, having joined the anti-Comintern pact with Germany in 1936. After France's collapse, Japan had prevailed upon Marshal Pétain's government to allow her the trusteeship of the French colonies in the Far East until the war was over. Thus the orphaned Dutch colonies of the East Indies – oil-rich Borneo and rubber-fertile Java – came under Japan's hostile glare as well. Weak though Britain was in 1940, Japan had however made no move against her imperial possessions. Her prime minister was the moderate aristocrat Prince Fumimaro Konoye, and under his stewardship, the fiercer hotheads of the Japanese military were restrained. Even after Japan signed the Tripartite Alliance with Nazi Germany in September 1940 Konoye had opened negotiations with the United States in the spring of 1941 in an attempt to resolve outstanding differences.

Preoccupied elsewhere, Churchill attended to all this with only half an ear. 'I confess,' he would later write, 'that in my mind the whole Japanese menace lay in a sinister twilight, compared with our other needs.'²

THUS INITIALLY he had discounted the threat to British imperial possessions in the Far East like Malaya and to Australia, and he continued to do so far into 1941. 'The N.I.D. [Naval Intelligence Division],' he admonished A. V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty, in September 1940, 'are very much inclined to exaggerate the Japanese strength and efficiency.'³ He explained to the chiefs of staff that he was unwilling to allow the 7th Australian Division to go to Malaya: he did not share their fears for the safety of the empire's great base at Singapore. 'The Japanese,' the minutes recorded his opinion, 'were unlikely to attack Singapore which was 2,000 miles from [their] home, with the fear of the American fleet on one flank, and of being cut off by the arrival of the British fleet before they could reduce the fortress.'⁴

At the time of the Japanese 'war scare' in February 1941* the foreign office had furnished to Churchill a sheaf of intercepted 'Japanese conversations on the present situation' – probably conversations conducted within the Japanese embassy – and he felt that both these and an earlier such sheaf had the 'air of being true' and suggested to him that the danger had passed. 'Altogether I must feel considerably reassured,' he had written at that time to Cadogan. 'I have always been doubtful they [the Japanese] would face it.' For a while there was a sudden hiatus in these intercepted Japanese 'conversations,' but Churchill had sent a telegram to Roosevelt reassuring him that he did not think the Japanese navy likely to send the 'large military expedition necessary to lay siege to Singapore.'⁵ Consequently, when the American codebreakers advised at the end of March 1941 that both Grand Admiral Erich Raeder and Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring, the commanders-in-chief of Hitler's navy and air force, were urging the Japanese to strike at Singapore, little was done to reinforce the naval base there.⁶

Churchill's information on Japan's intentions came not only from electronic Intelligence but from Britain's diplomatic agencies. Britain was represented in Tokyo by Sir Robert Craigie – a gifted, realistic, and patient negotiator, but also a wounding and well-informed critic of Churchill's strategies. His final report on his four years in Tokyo would be circulated in 1943, after his return from Japanese internment, only against the most trenchant opposition of Churchill, since it portrayed the Japanese government as the virtually innocent victims of an American imperialism to which the prime minister had granted a free hand in the hope of inveigling the United States into a war with Japan.⁷ Craigie felt throughout the suspense-

* See vol. i, page 511.

ful months of 1941 that Downing-street lacked the necessary finesse, the ‘Fabian tactics’ as he called them, the ‘flexibility’ to avoid war; he even charged that Churchill had encouraged Roosevelt to paint the Japanese (by declaring an all-out embargo in July) into the corner which ultimately resulted in war. Whatever the truth in these charges, it is surely not by peradventure that some of Churchill’s cabinet records on Anglo-Japanese relations have remained sealed for over half a century.⁸



It was codebreaking which provided Churchill with his sureness of touch as he manoeuvred the Americans. The admiralty had shown an interest in Japanese naval signals since the early 1920s. At first, they were intercepted by Britain’s China Squadron and brought by bag to London. In the 1930s the admiralty had sent out a Commander Tait, of naval Intelligence, to the Far East, and he set up a small unit under a Captain Shaw in Hongkong to work on the cyphers; after war broke out in September 1939 this unit moved to Singapore, by which time, according to a wartime memoir by the head of Bletchley Park, they had gained ‘full control’ of Japanese diplomatic and attaché traffic, were reasonably fluent in the main naval cyphers, and ‘knew quite a lot’ about those Japanese army cyphers used in China.⁹

The Americans had made only a hobbling start in the breaking of Japanese codes, with barely 180 men working on this in their Signals Intelligence Service even in 1941. The Japanese diplomatic cypher dubbed PURPLE had long defeated both them and Bletchley Park, but in the summer of 1940 the Americans had reconstructed a cypher machine known as MAGIC, which replicated the Japanese machines; in February 1941 Washington supplied two such machines to the British government. Bletchley Park sent one out to their unit working on Japanese cyphers at the Far East Combined Bureau in Singapore, and retained the other at Bletchley Park.¹⁰ The idea was that the British would watch Tokyo’s communications with the Japanese embassies in London, Rome, and Berlin, while the Americans covered the Pacific networks. The result was that from the spring of 1941, ‘C’ was able to supply Churchill with intercepts of Japanese diplomatic telegrams. These ‘BJs’ – blue-jackets, also Black Jumbos* – were typed in the large typeface favoured by the prime minister on foolscap-sized, flimsy paper, each headed

* We reproduce important examples on page 205 and among the illustrations.

with a security-warning printed in red. Serial numbers of scattered 'BJs' suggest that the wizards at Bletchley deciphered 916 Tokyo messages in the 24 days up to May 3; 272 more in the week to May 10; and 827 more in the following three weeks.¹¹ 'C' furnished him with one carbon copy, while others were sent in sealed boxes to a very limited circulation – typically, in November 1941, three each going to 'C,' the foreign office, the admiralty, and the war office, while two went to the India office and single copies went to the Political Intelligence Department, the colonial office and the Dominions office, the air ministry, M.I.5, and Sir Edward Bridges, secretary of the cabinet.

BRITISH AND American relations with Japan had steadily deteriorated during 1941. As a precaution after the 'February scare' Britain began obstructing communications between Japan and her missions in outposts of the British empire, forbidding the use of codes and imposing visa restrictions. At first Tokyo tried to appease Britain, but in May the Japanese government recalled Ambassador Mamoru Shigemitsu from London; during June the Japanese noticed that Britain had begun moving Indian troops up the Malay peninsula to the borders of neutral Thailand (Siam).¹²

Eden made it plain that Britain did not care whether she offended Japan.¹³ Sir Robert Craigie, the British ambassador in Tokyo, was less sanguine and on June 13 he cautioned the Japanese government that while Britain appreciated Japan's dependence on rubber and tin imports from the Dutch East Indies, she must not take them by force. 'We British,' he continued, 'can see no reason why you Japanese should not get some rubber and tin provided that you do not transship them to Germany.'¹⁴

Pressed for Japan's position after Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union, on July 4 the new Japanese foreign minister Admiral Tejeiro Toyoda assured Craigie that Japan was not obliged to follow suit, and that Hitler had not asked her to do so. The Soviet Union's predicament did mean however that Japan felt free to expand in other directions, and the MAGIC intercepts seemed to bear this out. On July 7 Eden informed the war cabinet that while he had 'sure information' that Japan did not intend to invade the Soviet Union 'in the immediate future,' she had decided to acquire '*points d'appui*' in Indo-China using force if necessary; Britain must stop Japan 'gaining, unhampered, one position after another' which would eventually threaten Malaya and Britain's sea routes to Australia and New Zealand.¹⁵

The Americans felt the same way. The U.S. navy assessed that Japan was about to make her move. In which direction however? Secretary of War Henry Stimson had long argued that the U.S. fleet should move from its Pacific base, at Pearl in the Hawaiian islands, to the Atlantic; now, according to Stimson's diary, the MAGIC machine unscrambled a Tokyo comment enciphered in PURPLE gloating on how they were fooling Washington into keeping this fleet in the Pacific. President Roosevelt agreed with him that this ought to signalise the 'end of our efforts of appeasement in the Pacific.'¹⁶

THERE WAS however an element of Oriental inscrutability in all this. Some months earlier, MAGIC had also intercepted clear signs that Tokyo was *aware* that the Americans were reading PURPLE.¹⁷ Cordell Hull persuaded the president not to move the Pacific fleet away from Hawaii. On July 7 a radio signal went from Washington advising the American general commanding at Hawaii of possible Japanese aggressive action; Tokyo, the message added, had secretly ordered all Japanese ships to be on the Pacific side of the Panama Canal by the end of the month.

It was a worrying picture. Shown the MAGIC file by Sumner Welles on July 10 Lord Halifax, though sceptical, recorded that it contained 'a lot of fairly definite stuff suggesting that the Japs had made up their mind to have a go.'¹⁸ They had. On the twelfth the Japanese ambassador at Vichy tendered a secret ultimatum giving the Pétain government eight days to permit Japanese forces to occupy bases in Indo-China.¹⁹ Two days later the British government received intercepts revealing this.²⁰ Referring specifically to these, General Pownall wrote in his diary on the fifteenth: 'From "BJ" sources we know that she [Japan] is going for anchorages and aerodromes in Indo-China on or very soon after [the] 20th of this month.' Pownall drew a worrying conclusion: 'Indo-China is still a longish way from Singapore, but it is a distinct step in that direction.'²¹

At Downing-street that afternoon Churchill conferred with 'C' and his advisers on how to deter Tokyo from making this move into Indo-China. Their planning experts had decided that the Japanese were unlikely to be deterred by threats of economic action, and rather feebly concluded: 'We are left with the weapon of publicity.' They would tell the world of Japan's ultimatum, which Tokyo had hoped to keep secret. If the Japanese did move troops into French Indo-China, then would be the time for a 'tightening of the economic screw.' This raised the question of concealing the actual source

of their intelligence, namely *MAGIC*. Admiral Pound suggested that they hint that 'Japanese sources opposed to Axis machinations' had secretly tipped them off. Everybody was agreed that nothing must compromise the famous 'secret sources.' On July 16 the Diplomatic Correspondent of *The Times* planted the news in next day's edition, and other papers raised a hue-and-cry.²² The Japanese, a people who would display unexampled courage on the battlefield, were unimpressed by Fleet-street's barrage of printer's ink.

ON JULY 16 Churchill repeated to the chiefs of staff committee his oft-stated conviction that Japan would not declare war upon the British empire, adding now however the words, 'at the present juncture.' As for Britain declaring war on Japan, he agreed with the chiefs of staff, as he minuted to Ismay, that 'we are in no position to declare war' without the United States fighting on Britain's side. 'Therefore,' he repeated, 'I do not consider that a war between Britain and Japan is likely at the present time.' If Japan did nevertheless strike at the British empire, he believed that the United States would be bound to enter the war. As the threatened Japanese moves into Indo-China were 'of serious menace,' he ordered that further precautions be taken in the Far East 'so far as they are possible without condemning us to misfortune in other theatres.' He sent these rather woolly thoughts as an ACTION THIS DAY minute to Ismay for the chiefs of staff on July 16.²³

That day the *MAGIC* machines decrypted instructions from Tokyo to the Japanese Legations at Hanoi and Saigon, in French Indo-China, to burn their codebooks. 'Japan,' the dispatch added, 'intends to carry out plans by force if opposed or if British or United States intervenes.'

Roosevelt had no intention of opposing the imminent Japanese move, which he revealed to his cabinet on the eighteenth. He said that Japan could move 'one, two, or three ways' after occupying Indo-China. Evidently he believed in appeasement at this stage. 'He also indicated,' wrote one of his colleagues after this cabinet meeting, 'that the U.S. would continue to furnish some oil at least to Japan to keep her from moving into the Dutch [East] Indies for oil.'²⁴ Over the next few days Roosevelt reiterated that any embargo on Japanese imports would *not* include oil supplies; this point is to be noted.

On July 20 the American codebreakers intercepted a Japanese message revealing that their army had 'decided to advance on 24th regardless of whether demands accepted or not.'²⁵

HARRY HOPKINS had just arrived in London for secret talks with Churchill. Significantly, Lord Halifax wrote in his diary a few days earlier, 'With their desire to keep things off the record the principal purpose of Harry Hopkins's visit to London was to tell Winston orally what the president had in mind.'²⁶ The Japanese economy was heavily dependent on American and British empire supplies of raw materials. On July 20 Eden circulated a memorandum pointing out that a rigorous embargo would face the Japanese with the choice of abandoning their pro-Axis policy or proceeding southward to the point of war with Britain and the Dutch. Should Britain therefore back the Americans to the hilt, or restrain them?

The chiefs of staff warned that if Britain found herself at war with the Japanese the United States would not help. Eden disagreed. He wanted to force the issue, rather than wait for the Japanese to move. On July 21 Churchill's ministers debated, first in cabinet, as Item 7 – after Hopkins had been ushered out – and then in the more august defence committee, for seven tedious hours the question of what to do if Japan, after swallowing French Indo-China, went on to invade the oil-rich Dutch East Indies. All except Churchill agreed that Britain must help the Dutch. The prime minister made his curious dislike of the Dutch felt. 'Several of our capital ships are being repaired,' he reminded his colleagues, 'and will not be ready for about three months.'²⁷ Britain was in no position to send an adequate fleet to the Far East. 'P.M. digs his toes in against an assurance to the Dutch,' summarised Cadogan in his pen-and-ink diary afterwards. In an aside, he speculated that Winston was actually 'frightened of nothing but Japan.'²⁸

Eden tried to fight him, but found no backing and remarked petulantly in his own diary that they could have boiled the seven-hour discussion down to one hour, 'the rest being interminable speeches by P.M.'²⁹

Eden eventually persuaded the war cabinet that they should not restrain Washington. Somebody however also encouraged the American president that the all-out embargo to be applied on exports to Japan should *include* oil. How this came about was symptomatic of the slither into war in the Far East. Britain had expected Japan to be allowed a certain amount of latitude in the use of her assets, but by mid-September it was clear that Washington intended to allow Japan no licence whatsoever.

What had started merely as a warning, a token freezing of Japanese assets, thus quietly, and in the most puzzling and unexplained manner, assumed the character of a complete embargo, as an internal foreign office history would note.³⁰ On the last day of September 1941 Eden found it necessary

to remind the war cabinet that such an embargo must inevitably force the Japanese to decide between *entente* and war. 'The U.S., the Dutch and the British Empire had nailed their colours to the mast,' he adjudged in this monograph, 'and could not lower them even an inch without tearing them.'³¹

As anticipated, the Japanese move into French Indo-China began on July 24. In Washington that afternoon Roosevelt's cabinet again discussed the sanctions issue: again he declared that he proposed to continue to furnish some oil to Japan, to keep her from attacking the Dutch East Indies. The United States policy might, he allowed, shift to one of 'strangulation' as time went on.³² At midnight first Hopkins, then Churchill, telephoned Roosevelt from No. 10 Downing-street (as we have seen*).³³ The next day Hopkins cabled from London to Roosevelt, in a clear reference to their MAGIC intercepts, 'There is no news here about Russia or Japan that you do not already have. Prime minister does not believe Japan wants war.'³⁴

This is all the information we have. The mystery remains unsolved. On the same day, July 25, Roosevelt announced a freeze on all Japanese assets (around \$130,000,000) in the United States unless Japan withdrew her troops from Indo-China; but the total embargo which he also announced on the export of raw materials to Japan now *included oil*. Britain followed suit that same day, freezing all Japanese assets, and she repudiated all the commercial treaties and agreements between them the next day.



This decision was what led to war in the Far East. The Japanese were left with three months' supply of oil. The original intention had been merely to discourage Japan, and Roosevelt at first believed that their action had halted her. 'All well here,' he replied to Hopkins, still at Chequers, on July 26. 'Tell Former Naval Person,' as he endearingly referred to Winston, 'our concurrent action in regard to Japan is, I think, bearing fruit. I hear their government [is] much upset and no conclusive future policy has been determined on. Tell him also in confidence I have suggested to [Japanese Ambassador Kichisaburo] Nomura that Indo-China be neutralised by British, Dutch, Chinese, Japan, and ourselves, placing Indo-China somewhat in status of Switzerland. Japan to get rice and fertiliser, but all on condition that Japan withdraws armed forces from Indo-China in toto.'

* Page 20.

Sir Robert Craigie tried to reassure Toyoda on July 25 that despite all the appearances to the contrary this was not an economic encirclement. Toyoda replied that his country's troop movements were defensive; three days later Nomura was heard reporting from Washington to Tokyo on a further meeting with Roosevelt, where he too had set out the reasons why they were occupying French Indo-China (they needed the food, he said).³⁵

ON JULY 27, 1941 the chiefs of staff submitted their views on the prospects of defending Britain's possessions in the Far East. They felt that only the certainty of American intervention would deter the Japanese. Meanwhile they recommended establishing positions in the Kra Isthmus, to forestall any Japanese invasion of Malaya and Singapore through Thailand.³⁶ This would involve violating Thai neutrality – a particularly unfortunate departure from international law, given that in the winter of 1939–40 the British minister Sir Josiah Crosby had signed with Thailand the only bilateral non-aggression pact to which the United Kingdom ever affixed her signature.³⁷

The Japanese now faced a brutal choice between a war with the British empire and the United States or a humiliating climbdown. This was not at first recognised in either capital. Only at the end of the year was it accepted at the foreign office that the mysterious oil embargo, pronounced by Churchill and Roosevelt without any cabinet discussion in London or Washington, had marked the watershed between peace and war in the Far East.³⁸

On the last day of July 1941, war in the Far East became a certainty as the Japanese navy, aware that it was now burning its final oil reserves, threw its weight behind the army in demanding action against the United States and Britain, seeing this as the only honourable course remaining if Japan were not to forfeit all that four years of hard fighting had won her in China. On the same last day of July, Tokyo was heard transmitting a cypher telegram to her ambassador in Berlin which was no less menacing for being quaintly phrased: 'To save its very life [Japan] must take immediate steps to break asunder this ever strengthening chain of encirclement which is being woven under the guidance and with the participation of England and the United States, acting like a cunning dragon, seemingly asleep.'³⁹

Tokyo at first concealed the stiffening of her resolve; on August 1 Roosevelt suggested to his cabinet that the Japanese had been 'surprisingly apologetic.'⁴⁰ After the war, Churchill would even try to shift the blame for the Pacific war onto the late president's shoulders. 'As time passed,' he would write in his memoirs – sadder, and perhaps better informed if not

actually wiser – ‘and I realised the formidable effect of the embargoes which the president had declared on July 26, and in which we and the Dutch had joined, I became increasingly anxious to confront Japan with the greatest possible display of naval forces in the Pacific and Indian Oceans.’⁴¹

In the summer of 1941 however it became more urgent to persuade the Americans to show their colours, a struggle which continued for the next four months. Hoping to secure an indication that, ‘in the last resort’ the United States would be at Britain’s side, Eden gave Halifax guidelines for obtaining from Washington an assurance of ‘active armed support.’ He should remind Roosevelt of the value for the ‘general war effort’ of the rubber production in Malaya and the Dutch East Indies and also suggest that it was only fair to protect these territories given their importance to Australia and New Zealand, whose own soldiers were away fighting in the Middle East. Having set out these guidelines however Eden told Halifax not to make any approach until he received further instructions.⁴²

AT THE beginning of August 1941, Churchill had left for his Atlantic meeting with President Roosevelt. In his absence, reports multiplied of imminent Japanese moves. The Joint Intelligence Committee appreciated on the second that a ‘sudden invasion’ of the Kra Isthmus was likely.

On the fifth the chiefs of staff remaining behind in London proposed once again that Britain should move troops into Thailand first, and the defence committee looked at this project that evening. On the following day the Commander-in-Chief Far East, Air Chief-Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, telegraphed that it would be unwise to do so unless the Japanese had already marshalled their invasion force for Thailand and unless the United States, British, and Dutch governments had jointly warned Japan that a violation of Thailand would be regarded as a *casus belli*.

The defence committee on the seventh decided to send a message to Churchill, still crossing the Atlantic aboard the *Prince of Wales*, urging the need for such a warning.⁴³

In Washington, the Japanese still seemed anxious to negotiate. On August 6 their emissary, Admiral Nomura, handed to Cordell Hull two documents in which they offered to undertake not to move more troops into the disputed region, and to withdraw those in Indo-China – but only on condition that Roosevelt abandon the trade embargo and agree to make further concessions. These included, as Churchill would put it on the eleventh, an opportunity to ‘strangle the Chinese government.’

From the *MAGICS* it was clear to the Americans that the Japanese were now heading for a military ‘showdown.’⁴⁴ The evidence of this was accumulating in Washington. On August 8 Henry Stimson noted after a talk with Cordell Hull: ‘He has made up his mind that we have reached the end of any possible appeasement with Japan and that there is nothing further that can be done except by a firm policy and that he expected force itself. I had brought with me,’ dictated Stimson, ‘the last *MAGICS* that I had received which gave a very recent example of Japan’s duplicity.’ The next day Stimson received from Major-General Sherman Miles, chief of military Intelligence, a *MAGIC* revealing ‘further duplicity’ by the Japanese, who were trying to arrange a conference between their prime minister and President Roosevelt, while (as Stimson afterwards dictated) ‘at the same time they are carrying on negotiations with their ambassadors throughout the world showing that on its face this is a pure blind and that they have already made up their minds to a policy of going south through Indo-China and Thailand.’⁴⁵

Duplicity was not a Japanese monopoly. Both Roosevelt and Sumner Welles, Hull’s deputy, felt that the best course would be to humour the Japanese to gain time. The U.S. navy needed time to build up their defences in the Philippines, as Admiral Harold R. (‘Betty’) Stark, the little white-haired, hook-nosed, chief of naval operations, made plain to the British chiefs of staff.⁴⁶ Talking with Churchill at Placentia Bay on August 10 the president indicated that when he got back to Washington he would send for Nomura and feign acceptance of the Japanese proposals. ‘Leave it to me. I think I can baby them [the Japanese] along for three months.’⁴⁷

Sir Alexander Cadogan shared Churchill’s uneasiness that Roosevelt might be proposing to buy time at the expense of the hard-pressed Chinese. ‘If we are to allow the Americans to proceed on that line,’ the foreign office man assessed, reporting to Eden, ‘we must at least insist that the time isn’t gained at China’s or any one else’s expense, and that meanwhile the economic measures are kept up.’⁴⁸ (This tends to confirm the suspicion that it was the British who had provided the inspiration for the embargo on exports to Japan). Roosevelt outlined this policy, of ‘babying the Japanese along,’ upon his return to Washington when he lunched with Frank Knox, the secretary of the navy. ‘We are going to do some plain talking to Japan,’ wrote Knox to his wife that day. ‘ – Not an ultimatum, but something that very closely approximates that and can easily lead to it later if the Japanese do not accept our demands. This will be a joint affair with Great Britain.’⁴⁹

'LEAVE IT to me,' Roosevelt had said. The disadvantage of this was that although vital British empire interests were at stake, Churchill had thus relinquished to Washington control of the conduct of the negotiations with the Japanese; from now on, unless the Americans kept him closely informed – and they did not – he could follow these negotiations only through the uncertain window provided by the *MAGICS*. On August 16 Nomura duly showed up at the state department with a formal invitation for Roosevelt to meet the Japanese prime minister somewhere in mid-Pacific. Roosevelt, now back in Washington from the Atlantic meeting, sent for the Japanese emissary the next day and (on Hull's advice) refused the invitation.

The warning which Roosevelt handed to Nomura on this occasion was more mildly worded than Churchill hoped: 'The U.S. government,' it ran,

now finds it necessary to say to the government of Japan that if she takes further steps in pursuance of a policy of force towards neighboring countries, the U.S. government will be compelled to take all necessary steps towards safeguarding rights and interests of U.S. nationals and U.S. security.⁵⁰

It was Hull who had toned down the original wording. Finding, as he told Vice-president Wallace later, that Churchill had 'sold the president' on the idea of taking decisive action against Japan, Hull had pointed out that Britain had no military strength in the Pacific.⁵¹ Nonetheless, on the eighteenth Roosevelt sent a less than frank message to Churchill outlining his interview with Nomura. He had, he assured him, made a statement 'along the lines of the proposed statement such as you and I had discussed;' it was, he claimed, 'no less vigorous and . . . substantially similar to the statement we had discussed.'⁵²

This was not true and Churchill, who was reading Nomura's dispatches, knew it. The statement fell far short of what he thought they had agreed at Placentia Bay.* He had evidently received the intercept by August 23, because on Sunday the twenty-fourth he showed the Roosevelt statement to Mackenzie King – having evidently just read it – and the Canadian premier agreed that it said nothing about any response by the United States if their interests were *not* directly violated.⁵³

* Page 46. This had warned of the United States taking counter-measures, 'even though these might lead to war between the United States and Japan.'

This was why, broadcasting that Sunday evening from Chequers, Churchill deliberately went further, stating that if the United States were involved in war with Japan then Britain would go in wholeheartedly with her.

For five long years [said Churchill] Japanese military factions, seeking to emulate the style of Hitler and Mussolini . . . have been harrying and invading the 500 million inhabitants of China. The Japanese armies have been wandering about the vast land disrupting and intimidating, carrying with them carnage, ruin, and corruption, and calling it ‘the Chinese incident.’ Now they stretch a grasping hand into the southern seas of China: they snatch Indo-China from the wretched Vichy French; they menace by their movements Siam [Thailand], they menace Singapore, the British link with Australia, and they menace the Philippine Islands under the protection of the United States.

Churchill added the admonition: ‘It is decided that this has got to stop.’

The broadcast caused an uproar in Japan, as he had intended. Hugh Dalton, the minister of economic warfare, noted with approval: ‘He has been very rude to the Japs in his broadcast on Sunday – “All this has got to stop” – and he thinks this will have the effect of checking them.’ Roosevelt hoped, Dalton also learned, to spin out the talks with Tokyo for three months. ‘Long before then *we* shall be able to put a really strong fleet in the Indian Ocean without denuding the Mediterranean.’⁵⁴

In Tokyo however Sir Robert Craigie expressed dismay at this sabre-rattling. His embassy published Churchill’s broadcast omitting the belligerent passages, but the Japanese government still affected strong indignation.⁵⁵ The Tokyo newspapers accused Churchill of threats and deceit: his declaration that he was striving for a peaceful adjustment was meaningless, they said, so long as he and Roosevelt had violated their commercial treaties, frozen Japanese assets, and begun the encirclement of Japan.

The *Yomiuri Shimbun* and *Asahi Shimbun* editorialised that Churchill obviously hoped to goad the United States into taking action in the Far East; *Miyako* voiced the suspicion that Roosevelt and Churchill were hoping to isolate Japan until 1943 when their own preparations would be complete for a strike against Japan. ‘One hundred million Japanese,’ this newspaper editorialised, ‘will never flinch in defence of their faith.’ All this struck, as Craigie’s American colleague Joseph Grew pointed out, an ominous note in Tokyo.⁵⁶

Churchill did not detect it. Briefing his junior ministers on August 26 about the Placentia Bay meeting he said yet again that he did not expect Japan to pick a fight with Britain now, and he reported that Roosevelt had issued a serious warning to the Japanese and was gaining time by 'rather humbugging' negotiations with the Japanese about the neutrality of Indo-China and Thailand – Roosevelt hoped, he said, to spin these talks out for three months, by which time Britain would have a powerful fleet in the Far East.⁵⁷ In private however Churchill was uncomfortably aware that Roosevelt had once more wriggled out of making any commitment to war; the Englishman had given himself to his intimate friend, but the latter still refused to name the day. Lord Halifax – who was in London for consultations – agonised over whether he could have done more in Washington to embroil the United States in war – it was so frustrating, he said, trying to pin the Americans down, rather like 'a disorderly day's rabbit shooting.'⁵⁸



During the remaining months of 1941, Japan's relations with Britain slowly froze over. The signs were slender but unmistakable. Churchill learned from MAGIC that the Japanese were quietly reducing their more exposed diplomatic outposts – those in Hongkong, Johore (in Malaya), and London.⁵⁹ On August 20 the Japanese ambassador Shigemitsu who had returned to London was heard inquiring of Tokyo whether he ought to send home his assistant military and naval attachés.⁶⁰

Later in August Tokyo formally asked for assurances that Japanese nationals would be allowed to leave India, Kenya, and South Africa; Sir Robert Craigie requested the same facilities for British residents in Japan and China.⁶¹ On September 10 the Japanese foreign minister Toyoda was heard notifying his consul at Singapore that the freighter *Fuso Maru* would berth there and embark Japanese evacuees.⁶² Underlying many of these intercepts even now there was a perceptible anxiety to avoid provoking incidents with the British.

At the same time Churchill learned from his codebreakers that there would be an added bonus if he could lure the United States into war with Japan. On August 24, 'C' showed him a significant Japanese intercept. Hitler's press chief Otto Dietrich, gossiping with General Oshima in Berlin on the ninth, the day after he returned from Hitler's field headquarters, had quoted the Führer as declaring that 'in the event of a collision between

Japan and the United States, Germany would at once open hostilities with America.’⁶³ That was just what Churchill wanted.



We must now examine the naval dispositions which Churchill was making. ‘We shall have four more powerful ships there soon,’ Churchill had told Mackenzie King on August 23, referring to the Far East.⁶⁴

By this time in 1941 the naval staff was already in a state of ferment over a rude letter from the prime minister insisting on sending a force of destroyers and cruisers from Malta to attack General Rommel’s supply traffic to Tripoli. The Navy had about 180 destroyers in home waters, but three quarters of these were designed only for escort or other non-‘fighting’ duties.

Shown Churchill’s letter on August 24 Captain Ralph Edwards, director of naval operations, found it ‘quite insufferable.’ ‘He obviously has not the faintest idea of our fighting destroyer strength,’ Edwards wrote in his diary, ‘nor of our cruisers available.’ His staff consumed a whole day providing Admiral Pound with the data needed to reply to the P.M. ‘If only the Honourable Gentleman,’ Edwards continued, with withering sarcasm, ‘were to confine himself to statesmanship and politics and leave naval strategy to those properly concerned, the chances of winning the war would be greatly enhanced. He is without doubt one of history’s worse strategists.’⁶⁵

The next day provided the angry naval staff with further proof of this. Two weeks previously the Australian prime minister had sent a telegram pleading with Churchill to send five battleships to the Far East as a deterrent to Japan.⁶⁶ On August 25 Churchill sent two notes over to Admiral Pound – one ‘praying for’ (to use his terminology) a list of Japan’s warships, and the other demanding the formation of an Eastern Fleet to counter them.⁶⁷ ‘It should be possible in the near future to place a deterrent Squadron in the Indian Ocean,’ he wrote. ‘Such a force,’ he added, ‘should consist of the smallest number of the best ships.’ He predicted it would exert ‘a paralysing effect’ on Japanese naval action. He was thinking of at least two battleships and an aircraft-carrier. In justification, he pointed to the nuisance caused by Germany’s one well-placed battleship *Tirpitz*.⁶⁸

The Naval Staff were dismayed. ‘Another Prayer from the prime minister,’ wrote Edwards sarcastically that day, ‘who wishes to form a squadron of “fast, powerful modern ships – only the best to be used” – in the Indian

Ocean. This, he avers, will have a paralysing effect on the Japanese – why it should, the Lord alone knows.' Examining Churchill's proposed list of ships more closely Edwards noticed that most of them were either still incomplete or 'falling in pieces.' Powerful and modern, yes; but hardly of the best. 'This, mind you,' the admiral lamented in his diary, 'at the same time as he wishes to form a force at Malta, reinforce the Mediterranean Fleet, help Russia, and be ready to meet a break-out by the *Tirpitz*. The amount of unnecessary work which that man throws on the Naval Staff would, if removed, get us all a month's leave.'

On August 27 the admiralty prepared an answer to Winston's 'prayer': the best they could offer was to place a couple of *Nelson*-class battleships in Ceylon by early 1942, and three of the elderly R-class battleships some time before the end of 1941, to be followed by a fourth in January. Admiral Pound now had to explain that the *King George V*-class battleships were still crewed by youngsters and novices; it might, he suggested, be found more desirable to send *Nelson*, *Rodney*, and *Renown* to Singapore 'in the first instance,' as a deterrent; but their deterrent effect was only notional, because he warned that if war broke out with Japan these ships would have to retire to Trincomalee in Ceylon.⁶⁹

Churchill now made a different proposal – to position a 'formidable, fast, high class squadron' of modern *King George V*-class battleships in the triangle Aden–Simonstown–Singapore purely as a deterrent: '*Tirpitz* is doing to us exactly what a *K. G. V.* in the Indian Ocean would do to the Japanese Navy. It exercises a vague general fear and menaces all points at once.'⁷⁰

Not wanting to see their valuable new battleships committed to such indeterminate and distant missions, far from the Atlantic battleground, Pound and the Vice-Chief of naval staff Rear-Admiral Tom Phillips felt that both *Prince of Wales* and her sister ship *King George V*, each armed with ten 14-inch guns and capable of over twenty-eight knots, should be held back for specific, well-defined operations.

There the matter rested for six weeks. Churchill was satisfied that they still had time. 'I cannot feel,' he once again assured Pound on August 29, 'that Japan will face the combination now forming against her of the United States, Great Britain, and Russia, while already preoccupied in China. It is very likely she will negotiate with the United States for at least three months without making any further aggressive move or joining the Axis actively.'⁷¹

This was to prove a fateful misjudgement. The foreign secretary however echoed this complacency. He lunched alone with Winston on September

12. The two men read the latest telegrams and talked about the Far East. 'Winston,' recorded Eden in his diary,

insisted that we could now put pressure on Japs. I agree in the sense that they are beginning to understand their isolation, but process must take a little longer. Nothing could help it more than arrival of modern battleship or two at Singapore. We agreed that 'R' ships such as admiralty propose is a weak compromise. I told him that politically I had rather not have them. Modern battleship, Carrier & Battle Cruiser or nothing, we agreed.⁷²

Writing to Churchill that Friday September 12, Eden thought it unlikely that Japan, 'this probably over-valued military power,' would be prepared to challenge Russia, the United States, China and the British empire. 'Our right policy is, therefore, clearly to keep up the pressure.' (Churchill jotted 'Yes,' in the margin). 'So far as trade measures are concerned,' admitted Eden, 'the freezing action is being more strictly applied than was at first contemplated.' (This was probably a reference to the originally unintended oil embargo, but Churchill again wrote, 'Good.')

'We want to make the Japanese feel that we are now in a position to play our hand from strength,' proposed Eden, and the prime minister liked that too: 'Good.' Eden felt therefore the British naval squadron would best make itself felt if dispatched in the next few weeks. Churchill, better aware of the practicalities, suggested 'months' instead, and sent the document to the naval staff.⁷³

DURING THE three months' respite which both Roosevelt and Churchill believed they had won, the U.S. Army Air Force had begun warlike preparations in the South-West Pacific to which historians have paid only scanty attention. A significant proportion of the B-17 heavy bombers – the famous Flying Fortresses – which Roosevelt had originally allocated to Britain was now being ferried over to the Philippines instead, preparing for operations against Japan. The first nine arrived there on August 26. These bombers could fly two thousand miles; if they shuttled on to Vladivostok, in the Soviet Union, they would have Japan within range.

Remarking upon this prospect on September 12, Henry L. Stimson recorded: 'We have been busy for the last few weeks in reinforcing the Philippines.' On the twenty-fifth he confidentially briefed Dr T. V. Soong, the Chinese foreign minister resident in Washington, on this; and on the

last day of the month he, Hull, Knox, and Stark attended 'a fine disquisition' by General Marshall on these preparations in the Philippines.⁷⁴ On October 10 the president revealed the secret of these bombers to the British ambassador. 'He had a great deal to say,' wrote Lord Halifax, 'about the great effect that their planting some heavy bombers at the Philippines was expected to have upon the Japs.'⁷⁵

In a personal letter to Churchill, Halifax described their interview: 'The president spoke to me today about what he termed a great change in the United States staff thought. It had formerly been pretty well accepted that if they were at war with Japan, they would have to give up the Philippines. Now they had all, as he put it, made a new discovery with which they were as pleased as a child with a new toy. This was the air, and they had recently been sending some heavy bombers and fighters to the Philippines, and were going to send more. . . From various points in the Islands it was now possible respectively to reach the whole of Japan, the China coast, and Indo-China, and almost down to Singapore. They were not intending to make any public reference to what they had done, as they thought an attitude of secrecy would be more effective with the Japanese, who would certainly get to know about it.' Following that, Stimson gave Halifax an after-dinner briefing with the aid of 'various maps and circles that they had prepared, illustrating the extent to which bombers based on the Philippines could get at the Japs.' Stimson believed that this move had already greatly affected the Japanese in their judgement.⁷⁶

Ten days later some three dozen B-17s had reached the Philippines, presenting what Stimson called in a letter to the president 'a strategic opportunity' of the utmost importance. Suddenly, he said, they had the ability to mount a strategic bombing offensive against Japan.⁷⁷ Roosevelt, nonplussed, sent this document to Hopkins on October 25, asking him, 'Please read and speak to me about this. I am a bit bewildered. — FDR.'⁷⁸

Three days later Cordell Hull asked Stimson an extraordinary question — whether he favoured an 'immediate declaration of war' against Japan. Stimson replied that he did not — he still wanted to use the remaining months to strengthen the Philippines, since the four-engined bombers would in his view deter Japan from going for Singapore — indeed, they might even 'shake the Japanese out of the Axis.' The Japanese were puzzled, he said, as he knew from MAGIC, about the American secretiveness in the Philippines.⁷⁹

'Speak softly, but carry a big stick.' That had been Teddy Roosevelt's policy, and it was Stimson's too.

7: *The ‘Nigger in the Woodpile’*

ONCE OR TWICE in September 1941 Churchill’s private secretary, the twenty-five-year-old Jock Colville, heard him admit that critics were beginning to ask how Britain was going to win the war. ‘It is difficult to answer,’ he said.¹ If his brain formed the initials K.B.O. his lips did not show it.

An uneasiness pervaded the British press. Churchill predicted to Eden that however magnificent the British public might be in time of crisis, when their hour of triumph came they would prove intolerable.² True, the German air raids on London had ceased. Hitler’s air force was in Russia; London’s sirens had sounded only once in July, and not at all in August. The War Room log of R.A.F. Fighter Command shows that thanks to his codebreaking Oracle and keeping track of the Nazi blind-bombing beams he had long known in advance, on perhaps eighty per cent of the nights, what the Luftwaffe’s most likely target was to be.³ Partly inspired by communist agitation, by late September 1941 there was a mood of resentment in Britain about the failure to aid the Russians. The foreign secretary found the P.M. in a state of depression, embittered by nagging newspaper editorials. Most of the bickering came from the Beaverbrook press, and Eden came over to No. 10 to complain about their fellow-minister’s unruly behaviour.

It was with relief that Churchill had dispatched Beaverbrook on his dangerous mission to Moscow on the twenty-first. While neither Beaverbrook nor Harriman was empowered to engage in military discussions, General Ismay would accompany them to answer queries. Beaverbrook was carrying a manuscript letter from Churchill promising Stalin that Britain, small though she was, was doing all she could for the Soviet Union.⁴

Still hoping to contribute an expeditionary force to the Russian front, Churchill dictated an afterthought by scrambler-telephone to await

Beaverbrook's arrival at Scapa Flow; this suggested that the Russian-speaking General Wavell might command such a force. Before the mission sailed aboard the cruiser *London* on September 22, Churchill sent up yet another message to Lord Beaverbrook directing him to answer, if the Russians should ask, that awkward question: how Britain proposed to win the war: 'By going on fighting till the Nazi system breaks up as the Kaiser's system broke up last time.' For this purpose, said Churchill, Britain would fight wherever she could on favourable terms – using propaganda warfare, blockade, and the ruthless bombing of the German homeland.⁵

Eden dined that evening with the Churchills, with Oliver Lyttelton, just back from Cairo, making a fourth. 'Winston,' wrote the foreign secretary afterwards, 'was depressed at [the] outset, said he felt that we had harsh times ahead.' Once again, he blamed this on the press.⁶



One formidable source of his *ennui* was Charles de Gaulle. The prime minister's dislike for the French general had burgeoned into loathing. We shall find in this and later chapters evidence of their relationship developing in so extraordinary a fashion that the files in British archives remained closed for over half a century (and some are still sealed); we shall witness at least one attempt to eliminate the fractious general by force in April 1943, and a strong hint by Churchill (overheard by the Americans) that his underlings should try again.*

Travelling slowly around the Middle East, de Gaulle had left a slime-trail of anti-British remarks which were at best troubling indiscretions and at worst violations of the agreement which the two men had signed in August 1940. The current reason for de Gaulle's behaviour was that Britain had dealt leniently with the Vichy officers in Syria on the conclusion of the campaign there on July 14. His methods were ill-chosen, indeed akin to blackmail. He threatened to withdraw French troops from the war altogether and to close 'his' territories to the passage of British aircraft.

Churchill's erstwhile hireling spoke so rudely to Lyttelton in Cairo that the British government ordered the French general back to London forthwith. De Gaulle chose to return in his own good time, travelling via Brazzaville in Africa; from that 'Free French' town on August 26, he gave an

* See pages 728 and 781 below.

astonishing interview to the local reporter of the *Chicago Daily News*. Asked why Britain did not finally close the door on Vichy by recognising his government, de Gaulle had responded that l'Angleterre was afraid of the French fleet – namely the formidable units still held, if not controlled, by Vichy admirals at Toulon, Mers el-Kébir, and Alexandria. 'What, in effect, England is carrying on,' sneered de Gaulle, 'is a wartime deal with Hitler in which Vichy serves as go-between.'⁷

This Brazzaville impertinence was the last straw for Churchill. 'The P.M. is sick to death of him,' Colville observed at the end of August.⁸ Winston was within one step of breaking off relations with the general altogether.

Major Morton, the prime minister's liaison to the Free French, listed several ways of harassing de Gaulle to bring him into line. Churchill liked them, and noted: 'As proposed. 31.viii.'⁹

Among the proposals was that no one was to have any contact with de Gaulle or his staff on their return to London: 'If occasion demands,' directed Morton, 'it may be conveyed to him that a most serious situation has arisen with which the prime minister is dealing in person.' De Gaulle was to stew in his own juice, 'for a week if necessary.'¹⁰

The foreign secretary did not like this at all. When he telephoned these Chequers proposals to his office on the last morning in August, his minions protested that they had much day-to-day business to transact with de Gaulle's subordinates; they urged the foreign secretary, before 'breaking with de Gaulle,' to bear in mind the general's great symbolic value.¹¹

Eden therefore wrote to Churchill in an attempt at conciliation: 'It may well be that we shall find that de Gaulle is crazy; if so, he will have to be dealt with accordingly. If, however, he shows indications of repentance, I hope that you will not underestimate your power to complete the cure. He has a real and deep respect for you which he does not extend to any of our military commanders.'¹²

Unwilling to yield to flattery, Churchill repeated on September 1 his order

that these matters be allowed to rest in deadlock, and that generally a chilling and dilatory attitude should be adopted towards all requests made by the Free French. No notice will be taken of General de Gaulle's arrival, and it will be left to him to make any overtures. Should he desire an interview, he will be asked for explanations of his unfriendly conduct and absurd statements.¹³

On September 2 Morton personally conveyed to de Gaulle the P.M.'s displeasure. He reported back to Winston afterwards – the general, he found, was a clever man, a politician but no diplomat, 'but there lies a calculating brain behind that curious countenance and though absolutely sincere and honest he is undoubtedly swayed by deep prejudice. He is also a sentimentalist.' He was neither penitent, in Morton's view, nor mad. 'If he raves like a lunatic at one man and attempts to charm another by quiet reasonableness, it is because he thinks that such an attitude is the more likely to gain his ends with the person in question.'¹⁴

Since de Gaulle did not write, after a few days the prime minister sent him a letter in a wounded tone, saying that in view of his unfriendly remarks and actions, and in the absence of any satisfactory explanations, he was unable to judge whether a meeting would serve any useful purpose.¹⁵ The general replied in no less injured French, complaining about General Sir Louis Spears – Winston's political general in the Levant – and about Oliver Lyttelton.¹⁶ Unmoved by this, Churchill directed Morton to prevent de Gaulle from slipping out of Britain by air or Free French warship without his consent; similarly, M.I. 5 was ordered to mount a watch on the general's telephone.¹⁷

THE CLAMPDOWN on Britain's turbulent ally began at once. When de Gaulle asked for facilities to broadcast on the night of Monday, September 8, Churchill denied them. De Gaulle then threatened to withdraw all Free French staff from the B.B.C.¹⁸ More examples of de Gaulle's confused loyalties came to Churchill's ears. Lord Gort reported that passing through Gibraltar de Gaulle had told the senior Free French officer in that colony that it was his duty to observe and report on the British there '*parcequ'on ne sait jamais ce que l'avenir nous réserve*' (because one never knew what the future held in store for us).¹⁹ He told a French editor in Britain on September 9 that he was considering returning to Brazzaville and explaining why in a broadcast from there; he would break with the British, play along the Americans, and offer his services to the Russians. He would 'pretend to accept the present situation,' he had said, 'but await the first occasion to turn on the British.'²⁰ These were, if truly reported, extraordinary remarks.

At noon on September 12 Churchill had a frigid session with the general, alone but for an interpreter called in to lend formality to their meeting. He told him to watch his tongue in future, and explained that he recognised neither de Gaulle nor Vichy as representing France. He sug-

gested that de Gaulle set up a formal council to shape Free French policy. He brought their interview to a gracious end by declaring that he would be willing to receive the general again.²¹

De Gaulle drafted his own record, reporting four of the five issues between them with great accuracy (considering that he took no notes) but adding a fifth paragraph according to which Churchill had conceded that de Gaulle personified the leadership of Free France, given the leading rôle he played in French public opinion. Morton commented that this allowed only one conclusion, 'that the general is frankly somewhat unstable in mind upon this particular point. . . No sane man could have produced this fake and thereafter sent it for the inspection of the other party to the meeting.'²²

A few days later the prime minister learned – because the staff of Vice-Admiral E. H. D. Muselier, the French naval C.-in-C., so informed Major Morton – that de Gaulle was telling his people that nothing would induce him to take Churchill's advice about setting up a council.²³ The general, as Morton briefed the prime minister on September 23, was now hoping to set up a committee of his own 'yes-men,' which would be useless from the British point of view. He was hell-bent on securing unfettered personal power, warned Morton. He had created his own secret service, 'a sort of Gestapo,' to keep an eye on his followers; its chief was a young man in his twenties known as Passy. Passy – his real name was André Dewavrin – was notorious for his right-wing views and fascist methods.²⁴

Churchill now (September 23) spent half an hour trying to heal the rift developing between the prickly general and Admiral Muselier, who also wanted to see the general's powers curtailed. Muselier was even claiming to preside over the new committee. De Gaulle told Churchill he was contemplating dismissing the admiral altogether. Horrified at this new scandal, Churchill told the general he would consult his advisers and see him again the next day. 'The P.M., who is heartily sick of the Free French, ended by handing the whole matter over to the reluctant Eden,' recorded Colville.²⁵

Despite a conciliatory message from Muselier, drafted in conjunction with A. V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty, de Gaulle refused to work with the French admiral and now threatened to have him 'put out of harm's way,' whatever that might mean. On the twenty-fourth Morton told de Gaulle that Churchill wanted him to see Eden that evening, and meanwhile to say nothing in public about the crisis and do nothing to Muselier.²⁶ 'This is very unpleasant,' Winston agreed in a weary message to Eden. 'Our intention was to compel de Gaulle to accept a suitable Council. All we have

done is to compel Muselier & Co. to submit themselves to de Gaulle.' This would need the closest watching, he added: 'Our weight in the immediate future must be thrown more heavily against de Gaulle than I had hoped would be necessary.' He renewed his order that General de Gaulle was to be prevented from leaving British soil.²⁷

ON SEPTEMBER 23 Churchill had a farewell interview with Lord Halifax before he returned to Washington. He showed to Halifax a good letter which had arrived from General Auchinleck, giving an optimistic prognosis for CRUSADER, their coming offensive against Rommel. The Churchills dined with the Halifaxes at the Dorchester. 'Winston at his best,' recorded Halifax, 'and full of fight; very entertaining about his appointments of bishops and selections for peers.' Churchill revealed that he insisted on seeing photographs of those he was considering for bishops; if he explained what features he was searching for – whether sexual inclination, subservience, or firmness of jaw, Lord Halifax did not confide it to his diary.²⁸



Winston Churchill was the Pickwickian prime minister of an almost archaic country. Among the styles and dignities which somehow now accrued to him was the ancient title of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. It provided a useful naval uniform, and more: on September 25 he set off in his new and well-appointed railway coach to Kent, to run his eye over Walmer Castle which thus came within his fief.²⁹ The expenses seemed to outweigh the prerogatives: he found that he was entitled to all and any whales that washed ashore, but he would have to bury the bulky mammals at his own expense. The castle would need fourteen servants and half a dozen gardeners to render it habitable, and it was too close to Hitler's coastal artillery to be a desirable residence right now.

That night his train rested outside Coventry. Huge crowds mustered everywhere he went over the next two days. 'The P.M.,' wrote Colville in distress, 'will give the V sign with two fingers in spite of representations repeatedly made to him that this gesture has quite another significance.'³⁰ At Armstrong Siddeley's aircraft and torpedo factory, the workers clanged their hammers, which he took to be a traditional chorus of welcome, as he walked through. Even at the Whitley bomber factory, a real communist hotbed, the personnel were not put out by the sight of his cigar and semi-

top hat. Before lunch, he visited the mass grave of the four hundred citizens killed in the appalling November 1940 fire raid, of which he had perhaps suppressed his own awkward memories.* Over at Birmingham after lunch he inspected a tank factory and watched a display by Hurricane and Spitfire fighter planes. 'The drive back to the station,' wrote Colville, who was shortly to join the R.A.F. himself, 'was a triumphant procession. The crowds stood on the pavements, as thick as for the opening of Parliament in London, for miles and miles along the route. They waved, they cheered, they shouted: every face seemed happy and excited.' The one storm cloud that briefly appeared aboard the train that evening, Colville's diary further relates, without explaining what it was, was readily dispelled with the advent of 'lots of champagne.'

Before setting off for Chequers, he drove over to Liverpool to inspect the new aircraft-carrier *Indomitable*. He clattered up and down her companionways, wearing a naval uniform. He delivered to the assembled company a speech constructed with his usual flair – speaking in allegory of the aircraft-carrier as the capital ship's 'wife' who sallied forth to find, and even cook, the 'meal' so that the man-o'-war might 'eat it': thus battleship and aircraft-carrier had together done for *Bismarck*, he said, and so too they might yet deal with *Tirpitz*.

HIS TOUR OF the blitzed Midlands cities had left Churchill pondering one obvious and most disagreeable paradox: morale appeared to be higher than ever despite – or was it even because of? – the enemy's bombing raids. For a few weeks he now wavered about Britain's own night bombing offensive against Hitler's Reich.

Upon his return from Liverpool to Chequers on September 27, 1941 he expressed these doubts in a remarkable letter to Sir Charles Portal, the chief of air staff. 'It is very disputable whether bombing by itself will be a decisive factor in the present war,' he wrote. 'On the contrary, all that we

* Vol. i, pages 459–465. Believing on the authority of his 'most secret sources' that Central London was to be the Luftwaffe's target for a three-day blitz beginning on the night of November 14, 1940, Churchill had cancelled all his engagements for those days and made preparations to flee to the safety of Dytchley in Oxfordshire; he was being driven out of London with John Martin at five P.M. when an air ministry dispatch-rider caught up with him, with word that the 'beams,' just located, showed the target to be Coventry instead. He returned to No. 10, professing that he had decided to 'share London's ordeal.'³¹

have learnt since the war began shows that its effects, both physical and moral, are greatly exaggerated. There is no doubt that the British people have been stimulated and strengthened by the attack made upon them so far.' R.A.F. Bomber Command's offensive would probably be no more than 'a seriously increasing annoyance' to Germany.³²

Portal had until one year before himself been commander-in-chief of R.A.F. Bomber Command. He was, it is fair to say, one of the cruellest and most morally unprincipled directors of British war strategy. He was dismayed to find his prime minister losing faith like this. In his reply he pointed out that Churchill's letter appeared to challenge the most fundamental tenets of British strategy, which vested all hope of a final victory in the expansion of the bomber arm to the exclusion of all rivals like Coastal Command. The chiefs of staff had recently stated – and Churchill had approved – this strategy in these words: 'It is in bombing on a scale undreamed of in the last war that we find the new weapon on which we must principally depend for the destruction of economic life and morale.' It was too late to have second thoughts now.³³

With so much of Britain's industrial capacity geared to sustaining it, Churchill's bombing campaign had gained its own momentum. It was a juggernaut still gathering speed. On October 3 the R.A.F. attacked Rotterdam. The Dutch minister complained at the resulting horrendous casualties in the port – far more than the Nazis' infamous raid of 1940. In cabinet Sinclair ventured that perhaps the bombers had plastered the town in mistake for the harbour. Portal stoutly denied that the bombing had been indiscriminate.³⁴ Concern about the R.A.F.'s bombing accuracy leaked out. The press found out that even the air ministry agreed that they were doing little damage to enemy targets. 'It comes as a great shock to the government,' wrote Cecil King, 'who find that, after all, our bombing will not win the war.'³⁵ Churchill had sources of information which Portal did not – diplomatic telegrams (particularly those of American officials, who were still relatively free to roam about Hitler's Reich), codebreaking (especially of German municipal police messages), and agents' reports.

Writing to the chief of air staff on October 7, he explicitly deprecated placing 'unbounded confidence' in the bombing offensive, 'and still more expressing that confidence in terms of arithmetic.'

It is the most potent method of impairing the enemy's morale we can use at the present time [he agreed]. . . [But] even if all the towns of Ger-

many were rendered largely uninhabitable, it does not follow that the military control would be weakened or even that war industry could not be carried on.

What had gravely misled the government, he charged, were the pictures painted by the air staff before the war of the destruction that German air raids would wreak on London. 'But all things are always on the move simultaneously,' he added, 'and it is quite possible that the Nazi war-making power in 1943 will be so widely spread throughout Europe as to be to a large extent independent of the actual buildings in the homeland.' 'He is an unwise man who thinks there is any certain method of winning this war,' he concluded.³⁶

Taut and angry at this belittling of the effort of his brave aircrews, Portal personally saw the prime minister and defended the bombing offensive.³⁷ The evidence against it continued to accumulate however. From the British Legation in Berne came a dispatch reporting that neutral observers had seen little evidence of bomb damage in Berlin. 'Bomb damage is still a novelty,' this telegram read, 'Thousands of spectators are attracted to these spots.' Churchill sent a copy to the chief of air staff. Portal resisted any reduction in their bombing effort, writing to Churchill on October 13: 'I am now completely reassured that you accept the primary importance of our bomber operations and of building up the bomber force on the largest possible scale.'³⁸ The next day he wrote again, this time specifically about the raids on Berlin. 'The aiming points now given,' he stated frankly, 'are invariably in the most heavily built up areas in the centre of the city, mainly to the south and east of the Tiergarten.' So far, he regretted, all their attempts to ignite major conflagrations had been thwarted by weather and technical problems.³⁹

It was at about this time that Churchill gave express instructions for the office accommodation installed 'under the slab' in the Cabinet War Room to be made, as far as humanly possible, one-hundred per cent bomb proof.⁴⁰

THE ABRASIVE correspondence with Air Chief-marshal Portal came at a time when he was already contemplating resignation over the prime minister's treatment of Sir Arthur Tedder, commander of the desert air force. Tedder had warned as recently as October 8 of the growing air strength confronting his own squadrons. 'The conclusions were,' he reminded Portal on October 13, 'that we shall be definitely superior in mechanised forces but

numerically inferior in the air.'⁴¹ This resulted in a double-barrelled blast from Portal on the fourteenth, which Tedder privately, and no doubt rightly, described as being in fact 'pure and unadulterated Winston.'⁴²

Portal explained the background: given that New Zealand's soldiers were involved, Peter Fraser, the prime minister of that country, had just required from Churchill an assurance that Britain would have air superiority before launching *CRUSADER*. Air Marshal Tedder's report – although he had carefully spoken of 'numerical superiority,' which was very different from 'air superiority' – had made it impossible for Churchill to give such an assurance, short of lying. Since it was Tedder's figures which were the stumbling-block, Churchill began to question his judgement. He instructed Portal to send out his deputy, the Vice-Chief of Air Staff Sir Wilfrid Freeman, to Cairo to investigate – and, no doubt, to generate more politically acceptable figures. As Churchill informed General Auchinleck, using language of no uncertain colour, 'Tedder's estimate of strength, actual and relative, is so misleading and militarily untrue that I found it necessary at once to send Air Chief-marshal Freeman to Cairo.'⁴³

At the defence committee meeting on the fifteenth, the prime minister would admit to having received Fraser's request for assurances; he had also received a signal from Auchinleck, providing figures which 'seemed to show that we should be inferior to the German and Italian Air forces' there. He therefore intended, he announced, to send out Freeman 'to clear up the facts.'⁴⁴ 'Greatly regret this intrusion,' Portal apologised to Tedder, as a post-script, '. . . but you can picture situation here and understand my difficulties.'⁴⁵

In Churchill's defence it must be said that he had all the *ULTRAS* at his fingertips, which gave him an edge on his officers in Cairo. Since mid-September Bletchley Park had been solving the German army *ENIGMA* keys used both for communications within Rommel's Panzer army and those between him, Rome, and Berlin; until the end of November this would give Churchill a remarkable insight into the enemy's morale, condition, and movements. Bletchley Park was also routinely reading signals between Rommel's *Fliegerführer Afrika* and Tenth Air Corps headquarters in Italy.⁴⁶

As so often before, it was a clash of personalities which underlay the row about Tedder. The Paymaster General and *éminence grise* Lord Hankey heard about this simmering row on October 15 from Freeman himself, as he was about to leave for Cairo. 'There is going to be a battle,' recorded Hankey with evident satisfaction. Churchill had 'taken a dislike' to Air Mar-

shal Tedder and had asked Portal to suspend him; Portal had refused and said that in that case Winston would have to accept his resignation too. Sinclair, added Hankey, supported Portal, 'though he is [crossed out: *a feeble*] not a strong man, and a strong personal friend of Churchill's.' Freeman asked Hankey whether his chief would be justified in resigning. Hankey replied to Freeman that 'another chief of staff' had asked him the same question – a month or two previously General Sir John Dill had asked him whether he ought to have resigned over Churchill's harsh treatment of Wavell. As for Portal's query, Hankey hedged – it all depended on Churchill's constitutional position as minister of defence, a post which Winston had created for himself on becoming prime minister. Freeman said that if his chief resigned, then he would too. 'He said he had no use for Churchill at all,' recorded Lord Hankey – who was himself one of the P.M.'s most informed and influential critics.⁴⁷

Seeing Sir Wilfrid Freeman before his departure to Cairo on the following day, October 16, Churchill attempted familiar tactics to dispose of a dangerous critic – bribery and banishment: he offered Tedder's Cairo job to Freeman; he gave him a letter to hand to General Auchinleck immediately, which made plain that he had lost confidence in Tedder.⁴⁸ The letter hinted that Auchinleck should replace Tedder with Freeman. 'Do not let any thought of Tedder's personal feelings influence you,' wrote Churchill.⁴⁹

Tedder and Auchinleck, both receiving selected ULTRA decrypts direct from Bletchley Park, had however now both concluded that the German air force facing them was stronger than Churchill admitted. Auchinleck would not hear of replacing his desert air force commander.⁵⁰ As for Churchill's letter, Auchinleck's heart must have sunk as he read the closing paragraphs – Churchill wrote about an expedition he was contemplating to Norway with three divisions and one armoured division.

LORD HANKEY soon had further good reason to detest Churchill. Since Lord Beaverbrook had achieved a great propaganda triumph with his mission to Moscow, Hankey would shortly find himself unceremoniously divested of his own Committee on Allied Supplies. Beaverbrook revelled in the publicity. With Hitler's armies only an hour's drive from Moscow, the world spotlight had lingered on his mission ('which, as I know from my sources,' recorded Cadogan, 'was a complete newspaper stunt. He *is* a scamp!')⁵¹ The chiefs of staff shared his unease. 'This is typical of a totally unscrupulous cad of the Yellow Press,' recorded General Pownall.⁵²

Beaverbrook had certainly offered Moscow more than just fair words. Despite Britain's own overseas commitments he and Harriman had jointly made formidable promises of succour to the Soviets – including British Hurricanes, American fighter-planes and bombers, Asdic submarine detection gear, and naval artillery; they offered a thousand tanks and two thousand armoured cars per month, as well as shiploads of steel, diamonds, machine tools, rubber, army boots, telephone cable, explosives, and medical supplies.⁵³ The prime minister called upon everybody to ensure that the shipments to Archangel began at once – the first of the famous 'PQ' convoys.* He cabled to Roosevelt: 'Max and Averell seem to have had a great success at Moscow, and now the vital thing is to act up to our bargain in early deliveries. Hitler evidently feels the draught.'⁵⁴ He informed Stalin that he hoped to sail one PQ convoy to Russia every ten days. The first would arrive at Archangel, he said, on October 12: twenty tanks and 193 fighter planes, followed by a convoy with 140 more tanks and one hundred Hurricanes, and a third PQ convoy, laden with two hundred fighters and one hundred tanks. To the Soviet dictator he quoted a Latin tag meaning 'He who gives quickly gives twofold.'⁵⁵

On Friday October 10 the news from the Russian front was bad. Exhausted and asthmatic, Beaverbrook returned that morning to the U.K. with Harriman and rendered to Churchill and Eden a 'very lively & entertaining' account of their mission. They had been received bleakly and with little hospitality by the Russians, but Beaverbrook was totally enamoured of Joseph Stalin. 'He believes that Stalin will fight on,' wrote Eden, 'come what may, & that he hates Hitler (which he certainly did *not* in 1935) with cold fury.'⁵⁶ 'Stalin and Max,' scoffed one journalist, Vernon Bartlett, 'did everything two lovers can do except sleep together, and that only because they were too busy.'⁵⁷

CHURCHILL INVITED Eden to motor down to Chequers for a night with Beaverbrook and Harriman. 'Winston arrived,' recorded Eden, 'while I was working in Hawtrey Room.' The prime minister insisted on escorting him upstairs to his draughty bedroom and lighting the fire. 'I know no-one with such perfect manners as a host,' noted the young minister, with the dour addition, '– especially when he feels like it.' Harriman confided to him that

* Named after the British admiralty officer P.Q. Roberts, who organised these convoys to North Russia. See our *The Destruction of Convoy PQ17* (London & New York, 1967).

Marshal Stalin was still speaking of a post-war alliance; the Kremlin would be offended if Britain did not respond. After an interlude for late movies, Eden cornered Beaverbrook and reproached him that his newspapers were sometimes 'pretty vindictive' toward him, a point which Winston had already raised at dinner. 'Max pleaded bewilderment,' recorded Eden. 'Said he had entered cabinet not expecting that he would agree with me & had thought my advice always well informed & wise etc., etc. He said he would deal with his press tomorrow. We shall see!'

Over dinner, Beaverbrook brought the talk around to the question of who should take over if anything befell Winston. Many would want Eden, he said; Churchill agreed. As for David Margesson (the secretary for war), the prime minister remarked that he had neither the brain nor any of the other qualifications. Churchill himself mentioned the name of the unquestionably well-qualified Sir John Anderson, and Eden politely offered that of Beaverbrook. All agreed however that the newspaper proprietor's difficulty would lie with the anti-Beaverbrook section of the Conservative Party. 'The rest would have you happily enough,' consoled Winston. When Churchill mused out loud that perhaps he ought to identify a successor in a political testament lest he did himself 'meet a bomb,' Eden superstitiously interjected that that would be to court misfortune. 'You needn't worry that it would do you any harm,' was Churchill's interesting response. 'Winston still in the kindest of moods,' Eden wrote, still glowing. 'I don't think I have ever known him more warm-hearted in his friendliness. And so to bed, at length, at 3 A.M.!'

THE PROTOCOL which Lord Beaverbrook had signed in Moscow evinced outspoken horror in Whitehall; the air ministry wanted to furnish only their most inferior fighter planes to the Russians, while the war office was reluctant to release scarce spares with the tanks. Churchill overruled them. At midday on October 15, he called Attlee, Eden, and Beaverbrook to No. 10, and appointed Beaverbrook as overlord for the supplies to Russia. Lord Hankey's diary shows the suppressed rage that this provoked: 'Today,' he wrote, 'I have been deprived of my Committee on Allied Supplies.'

I have no grievances [he continued] in view of the fact that Beaverbrook, a first rate muddler, has been to Russia & is justified in taking over the execution of the agreement he has made. But the fact remains that Winston loses no opportunity to humiliate me. He first left me out of his govern-

ment and only gave me a second-rate £2,000-a-year post when the chiefs of staff said I was doing indispensable work. Even that post he took away from me, disrating me to Paymaster General.

'Whenever I get something good going,' continued this very disgruntled senior civil servant, 'he turns it down. He did his best to turn down the Oil anti-tank weapon. . . Again and again he has prevented the execution of my Committee's plans for attacking German oil installations, which might have prevented the attack on Russia. . . And now that, by the sweat of the brow, I have created a really effective machine for supplies to Allies, including Russia, he smashes it.' He identified 'the nigger in the woodpile' as Beaverbrook.

On October 9, as soon as he had received Beaverbrook's telegram from Moscow reporting his agreement with Stalin, Hankey had his Committee convened and overhauled the arrangements for rushing the first instalment by convoy to Archangel as soon as possible. He had sent full particulars of these to both Beaverbrook and the P.M. 'On Monday last [October 13] I was summoned at short notice to the war cabinet, when they approved Beaverbrook's report. I then asked if I was to continue my work.'

Beaverbrook then said, in very surly tones, that he was going to speak to Sir Edward Bridges about it that night.⁵⁸ Churchill then said that the conditions had changed since my Committee was set up. Many Allies had disappeared. He thought that some new organisation was required.

I replied that some Allies had disappeared, but others had come to the front. Turkey was now much more important; Egypt, Cyprus, Palestine, Syria, Iran, China, had now to be catered for. I might have added Dutch East Indies, Portugal, and the Belgian Congo.

He said, 'We will have a talk about it.'

I knew, however, from the demeanour of Beaverbrook, who could not meet my eye, that the thing had been settled behind my back.

'If Sinclair & Portal resign,' Hankey concluded in his eloquent diary entry, 'I am tempted to go as a point of principle. . . The whole atmosphere of the war cabinet hit me in the eyes. No feeling of a happy team of comrades, such as I have been accustomed to. A crowd of silent men, and the usual monologue by Churchill.'⁵⁹

THERE WERE barely perceptible signs of a growing debility in Churchill which only those who had known him for many years could detect. At this time, the permanent under-secretary at the war office, who had been Churchill's private secretary for five years in the Twenties, reported confidentially to his father a growing 'conviction that Winston is showing signs of becoming ga-ga.'⁶⁰

Churchill was not happy with the war office; he compared it unfavourably with the German Army's High Command, which seemed the acme of ruthless professionalism. Dressing for dinner at Chequers one night at the end of September, he had confided to young Colville that it was the C.I.G.S. who had swept aside his misgivings about the wisdom of sending British empire troops into Greece in the spring – the result had been another Churchill Balkans fiasco.* As he straightened his black tie, he added that he was thinking of sacking Sir John Dill. 'We cannot afford military failures,' he said.⁶¹

Casting around for a new C.I.G.S., he contemplated appointing General Sir Alan Brooke, currently the C.-in-C. Home Forces, and even the venerable Lord Gort. Lyttelton, asked informally for his views about the latter, encouraged the idea. 'Above all,' wrote Lyttelton, 'he is always thinking of soldiering and getting at the enemy.' This was not the view that the Germans had gained of Lord Gort in the days before Dunkirk.⁶²

Eden reproached Churchill for underestimating Dill's talents: he knew the army well, and had made some excellent appointments. 'Winston was critical of Dill,' he wrote after one dinner with the prime minister now. 'I replied that I was sure he could not do better. I admired Brooke but he was probably better where he was.'⁶³

BOTH DILL and David Margesson, the secretary of state for war, were dismayed when Churchill now decided to revive his 1940 idea of a frontal assault on Trondheim in Norway.⁶⁴ It would be a sop to Stalin, but these critics felt that it had little else to commend it and the chiefs of staff had already turned it down. 'There he is,' wrote Dill's deputy on October 2,

* This was a terrible calumny: Churchill and Eden were the joint godfathers of the sentimental military extravaganza in Greece, which cost the lives of thousands of empire servicemen. Eden knew it. He continued to fret about it and often canvassed others for their support, including Wavell (Eden diary, September 18, 1941); Dill and Lyttelton (*ibid.*, August 30, 1942); and 'Jumbo' Wilson (*ibid.*, October 13, 1943).

'off on this wild hare and the [chiefs of staff] are going to have the devil of a time getting the bone out of his mouth. Winston's day-to-day strategy is simply appalling and if he were allowed a free rein in such things he would get himself into a series of disasters sufficient to lose us the war. And he is so impatient, both of opposition and in matters of *time*.'

Faced with a united war office front Winston toyed with the idea of having Eden himself develop the Trondheim operation, code-named AJAX. Even Eden however saw it as an unnecessary hazard. 'He feels, as I do,' noted his secretary, 'that so many of W.'s gorgeous schemes have ended in failure. The war is now going fairly well for us – but a false step, a faulty short-cut, would set us back years.'⁶⁵ Not easily thwarted, Churchill instructed General Brooke to prepare a plan of operation and appoint a task-force commander himself.⁶⁶ He called his cabinet colleagues down to Chequers to discuss AJAX on Friday the third. Pound, Portal, and deputy P.M. Attlee arrived first, while the recalcitrant General Dill brought Brooke down from London later that evening.⁶⁷ Churchill launched into one of his midnight monologues. 'We sat up till 2:15 A.M. discussing the problem,' recorded Brooke, to whom all this was still new, in his private diary, 'and I did my best to put the P.M. off attempting the plan. Air support cannot be adequately supplied, and we shall fall into the same pitfall as we did before.' When Dill returned to London he told Pownall that Winston had shown signs of being shaken by the opposition.⁶⁸ Brooke too thought the P.M. was weakening, but when Churchill returned to London visions of AJAX still danced in his head.⁶⁹

ONE SIDE-RESULT of these Chequers talks was that Admiral Pound persuaded Churchill to dictate an immediate letter ending the appointment of the aged Admiral of the Fleet Sir Roger Keyes as Director of Combined Operations.⁷⁰ Pound told friends that Keyes had intrigued his way into the job; the naval staff had despaired of ever getting rid of this septuagenarian crony and confidant of the P.M.'s. 'It is really a terrible business . . .' he had written privately in January: 'I am sorry to say it, but I firmly believe that the only thing he cares for is the glorification of Roger Keyes.'⁷¹

Pulling rank, Keyes had constantly interfered with the planning of operations like PILGRIM (the seizure of the Spanish Canary Islands) for which General Sir Harold Alexander and Rear-Admiral Sir Louis 'Turtle' Hamilton had been given responsibility. 'Winston put him in,' General Pownall had recorded as recently as September, 'and it's the devil of a job to get him

out. Not that Winston has any real faith in him, I'm sure. But his nominees, good or bad, remain.'⁷² Director of Combined Operations was not the proper title for the job anyway, and the chiefs of staff had drawn up a new directive, renaming Keyes' office as 'Adviser on Combined Operations.' Believing himself indispensable, Keyes had refused to go along with this. It came as a shock to be told now that in that case he would have to go. He complained to General Ismay that he had had a very raw deal from Winston. To add insult to injury, the P.M. would give to Mountbatten, the new D.C.O. – for the old title was retained after all – all the powers that he had allowed the chiefs of staff to remove from Keyes.⁷³ 'Roger Keyes is making himself very unpleasant,' described Pound, delighted at his coup. 'He never had much brain,' he wrote unkindly to another admiral, 'and what he has got left is quite addled.' This, coming from Pound, was censure indeed.⁷⁴

Six days after Keyes' dismissal, after a luncheon with H.M. the King, Churchill announced that the Combined Operations job should go to the blue-blooded Lord Louis Mountbatten, a young officer possessed of unquestioned drive and originality. He ordered a signal made to Mountbatten at Norfolk, Virginia, where he was just taking over command of the aircraft-carrier *Illustrious*. 'We want you home here at once,' this signal read, 'for something which you will find of the highest interest.'⁷⁵



On Churchill's arrival back at No. 10 Downing-street on Monday October 6, 1941, he seemed depressed. 'Long known to us,' as Sir Alexander Cadogan wrote that day, TYPHOON, Hitler's big push against Moscow, had begun on the second. The auguries for the Russian defenders were not good. Hearing Berlin's taunting, if premature, claims of final victory, Cadogan suspected that the Bolsheviks were in for a thin time – 'And so,' he speculated in his diary, 'are we all, probably.'⁷⁶

It was the dreadful news from Kuibyshev, whither the Soviet government had retired as Hitler's tanks approached the capital, that so oppressed Winston. One evening when Eden came to dinner he told the youthful foreign secretary, with tears of affection clouding his eyes: 'I regard you as my son. I do not get in your way, nor you in mine.'⁷⁷ He vested his hopes now in CRUSADER, General Auchinleck's coming offensive in North Africa – the newly created Eighth Army would have over six hundred tanks and six hundred aeroplanes, which he said vastly outnumbered Rommel's forces –

and he was impatient for the battle to begin. He said with a sigh that he often wished that Eden was still political master of the war office instead of Margesson.

Over at the war office General Brooke spent the coming week humouring what he privately called the P.M.'s 'mad Norwegian plans.' He concluded that Britain lacked sufficient aircraft-carriers, and that Trondheim fjord would be impossible to penetrate anyway. By the eighth many people in Whitehall were using that word, madness.

At the end of the week Churchill retired to Chequers, with Beaverbrook among the guests. Hitler's TYPHOON had already made obsolete much of what Beaverbrook had to report from Moscow. The mood was grim. Called in to take dictation on Sunday morning, October 12, the P.M.'s prim and proper shorthand secretary Miss Layton, whom Churchill's rakish daughter Sarah compared with a head girl in a convent school, found him barely suppressing a foul temper. 'Now, Miss Layton, just stop playing the bloody ass,' he shouted after one typing mistake. When she typed 'Somehow I think it right –,' the P.M. snapped that he had dictated what she now thought was 'the time is right;' the page was retyped, but flung back at her again with a roar: 'God's teeth, girl! Can't you even do it right the second time? I said *ripe, ripe, ripe!* P – P – P!'⁷⁸ The masseuse Miss Roper was hurried in that afternoon, to restore mental equilibrium in the prime minister.⁷⁹

The word from the Russian front was so grim that he telegraphed to Stalin an offer to take over the protection of the supply route in northern Iran too, which would release the half-dozen Soviet divisions stationed there. 'I pledge the faith of Britain,' his telegram continued, 'that we will not seek any advantage for ourselves at the expense of any rightful Russian interest during the war or at the end.'⁸⁰ He was verging on his familiar notion that to assist Stalin it would be better to undertake anything and fail, rather than to succeed merely in doing nothing: AJAX, the frontal assault on Trondheim, would perfectly fit that bill. He instructed Brooke to have his plans ready at No. 10 by that evening. General Pownall, standing in for Dill – who was on leave, having just taken a wife – wrote that day, referring to AJAX: 'It is a pet project of Winston's, and I do not doubt that when they meet this evening there'll be a very stormy scene.'⁸¹

The P.M. returned from Chequers to Downing-street at six-thirty for the meeting. Seeing him glowering, General Brooke already knew they were all in for the 'hell of a storm.' At one side of the cabinet table Churchill had grouped his more servile 'colleagues' – General Brooke recognised Eden,

Attlee, and war transport minister Lord Leathers among them. Brooke faced them with General Sir Bernard Paget, whom he had reluctantly nominated to act as the task-force commander. He had developed four possible plans for executing AJAX and – more importantly – the overwhelming arguments militating against those plans, in particular the total absence of air cover.

The storm broke at once. 'I had instructed you,' Churchill thundered, 'to prepare a detailed plan for the capture of Trondheim with a commander appointed and ready in every detail. What have you done? You have instead submitted a masterly treatise on all the reasons why this operation should *not* be carried out!' For two hours he cross-examined the generals; he demanded to know the precise source of each statement about frost and thaw, and just why the troops anticipated taking twenty-four hours to cover one stretch of ground. He kept up a withering crossfire of sarcasm, but by eight-thirty it was plain that AJAX was dead or dying. 'The P.M.,' Pownall would write the next day, 'is covering his retreat by a smoke screen.'

Churchill made a further run at it on October 15, holding an endless defence committee meeting after dinner to re-examine the objections. Eden was no keener on AJAX than the chiefs of staff; the risks were obvious. He much preferred a counter-project called WHIPCORN, an invasion of Sicily, after the conclusion of CRUSADER. Attlee supported him, while Beaverbrook kept his own counsels. 'Max thundered at our failure to help Russia,' recorded Eden, 'without backing any particular project and it was eventually agreed that projects on lines I had suggested should be examined. Dill was clearly anxious to do so.' Churchill predicted that the chiefs of staff would gun down WHIPCORN like everything else.

They reminisced about the 1938 Men of Munich, one of their favourite topics, before retiring to bed at two A.M.⁸² Two days later the defence committee decided that WHIPCORN should replace AJAX. 'I am immensely relieved,' penned Eden in his diary, 'for now I truly think that we are on the right lines. Winston too seems well content, for all his earlier enthusiasm for AJAX. It now remains for CRUSADER to do battle well. These days of waiting impose an agonising strain.'

THE GHOST of AJAX continued to clank around the battlements of Churchill's brain. Not long afterwards he invited a Canadian military dignitary to weekend at Chequers with him – Brooke recalled it was General A. G. L. McNaughton, commander of the Canadian forces in Britain, but the Chequers guest book records only Colonel James Ralston, the Canadian de-

fence minister, who visited on the twenty-fourth; Brooke briefed him first on AJAX, and warned him of Winston's methods. He suspected that the P.M. was now planning to stage the operation independently, with Canadian troops – and with good grounds for those suspicions, because the Canadian stumbled into Brooke's room looking limp on Monday, and 'literally poured himself' into the general's armchair. 'He informed me,' wrote Brooke, 'that he had had a ghastly weekend – he had been kept up till all hours of the morning until he did not know which way he was facing.'

The Canadian confessed that he had agreed to examine AJAX – but he had also telegraphed secretly to Mackenzie King, pleading with him not to sanction the use of any Canadian troops in Norway.⁸³

CRUSADER WAS NOT due to start until November 1. The prime minister hoped that this mighty British tank assault on General Rommel's positions in Libya would inspire Stalin, allure Turkey, worry Spain, and even encourage the Vichy French general Maxime Weygand to invite the British to enter North-West Africa at Casablanca. Everything hinged on CRUSADER.

Throughout October 1941 Churchill badgered General Auchinleck by letter, telegram, and personal messenger to bring the date forward. In mid-month however the general asked permission to delay CRUSADER until November 18: he was now encountering major – indeed, scandalous – problems with the axles of his main battle tanks. Churchill sent an angry riposte on October 18 reminding Auchinleck that the defence committee had only reluctantly accepted the original postponement. 'It is impossible,' he complained, 'to explain to Parliament and the nation how it is our Middle East armies have had to stand for four and a half months without engaging the enemy while all the time Russia is being battered to pieces. I have hitherto managed to prevent public discussion, but at any time it may break out.'⁸⁴

The delay was all the more sickening because, hoping to stimulate Roosevelt to action, he had telegraphed ahead to the president that he was sending him a secret letter by the hand of Clement Attlee, who was shortly travelling to Washington on Labour Party business. The letter was for F.D.R.'s eyes only, to be burned after reading.

'In the moonlight of early November,' Churchill's current draft of this letter dramatically began, 'General Auchinleck will attack the German and Italian armies in Cyrenaica with his utmost available power.' He had already invited Attlee to lunch at No. 10 Downing-street on the day of his departure to hand him the letter.⁸⁵

That morning, October 20, however, he had to advise the defence committee that *CRUSADER* was delayed. 'I feared this might happen,' recorded Eden, 'but hoped against hope.'⁸⁶

Because of Auchinleck's prevarication, the final letter to Roosevelt was revised to begin with the considerably less precise words 'some time this Fall.' (In a fit of humility Churchill even eschewed the English word *autumn*.*) Even this letter was then withheld. The only epistle which Attlee finally carried to the White House was an extract from a recent dispatch in which General Auchinleck described a morning in the desert outside Cairo watching the 4th Armoured Brigade training in their new American-built tanks; even these tanks, Auchinleck mentioned, required modifications like the fitting of radio sets and tanks for drinking-water.



The Germans seemed poised on the brink of victory at Moscow. As each day passed, Lord Beaverbrook stepped up his attack on the government in general and on Sir John Dill in particular for the failure to aid Russia. At the after-dinner defence committee meeting held on October 15 Beaverbrook (having 'apparently become imbued with the Russian point of view,' as one history of the chiefs of staff dryly noted) talked of the services' 'procrastination and idleness.'⁸⁸ Circulating a document entitled 'We Must Help Russia' (in fact, a leader from his own *Daily Express*) four days later he demanded a Second Front. 'We must strike,' this memorandum pointed out, 'before it is too late.' Even as Churchill met his cabinet on the twentieth to consider this, the Beaverbrook newspapers were printing another violent criticism of the chiefs of staff. At this meeting, according to Cadogan, Beaverbrook flapped his arms and snapped that he 'disagreed fundamentally' with the government, and generally 'put the wind up Winston.' 'What a monkey,' wrote Cadogan, in a tone of detached amusement.⁸⁹

Simultaneously Beaverbrook sired an intrigue to replace Dill with his own nominee, the anti-aircraft general Sir Frederick Pile.⁹⁰ He had proposed this to 'Pug' Ismay during their return voyage from Russia, and undoubtedly put it to Churchill too. Churchill certainly saw a lot of Pile in the weeks that followed. General Sir Alan Brooke jealously dismissed Pile as a

*The envelope is in Roosevelt's files. It is marked, 'The Lord Privy Seal,' *i.e.* Attlee, but it is endorsed: 'Handed to the president by Winston Churchill, Jan. 2nd. or 3rd., 1942.'⁸⁷

'climber,' but understood Churchill's lack of harmony with Dill. 'Dill,' he wrote, 'was the essence of straightforwardness, blessed with the highest of principles and an unassailable integrity of character.' None of these qualities appealed to the P.M., he added, given his own 'shortcomings.'

It seemed to Churchill that Beaverbrook was again growing too big for his boots – that he had political ambitions, and was conspiring on many levels to unhorse him as P.M. Challenged privately as to his intentions, Beaverbrook at first cut up rough and, pleading asthma, drafted on the weekend of October 25 yet another letter of resignation from his office as minister of supply; like the others, it was not sent. Over dinner at No. 10 on the twenty-seventh, Churchill read him the Riot Act. Beaverbrook claimed that everybody was against him. 'Why don't you send me to Moscow,' he exclaimed, according to one version of their argument. 'I'll keep them in the war!'⁹¹ Afterwards Churchill wrote a telling letter to his son in Cairo about how hard things were becoming in England 'now that the asthma season has come on,' and what with Beaverbrook fighting everybody and resigning 'every day.' After lunching with Winston at the end of October, Beaverbrook grudgingly knuckled under and promised he 'would serve under the prime minister in any capacity.'

Churchill was reluctant to lose Beaverbrook. He would tell W. P. Crozier, editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, a month later: 'When he is alright he can take on anything. But when he has asthma he is miserable and he wants to get out of things – and mind you, I need him; I need him. He is stimulating and, believe me, he is a big man.'⁹² These were important virtues, and Churchill was prepared to overlook the minister's rampaging in order to retain them.

SINCE NOTHING would persuade General Auchinleck to bring forward the date of CRUSADER, Churchill had yielded, writing to him on October 21, 1941, 'We have no choice but to accept your proposal. I will not therefore waste further words on it.'⁹³ A few days later he received a private note from Randolph expressing admiration for the general's qualities. 'He strikes me,' the P.M.'s son had written from Cairo, 'as being a really first class and intelligent human being. I trust that results will vindicate your choice.'⁹⁴

Churchill saw no reason why CRUSADER should fail: the balance was slowly tilting against Rommel's army – now called the 'Panzergruppe Afrika,' as the ULTRA intercepts showed. Auchinleck would be pitting 658 tanks against Rommel's 168, and 660 aeroplanes against 642; it all depended on

whether Rommel could be forced to accept battle. On October 24 Churchill approved the new date, November 18: 'Enemy is now ripe for [the] sickle,' he telegraphed to Auchinleck. 'This is the moment to strike hard. I have every confidence you will do so. Throw in all, and count on me.'⁹⁵

The Germans were already claiming to be only thirty-eight miles from Moscow, but there were signs from the Oracle that Hitler's offensive was in difficulties: unseasonably early autumn rains were turning the Russian highways and battlefields into quagmires. ('Rather a good report from Russia, from a good source,' recorded Cadogan, referring to a decoded signal).

How impatiently Churchill awaited the credit that a victorious CRUSADER would bring! In his mind's eye he saw Auchinleck's troops storming into Tripoli, capital of Libya, then invading Sicily and leaping across to Italy; he saw R.A.F. bombers lifting from airfields in Libya, Sicily, Malta, and Sardinia to devastate the Italian mainland; he glimpsed troops arriving on Libya's frontiers with French Tunisia, and General Weygand drawing the appropriate conclusions in Britain's favour; he saw Spain, occupied briefly by Hitler but rising against her invaders. He saw too, as he wrote to Oliver Lyttelton on October 25, 'the continuance of the murders and reprisals, slaughter of hostages etc. which is now going on in so many countries.'^{96*}



In the private message which he had drafted to Roosevelt on October 20 he had made much of his fear that after stabilising the Russian front Hitler might invade Britain with 'perhaps fifty or sixty divisions;' he even mentioned reports of eight hundred tank-landing-craft which the Nazis were amassing, reports which he himself later dismissed as untrustworthy.⁹⁸ In

* Encouraged by the S.O.E., French assassins had murdered a German army colonel at Nantes on October 20, 1941, with the desired result: the Germans shot fifty French hostages. Even de Gaulle balked at this cynical shedding of his countrymen's blood, and Maurice Schumann broadcast instructions over the B.B.C.'s French service not to assassinate any more Germans; de Gaulle repeated this advice on the twenty-third. The Polish leader General Wladyslaw Sikorski, lunching that day with Churchill, drew his attention to these broadcasts and accused de Gaulle of 'Pétainism.' Churchill protested to the B.B.C., and asked Bracken: 'Is it true that the B.B.C. deprecated killing by Frenchmen of Germans? Let me see what was said.' At his instance, that night the war cabinet decided not to dissuade individual Frenchmen from killing 'their German oppressors.' Hundreds of French hostages would pay for this policy with their lives.⁹⁷

1939, so Churchill wrote, trying to alarm the president, Hitler had attacked Poland; in 1940, France; in 1941, Russia. Would it be Britain's turn in 1942 – and who would be his victim, he asked portentously, in 1943? In this message, Churchill also revealed the political anxieties that underlay his plea to Stalin to withdraw Soviet troops from North Iran. 'The Russians,' he lamented, 'much disturb Persia by their presence, their theories, and their behaviour.' He feared what he called 'the outbreak of disorder.'⁹⁹ It is not easy to reconcile these lines to Roosevelt with his pledge to Stalin only one week earlier that Britain would 'not seek any advantage' in Iran at Moscow's expense.

He allowed the cabinet a glimpse of his submerged hostility toward the Soviet Union on October 23. Of course, he said, he was glad to assist the Russians in killing Germans – but with weapons, not with troops. Sending 'bodies' to Russia, he said, would be like sending coals to Newcastle. Had not the Russians double-crossed Britain by signing their treaty with Nazi Germany in August 1939? For two years Stalin had aided Hitler while himself annexing eastern Poland and the Baltic states and attacking Finland. Pownall, encouraged by this frankness, echoed several colleagues' private feelings when he now wrote, 'Would that the two loathsome monsters, Germany and Russia, drown together in a death grip in the winter mud.'¹⁰⁰ To Churchill too, the defeat of the Soviets seemed imminent, and he began talking of them as a liability.

Eden told his secretary on October 27 he was worried by this change.¹⁰¹ The next day Ambassador Cripps cabled from Kuibyshev a renewed plea to come home. In a savage retort, Churchill rehearsed all the old complaints – how Stalin had signed that pact with Hitler, and only had himself to blame now; and how the Russians had allowed France to die in 1940; * and how the Soviet Union had not entered into consultations with Britain until Hitler attacked them in June 1941. 'We were left alone for a whole year,' Churchill lectured his far-Left ambassador, 'while every communist in England, under orders from Moscow, did his best to hamper our war effort.'

That a government with this record should accuse us of trying to make conquests in Africa or gain advantages in Persia at their expense . . . leaves me quite cold.

* German records show that Stalin and Molotov actually congratulated Hitler on each of his 1940 victories over Norway, the Low Countries, and France.

To allow two or three British empire divisions to be sent into the heart of Russia as Cripps wanted, 'to be surrounded and cut to pieces as a symbolic sacrifice,' would be silly. 'I hope,' he added, 'that I shall never be called upon to argue the case in public.'¹⁰²

THEIR INDIGNATION roused by the Fleet-street press, the British public, and especially the working classes, stood solidly behind the Russian armies, and the apparent indolence of their own government attracted biting criticism in the House before it rose on October 23, 1941. The Welsh firebrand M.P. Aneurin Bevan, the Labour Party's most compelling orator, told the government to govern or to go. That afternoon, Labour's bibulous deputy leader Arthur Greenwood ('more sober and more confiding than usual') told an editor that Winston was aware that his popularity was slipping.¹⁰³ Churchill's parliamentary private secretary Colonel George Harvie-Watt came to Chequers that Monday morning to discuss Bevan's dangerous campaign. 'The Communists,' Winston described afterwards to Randolph, 'are posing as the only patriots in the country. The Admirals, Generals, and Air Marshals chant their stately hymn of Safety First. . . In the midst of this I have to restrain my natural pugnacity by sitting on my own head. How bloody!'¹⁰⁴

The anxious and chanting gentlemen to whom he was referring were undoubtedly General Sir Harold Alexander, Air Vice Marshal Sir Donald Stevenson, and Admiral Sir James Somerville, all of whom he had invited down to Chequers for the night on Friday October 24, to discuss WHIPCORD, an invasion of Sicily. Somerville, Flag Officer commanding Force 'H' at Gibraltar, had flown in four days previously 'in order,' as he put it privately afterwards, 'to try & dispose of some of the wet ideas . . . in active circulation & emanating chiefly from Chequers.' He and Alexander drove down together to Chequers, where they arrived at six P.M. After dinner, noted the admiral in his tiny pocket diary, they had a 'tremendous argument over WHIPCORD. P.M. getting very angry at objections and difficulties. However we put all the cards on the table.' As was his inhospitable way Winston did not allow his guests to retire for the night until three A.M.

Saturday October 25 dawned dull, rainy and overcast. 'Saw the P.M. again at ten in bed,' jotted Somerville, '& talked for about 40 [minutes]. Very angry at first but mollified later & very flattering finally.'¹⁰⁵ 'Winston,' he wrote in a private letter, 'handed out butter with both hands, but as he treated us to a version of the war in the Western Med., which lasted till

3:00 [A.M.], I was able to give him my views on Oran [Mers el-Kébir] & Dakar* including the passage of the cruisers. I realise now I fell into a trap because he obviously wanted the other side of the picture in order to dispose of it in the *Second World Crisis* which is passing through his head in draft.' Fortunately for Somerville, the First Sea Lord ('not so tired as I expected') had tipped him off in advance about the wildcat schemes that Winston was likely to broach at Chequers – 'which,' described Somerville, 'he did.' He expressed 'profound surprise & concern' when they came out.¹⁰⁶ He was aghast about the new project for a rapid invasion of Sicily, WHIPCORDER. Even as they were talking, at about one A.M. a telegram arrived from Auchinleck and Tedder in Cairo; both of these commanders also flatly opposed WHIPCORDER. 'They did not consider Sicily either practicable or necessary,' Churchill later recalled. Somerville would describe the scene in another private letter: 'I was down at Chequers when the remarks of the C.-in-C.s, Middle East, arrived –,' he wrote:

The P.M. gave an angry snort, thrust it into my hand & said, 'Read that, Admiral, & tell me what you think of it.' [I] read it & said, 'There's a lot of sound horse-sense in this & facts are being faced.' As it bore out nearly all the arguments I had been putting forward, I was naturally in agreement.

Since both of the other guests, Alexander and Stevenson, had their minds focused on what they would do when they got to Sicily, or what the admiral sardonically called 'the promised land,' they were indignant at his criticism. The rest of the time was spent deliberating on what he would generalise, perhaps unfairly, as 'important decisions . . . relegated to the middle watch [two to six A.M.] amidst the aromas of very old brandy and expensive cigars.' ('I speak with some acidity,' he apologised in this letter to Admiral Cunningham, 'because I've seen it all happening.')¹⁰⁷

AFTER THESE visitors – Somerville, Alexander, and Stevenson – had left on Sunday Miss Roper came in as usual to massage Winston. General Brooke and the Prof. came down for dinner: it was again eleven P.M. by the time they had disposed of the port, the brandy, the snuff, and all the other post-

* Two particularly unhappy naval controversies of the second half of 1940, in which orders given by Churchill were open to dispute. Vol. i, 348 *et seq.*, 386 *et seq.*

prandial perquisites of prime-ministerial power. 'After dinner,' recorded Brooke, 'the P.M. sent for his dressing gown to put over his "siren suit."' Thus silkily attired, covered with gold, red, and green dragons, he led his guests upstairs to watch the latest Soviet and German newsreel films. At midnight he sent the Prof. away, as he wanted to be alone with Brooke to discuss *CRUSADER* and *WHIPCORD* and the high hopes he persisted in vesting in them.

They made an odd couple, the elderly prime minister and the perky, alert general who would soon become the British empire's chief of general staff, a man of lightning-swift speech, his tongue seldom moving slower than his brain, and for ever licking suddenly around his lips like a chameleon.¹⁰⁸

Brooke did not tolerate fools lightly and he was often more abrupt with the prime minister in public than was seemly. He was abstemious, quick, tidy, and exact; the P.M. was just the opposite. He had an ill-concealed contempt, said Ismay, for the P.M.'s ignorance of fighting machines.¹⁰⁹ Inevitably, as the war progressed the general would become more and more impatient with his master. He hated Churchill's pathological unfairness toward generals like John Dill and Alan Cunningham, and was alienated by his monumental egoism, particularly as displayed in his post-war writings.¹¹⁰

By contrast, the prime minister was lisping and ponderous, but even at two-fifteen his flow of thought and oratory did not stop – he now suggested that they have some sandwiches sent into the hall. Like Mackenzie King two months before, Brooke watched bemused as his prime minister cranked up the gramophone and trotted around the room in his flowing and florid dressing gown, a half-munched sandwich in one hand, giving occasional skips in time with the tune. On each dance lap he stopped near the fireplace where the general was sitting close to the glowing embers, and unburdened himself of a fresh thought or quotation. Given the P.M.'s worries, Brooke found his lightness of heart truly astonishing.¹¹¹

The next day, October 27, this brief euphoria evaporated. The P.M. returned to London late to avoid a crowd of demonstrators outside No. 10 Downing-street. He found that the chiefs of staff had now recommended unanimously that *WHIPCORD* too should be abandoned – the operation against Sicily would be not only unnecessary, but fraught with risk; a flop now would set them back by years. At that evening's defence committee meeting Dudley Pound made a statement so clearly opposed to the operation that Churchill threw up his hands and said, 'Well, that settles it.'

'But,' [he] added with a rasp [*reported Somerville in a letter*], 'Mind you, I didn't prepare it – it was the chiefs of staff who prepared it, not me.'

This was perfectly true.¹¹² 'Poor Winston very depressed,' wrote Cadogan, adding with relief: 'Got away by midnight.' Somerville's diary concurs. 'Went to Defence meeting where chief of naval staff [Pound] gave very clear picture. PM said WHIPCORN was off & [curse]d everyone soundly especially [the] chiefs of staff who had put it up.' 'A sad affair,' he echoed in a private letter, '& a wicked waste of effort & time which could have been spent more profitably.'¹¹³



On that day, October 27, 1941, Roosevelt broadcast in his regular 'fire-side chat' series a statement which showed that he had – apparently – fallen for the 'Nazi documents' which the British secret service had planted on his government.¹¹⁴ It was Navy Day, and the president talked first about the recent German operations in the Atlantic – one American destroyer attacked on September 4, another on October 17 with the loss of eleven sailors. 'We have wished to avoid shooting,' he intoned emotionally. 'But the shooting has started. In the long run all that will matter is who fired the last shot.'

Then he played the trump card. 'Hitler,' he declaimed into the microphone, 'has often protested that his plans for conquest do not extend across the Atlantic Ocean. His submarines and raiders prove otherwise. So does the entire design of his new world order. For example, I have in my possession a secret map made in Germany by Hitler's government, by the planners of the new world order. It is a map of South America and part of Central America as Hitler proposes to organise it. To-day in this area there are fourteen separate countries. The geographical experts of Berlin, however, have ruthlessly obliterated all existing boundary lines and have divided South America into five vassal states bringing the whole continent under their domination. . . This map makes clear the Nazi design not only against South America, but against the United States itself.'¹¹⁵

8: *Really Not Quite Normal*

TRADITIONALLY, AS the foreign office only now objected, Britain had always retained the right of independent negotiation with Japan. In the summer of 1941 however, as we have remarked,* Churchill was content to leave the handling of the dispute with this formidable Far East naval power in American hands. His ambassador in Tokyo, Sir Robert Craigie, expressed profound dismay that such matters of vital concern to the British empire should be under discussion between Washington and Tokyo, 'without our being given anything but the barest outline of what was happening.' Craigie warned on November 1 of crises within the Dominions, and especially in Australia, if Britain continued to absent herself from these crucial discussions. 'What we really want,' wrote Craigie, 'is the United States in the war on our side, and Japan really neutral – and it is premature to abandon hope as yet of bringing this off.' Making little attempt to conceal the object of his derision, he added: 'If Hitler's motto is "one by one," the motto of those who take too lightly the prospect of Japan's entry into the war appears to be "the more the merrier".'¹

Only a few days previously, Churchill had again made plain that he believed Tokyo to be bluffing, assuring his cabinet that he was 'still inclined to think' that Japan would not 'run into war with the A.B.C.D. [American, British, Chinese, Dutch] powers' unless the USSR had first been 'broken.'²

President Roosevelt's actions since the meeting at Placentia Bay were chosen with equally little thought for their likely consequences. More than a hint of misplaced recrimination would creep into Churchill's subsequent memoirs, *The Second World War*, about the pass to which he claimed his late friend had brought their relations with Japan in 1941 – first by 'his' oil

* Pages 99–100.

embargo which had fatefully driven her into a corner; then by his refusal to meet the moderate Japanese prime minister Prince Konoye, of which London learned only through MAGIC; and finally by Roosevelt's about-face on the *modus vivendi*, or means of co-existing, which was originally drafted to be offered to the Japanese as late as November 1941 and which might have prevented war with Japan altogether. This document would be replaced by brusque demands of which Washington gave Whitehall no word, and which indeed (as Churchill would querulously write after the war) 'went beyond anything for which we had ventured to ask.'³

Roosevelt was buffeted, however, no less than Prince Konoye in Tokyo, by the dictates of a belligerent 'war council,' as he called it, in Washington: Stimson, Ickes, Marshall, Knox, and Hull all believed in nudging Japan to the brink, while the American forces prepared to do battle with her. For this readiness they had asked three months in August; but, such often being the ways of military planners, they persisted in asking for 'three months' in August, in September, in October, and even as late as November 1941.⁴

Stimson was particularly opposed to anything smacking of appeasement. On October 6, he had recommended to Hull that they demand that Japan evacuate her troops from China, and promise not to attack the Soviet Union; meanwhile the United States should string Japan along for 'three months,' but these talks 'should not be allowed to ripen into a personal conference' between Roosevelt and Konoye – this would only lead to concessions at China's expense.

Having failed to persuade Roosevelt to meet him at Honolulu to dispose of their grievances, Konoye resigned on October 16; the unmistakably belligerent General Hideki Tojo replaced him. Roosevelt called a two-hour meeting with Hull, Stimson, Marshall, and Knox that day. 'The Japanese Navy is beginning to talk almost as radically as the Japanese Army,' Stimson dictated after the meeting, in one of his more significant diary entries, 'and so we face the delicate question of the diplomatic fencing to be done so as to be sure that Japan was put into the wrong and made the first bad move, uh, overt move.' The U.S. chief of naval operations, Admiral Stark, advised Admiral Husband E. Kimmel, commander-in-chief of the U.S. Pacific fleet based on the Hawaiian islands, of the 'grave situation' that Konoye's resignation had created, and he spoke of the 'strong possibility' that Japan would now attack *Russia*.⁵ Underscoring this, on the seventeenth Stark wrote to Kimmel: 'Personally I do not believe the Japs are going to sail into us and the message I sent you merely stated the possibility.'

What Kimmel was *not* told was of the thickening harvest of MAGIC intercepts that seemed, certainly in retrospect, to display an ominous Japanese interest in Pearl Harbor itself, his own fleet base in Hawaii. In one secret message transmitted fifteen days before, and duly intercepted by Washington, Tokyo had instructed its consul in Honolulu to spy on the American fleet anchored at Pearl; he was asked to plot a grid-map of the harbour and 'make mention of where there are two or more vessels alongside the same wharf.'⁶ Rear-Admiral Kelly Turner, chief of the U.S. navy's war plans division, overruled the naval Intelligence specialists who wanted this worrying intercept relayed across the Pacific to Kimmel.⁷ Not until December 3 did the luckless Admiral Kimmel get his first hint of the existence of MAGIC.⁸ In the first week of December U.S. army codebreakers deciphered further instructions from Tokyo to an agent in Honolulu to ascertain 'with great secrecy' which of Kimmel's warships were currently anchored there.⁹

It is important to remark that these clues were not swamped by similar intercepts about other targets: those referring to Pearl Harbor easily topped the list numerically. In mid-October 1941, however, as the Soviet Union's days seemed numbered, all the experts expected Japan to jump on the Soviet Union, not the United States or the British empire. At Churchill's cabinet on October 16 Eden discussed what to do if Moscow fell. 'Ought we not,' he asked, 'to consult the United States about what action should be taken if Japan went to war with Russia?' Churchill ruled that Britain must not commit herself to war with Japan unless Japan went to war with the United States.¹⁰

Even now, while preparing for war, Tokyo maintained its efforts to reach a peaceful agreement. Lord Halifax recorded what he called a 'mysterious' visit by the Japanese ambassador to him in Washington on the sixteenth: 'He hadn't a great deal to say,' he entered in his diary, 'but did not suggest that they were near a breaking point. He seemed desperately anxious to find what he called a "*modus vivendi*".'

CHURCHILL WAS on the verge of taking a decision in the naval war which, more than any other would result in the destruction of British prestige throughout the Far East and, in the long run, contribute to the loss of the British empire – the decision, against all the expert advice of the admiralty, to send two of Britain's fastest and newest capital ships out to the Far East where, operating without air cover, they would be at the mercy of any determined enemy.¹¹

It is fair to remind the reader that Churchill took this naval decision against the background of mid-October, not December 1941. He expected Japan to attack a crippled Soviet Union or perhaps the frail Dutch East Indies, but not the British empire or the United States. The extremists were however at that very moment gaining the upper hand in Tokyo. Reporting the appointment of the anti-British, anti-American General Tojo as the new Japanese prime minister, in a paper circulated on October 17, Eden reminded the defence committee of the admiralty's August 1941 proposal to send out to the Far East half a dozen of Britain's older capital ships.

The admiralty had, only the week before, signalled to Admiral Cunningham about sending four 'R'-class battleships (*Royal Sovereign*, *Revenge*, *Resolution*, and *Ramilles*) out to the Indian Ocean 'and possibly further East,' followed by the battleship *Nelson* as soon as she had been repaired. Learning of this signal, Churchill had at once directed Admiral Pound to cancel this fleet movement as it had not been approved by the defence committee – as though this formality had impeded him in the past.¹²

When the defence committee discussed it that afternoon, October 17, Churchill proposed the same master plan as in August – to send out Britain's two finest and fastest capital ships as a deterrent. The battle-cruiser *Repulse* was already at Singapore; he suggested they dispatch the mighty new battleship *Prince of Wales* to join her. The complaisant Admiral Pound was however away that evening – and the Vice-Chief of Naval Staff, Rear-Admiral Tom Phillips, an implacable critic of Winston, was sitting in for him.

Phillips, wrote an American admiral, was barely five-foot-two but decidedly the intellectual type – 'good stuff, all right, and has a first rate brain.'¹³ He was not the type to compromise on matters of strategy; he strongly disagreed with Churchill's bombing strategy. Pound, Churchill could handle; but Phillips, this 'pocket Napoleon,' he could not. Phillips had proved right too often: he had opposed the P.M.'s diversion of British empire troops from Libya to Greece in March 1941, and the P.M. had denounced him as a 'defeatist' – 'he was lucky not to be called a coward,' commented Admiral Godfrey, 'but people who disagreed with the prime minister had to expect abuse.' Soured by the fact that Phillips was now proving right over the failure of the bombing offensive as well, Churchill had broken off all personal relations, and spoke with him only when government protocol required. The argument in this defence committee was accordingly acrimonious and lengthy. Phillips described it in a letter to Pound afterwards.

The prime minister [he wrote] at once raised the old question of sending out the *Prince of Wales* and gave the defence committee all the arguments that he has used before. He was also most scathing in his comments on the admiralty attitude to this matter.¹⁴

Churchill overruled him, drawing broad support from the usual *claqueurs* among his cabinet colleagues. He referred once again to the example set by Hitler's formidable battleship *Tirpitz* in Norway, which was compelling Britain to keep on guard a force 'three times her weight.' Eden followed boldly where his master had trod. 'If the *Prince of Wales* were to call at Capetown on her way to the Far East,' he chimed in, 'news of her movements would quickly reach Japan, and the deterrent effect would begin from that date.' Attlee then lined up behind these two, Eden and Churchill, to ba-aa against the admiralty's A. V. Alexander and Phillips; Churchill recommended that they send out one battleship with one aircraft-carrier to join *Repulse* at Singapore. The final decision was deferred until October 20, when Admiral Pound himself could attend.¹⁵

Before then he received two pieces of relevant information. On the eighteenth Lord Halifax reported from Washington on a proposal by Cordell Hull that by allowing a small, isolated barter deal with Tokyo (cotton for silk) they might strengthen the peace party there.¹⁶ Churchill scrawled in the margin, 'This is the thin end of the appeasement wedge,' but he urged Roosevelt a few days later to 'stronger . . . action' in the cause of peace; it seemed that Washington still hoped, or needed, to postpone confrontation.¹⁷ On the same day Tokyo had cabled to Admiral Nomura, their ambassador in Washington, this reassuring message in the PURPLE code: 'Regardless of the make-up of the new cabinet, negotiations with the United States shall be continued.'¹⁸

AT NOON-THIRTY on Monday, October 20, the defence committee examined Churchill's proposal to send *Prince of Wales* out to join the battle-cruiser *Repulse*. Admiral Pound strongly opposed the move. The presence of one fast battleship would not, he stated, deter the Japanese from sending invasion convoys to Malaya. Churchill interjected dismissively that he did not foresee any Japanese attack in force on Malaya – what he feared was raids on the empire's seaborne trade by Japanese battle-cruisers or cruisers. '[Churchill] did not,' the record once more shows, 'believe that the Japanese would go to war with the United States and ourselves.'

Somehow he prevailed – or partly so. Pound suggested that the battleship *Prince of Wales* should go to Capetown ‘forthwith,’ placing her on the cusp between the Atlantic and Indian Oceans; they could always decide on her subsequent movements after she got there.¹⁹ Churchill agreed to this. A few days later he ruled that there was no need for several days to tell either Roosevelt or Mackenzie King about the battleship’s movements. ‘Now that WHIPCORD is defunct,’ he pointed out, ‘it seems very likely she will go the whole way.’ There was no need to make up their minds about this yet.²⁰

Determined to get his own way, Churchill used his favourite weapon to split the opposition – banishment. He announced that he was sending Admiral Phillips, one of the most implacable of his foes, out with the battleship to take command of this new Eastern Fleet.

The appointment aroused the ire of the entire navy: Phillips was a desk-officer, totally lacking in seagoing experience. Churchill did not care: the admiral’s task in the Far East would be to deter, he was sure, not actually to fight. No record survives of their last meeting, which took place at 12:15 P.M. on the twenty-third in his room at the House.²¹ The next day the little rear-admiral hoisted his flag in *Prince of Wales*, and sailed from Greenock for the Far East, never to return.



Thus another weekend arrived – and with it another houseful of guests at Chequers. Some of these we have already met, high-ranking officers pleading with Churchill to abandon his wildcat schemes to invade Sicily and Norway. Late on Saturday, October 25, a slim, aristocratic, and rather effete ex-destroyer captain arrived for dinner. This was the forty-year-old Lord Louis Mountbatten, an officer related in the perverse way that royal blood contrives, to a legion of modern English princes, both noble and ignoble, and of German gauleiters and S.S. *Obergruppenführers*. Until a few days earlier, ‘Dickie’ Mountbatten had been in mid-Pacific, looking over the imposing battleships of Roosevelt’s Pacific Fleet in Hawaii. He had taken rather longer to comply with his recall to England than Churchill had expected – ‘More than 12 days have been wasted,’ the latter huffed in one missive: ‘He should come at once.’²² Mountbatten brought with him a hand-written message from Roosevelt. ‘Mountbatten,’ this read, ‘has been really useful to our Navy people and he will tell you of his visit to the Fleet at Hawaii. The Jap situation is definitely worse and I think they are head[ed] North

[i.e., against the Soviet Union] – however in spite of this you and I have two months of respite in the Far East.’²³

Before the young naval officer departed on Sunday, Churchill briefed him on the mysterious job ‘of the highest interest’ of which he had made mention: Mountbatten was to succeed Admiral of the Fleet Sir Roger Keyes as Director of Combined Operations. The officer jotted in his diary: ‘P.M. gave me staggering orders on my new job.’ Churchill brushed aside his pleas to be allowed to return to the aircraft-carrier H.M.S. *Illustrious*, jesting, ‘The best thing you can hope to do there is to repeat your last achievement, and get yourself sunk.’ Mountbatten’s task would be to train forces for amphibious assaults on the enemy coast. ‘Your whole attention,’ his written orders would specify, ‘is to be concentrated on the offensive.’ ‘Anyway,’ Mountbatten wrote to his wife, ‘it is all very thrilling and exciting.’²⁴

HITLER’S OFFENSIVE on the Moscow front had unexpectedly stalled, as torrential rains choked the battlefield in an impassable quagmire. On October 24, 1941 Churchill voiced to the Director of Military Intelligence his impression that the fighting there had diminished; he asked when the Russian winter would set in, and the chances of Moscow falling before then. ‘I should be inclined,’ he said, ‘to put it even.’ The D.M.I. replied that supply difficulties were bedevilling the German advance. The roads were impassable. Frosts would normally begin on the first day of December, and permanent snow from the middle of that month. As for whether the Germans would take Moscow before then, the D.M.I. put the odds at ‘5 to 4 on its capture.’²⁵

As though slightly shifting the burden of responsibility for his resolve to dispatch *Prince of Wales*, on October 27 Churchill informed his cabinet that John Curtin, the new prime minister of Australia, had asked Britain to send out a ‘first class battleship’ to the Pacific. Churchill’s further remarks on this occasion show that, since failure of the Nazi offensive against Moscow, he considered that there was now less risk of any hostilities from Japan until the spring of 1942. He hoped, he said, to station the new battleship permanently in the Far East, but her future would be reviewed, he promised, when she arrived at Capetown: because there was always the danger of *Tirpitz* breaking out into the Atlantic. Both Admiral Pound and the First Lord of the Admiralty stayed on in the cabinet room afterward, no doubt to argue the toss once more with Churchill.²⁶

The intention was for the new aircraft-carrier *Indomitable* to join the outbound battleship at Capetown. At present the carrier was working up in

the Caribbean. They might then sail on in consort to join the battle-cruiser *Repulse*. On October 30, the chiefs of staff had signalled to the C.-in-C., Far East: 'It is of first importance to avoid war with Japan at this stage.' Japan must be made to realise that from now on she would meet with united opposition; she must be induced to reverse her misguided policies and either 'abandon [the] Axis or at least remain neutral.'²⁷

'This,' observed Lord Halifax in his diary, 'will no doubt heat up the Japanese when the news is known. . . I still don't think that the Japs will jump over the fence, and it is interesting to reflect that many people were certain that they were going to do so last February.'^{28*}

There was evidently no more talk of reviewing this ship's future after Capetown. Churchill had already cast his mind far beyond Table Mountain; beyond, indeed, even the Indian Ocean. On October 20 he had dictated in a pious letter to President Roosevelt, a grand *tour d'horizon*, a promise that if the United States should 'become at war' with Japan, then Britain would declare war 'within the hour' – an unconditional guarantee which he was to reiterate many times over the next six weeks, and one which invites comparison with Neville Chamberlain's fateful March 1939 promise to Poland. Churchill boasted that before Christmas 1941 Britain would provide a 'considerable battle squadron' for the Indian and Pacific Oceans. He told John Curtin the same on the last day of October – *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse* would meet in the Indian Ocean 'in order further to deter Japan.' Perhaps significantly, Churchill's appointment diary shows 'D.P.' first pencilled, then inked in, that day: Admiral Sir Dudley Pound, still distressed at what Churchill was doing. Churchill repeated the boast to Roosevelt the next day, bragging: 'There is nothing like having something that can catch and kill anything.' 'The firmer your attitude and ours,' he chided the president, 'the less chance of their taking the plunge.'²⁹ He also kept Jan Smuts abreast of the battleship's movements, referring to Admiral Phillips, employing the kind of courteous white lie that seems to characterise the English Parliamentarian, as 'a great friend of mine.'³⁰

On November 3 a millennia-old Bermuda reef, a rock of ages, disabled *Indomitable*, the navy's newest aircraft-carrier. Churchill appeared unaffected. The fleet's eastward movement had become one of those dangerous obsessions on which other historians have remarked in him. 'With the object of keeping Japan quiet,' he informed Stalin, 'we are sending our latest battle-

* Vol. i, page 511.

ship, *Prince of Wales*, which can catch and kill any Japanese ship, into the Indian Ocean.’³¹ Informed opinion in London now held that the British empire was less at risk of early Japanese attack than the Dutch; on November 4, Sir Robert Craigie forwarded from Tokyo a medium-grade Intelligence report to this effect. Commenting on this, the C.-in-C. Far East and C.-in-C. China expressed their view as being that the Japanese were more likely to step up their action against China than to contemplate any attack on the British in Malaya or Burma.³²

Somebody had meanwhile quietly taken the decision that *Prince of Wales* should continue relentlessly onward from Capetown to Singapore. The surviving records are silent, but it must have been Churchill. Writing about it privately years later the official naval historian Captain Stephen Roskill would find himself, as he put it, ‘in deep trouble’ with Churchill who was by then – in 1953 – prime minister once again. In one letter Roskill wrote that Churchill would not ‘come clean’ about his responsibility for issuing the order ‘against D.P.’s reiterated opposition to the move.’³³ ‘Pound,’ he wrote privately, ‘was absolutely right on that issue & only yielded under very heavy pressure; but it is mighty hard to be allowed to tell the truth.’ In even deeper ‘trouble’ months later, the historian related in another private letter: ‘A b.f. of a civil servant in this office, without my knowledge, sent a proof copy [of the official history *The War at Sea*] to the Secretary of the Cabinet, who gave it to the P.M. [Churchill] with those passages sidelined. Then the balloon went up.’ Rather than alter his considered conclusions, the historian threatened to resign.³⁴ ‘It is futile for me to try & continue my history,’ he wrote in a subsequent private letter, ‘until that issue is resolved. . . Churchill is really the nigger in our wood pile. . . He doesn’t understand the sea.’³⁵

Writing about this controversial decision himself, Churchill took refuge in the passive voice, that ‘Dytchley’ of the English tongue, stating merely that ‘it was decided.’³⁶ In a letter in March 1942, Pound would loyally accept the responsibility; probably he had bowed to Churchill’s will at a private meeting.³⁷ Lord Winster told Hugh Dalton afterwards that the P.M. had summoned Pound to Chequers and inundated him with political arguments, ‘as a result of which,’ noted Dalton, ‘the lame, deaf, sleepy old gentleman returned to London prepared to say that the ships should go.’ This was what was called ‘getting the approval of the admiralty.’³⁸ The register shows that Admiral Pound certainly did take lunch at Chequers on Sunday, November 9.³⁹ On the following day Churchill spoke at the Mansion House. ‘I am able to announce to you,’ he said, ‘that we now feel ourselves strong

enough to provide a powerful naval force of heavy ships, with its necessary ancillary vessels, for service if needed in the Indian and Pacific Oceans.'

Learning that the current timetable called for the new battleship and *Repulse* to meet at Singapore on about the first day of December, Churchill cautioned Pound on November 11: 'I do not quite see what all this haste is to arrive at Singapore for a pow-wow. This is one of those cases where I am for Safety First.'⁴⁰

Shortly Pound replied that the battleship would now reach Singapore on December 6; Churchill inked the word 'Good' on this reply.



During the last week of October 1941 Churchill had been occupied with more than merely the future of one battleship. He had prodded and peered at maps of India, the Western Desert, the North Atlantic, and the Eastern Front. A gallery of names and faces from the past and present had paraded through No. 10 Downing-street – the king of Greece, the unfortunate Polish General Wladyslaw Sikorski and his ambassador Count Edward Raczynski, and Air Chief-Marshal Sir Hugh 'Stuffy' Dowding, pestering him for permission to publish his memoirs; the Burmese prime minister U Saw had hovered through both Chequers and No. 10, pressing his country's claim for Dominion status.⁴¹ There had been no less important committee meetings on Britain's night air defence and on bomber production too.*

On October 29 Churchill had visited Harrow, his old school, with his old schoolchum Leo Amery, another Old Harrovian. After listening once again and moist-eyed to the new verse to the school anthem which had been composed in his honour, he delivered a short speech, telling the youngsters never, never, to give in to mere force however overwhelming.⁴² The next afternoon Winston and Clementine spent at Claridge's, feasting at the

*There is in file PREM.4/69/1 at the Public Record Office a table of 1941 meetings held up to November 10, 1941, showing those over which Churchill presided:

<i>Committee</i>	<i>No of meetings</i>	<i>Those with P.M. in chair</i>
War cabinet	111	97
Battle of the Atlantic	16	15
defence committee (Operations)	69	60
defence committee (Supply)	13	12
Chiefs of staff committee	391	23
Tank Parliament	4	4
Night Air Defence	5	3

invitation of Sir Henry Strakosch, the financier whose loan of some £20,000 in February 1938, still unrepaid, had rescued Churchill from the brink of bankruptcy and summary expulsion from political life.^{43*}

On the last day of this month a German submarine torpedoed a destroyer escorting an Atlantic convoy. The ship, which went down with 115 men, turned out to be the American *Reuben James*. The P.M. conveyed carefully enunciated grief to the president by telegram.⁴⁴ It cannot have escaped his attention that even this humiliation was not enough to elicit a declaration of war by the United States on Germany.

ALTHOUGH – OR perhaps even because – the Nazi bombing had ended six months before, the mood in London was becoming more overcast with each month that passed. Morale was disintegrating; the people were frustrated and unhappy. The bombed-out basements of fashionable Bond-street stores had been flooded to provide water reserves for fighting future fires. Stripped of its elegant iron railings Eaton-square had become squalidly suburban. Whisky was virtually unobtainable to the common man: Scotch was now produced for export only and the Canadian distilleries were producing more conventional chemicals of war.⁴⁵

Fortunately Churchill had liquor stocks that would last him for some time to come. Weekending at Dytchley, his Oxfordshire hideaway, with Anthony Eden and Sam Hoare on the first two days of November 1941, he remarked to visiting American author John Gunther ('after he had a few drinks inside of him') that he was not going to be pushed into a Second Front prematurely.⁴⁶

His imagination cruised over to the Far East, catching up on the way with his warships even now ploughing through the South Atlantic to Capetown; he chafed at the slow seventeen knots that *Prince of Wales* was making, detained by her accompanying destroyers. In his mind's eye, he already saw his powerful new squadron lurking in the Indian Ocean, a menace to all Japan's evil intentions. 'Fix up the best plan meanwhile,' he dictated to Admiral Pound, and instructed him to consider widening the publicity accompanying this new force – for example, securing the 'Thanks of Australasia' to Britain for the formation of this eastern Battle Fleet.⁴⁷

* Vol. i, page 104. Strakosch had made similar 'loans' to two other cabinet ministers as became apparent when his Will – formally expunging the debts – was published, as was mandatory, in *The Times* on February 6, 1944.

After meeting the chiefs of staff at ten P.M. on the fourth – with ‘Dickie’ Mountbatten putting in his first formal appearance as Director of Combined Operations – for a discussion on the Far East and Russia, Churchill told the foreign secretary that he was going away for a few days, inspecting war factories at Sheffield; would Eden mind the shop and convene the chiefs of staff if need arose? Eden preened himself at this further proof that he was heir-apparent. But when later still they talked, over whiskies in the P.M.’s room, of a projected visit by generals Wavell and Paget to Moscow, and Eden, smitten by wanderlust, suggested that ‘it might be useful’ if he too went along, the prime minister would not hear of it. Such a visit, they agreed, would sit better after the results of CRUSADER were visible. How much depended on Auchinleck and his desert offensive!⁴⁸

CRUSADER WAS NOW only two weeks away. The tanks, the guns, the ammunition, the fuel were all out there, and it was high time too. Churchill had told nobody – not even Roosevelt – about this project. ‘I cannot tell you,’ he comforted Stalin that same day, ‘about our immediate military plans any more than you can tell me about yours, but rest assured we are not going to be idle.’⁴⁹

Hitler’s armies were still plodding into Russia, but making progress only in the south where the weather was still dry and the oil of the Caucasus provided a magnet of attraction. Stalin was in a churlish mood. He declined to hold joint staff consultations, and now insisted that Britain declare war forthwith on Finland, Hungary, and Romania; these countries had joined in Hitler’s attack on the Soviet Union. Churchill squirmed at the prospect. Britain had many friends in all three countries. In his message to Stalin he rather lamely excused their attack by describing them as Hitler’s ‘catspaws.’ ‘A British declaration of war,’ he argued, ‘would only freeze them all and make it look as if Hitler were the head of a grand European alliance solid against us.’

Generals Dill and Pownall were anxious to move two British divisions and seven R.A.F. squadrons into the Caucasus.⁵⁰ Writing to the chiefs of staff on November 5 the P.M. accepted that the Germans would probably reach that region, but he estimated that neither of the two British divisions concerned, the 18th and the 50th, could arrive there in time. He attributed this frustrating impotence to the repeated postponements of CRUSADER, and added gloomily: ‘I cannot feel any confidence that the Germans will be prevented from occupying the Baku oilfields, or that the Russians will effec-

tively destroy these fields. The Russians tell us nothing, and view with great suspicion any inquiries we make on this subject.' Britain's only realistic contribution would be to base four or five bomber squadrons in North Iran, from where they could help to defend the Caucasus or, failing that, bomb the immense Soviet oilfield at Baku and 'try to set the ground alight' – a nostalgic whiff of the odd obsession with 'palls of smoke' that lingered about Churchill's memoranda of mid-1940.⁵¹

The burden of the delay to CRUSADER was telling on him. Photographs taken as he toured Sheffield showed him old and bent. On Saturday November 8 he arrived, exhausted, at Chequers. Here he learned that the navy's Malta-based Force 'K' – the cruisers *Aurora* and *Penelope* and two destroyers, tipped off by the codebreakers of the sailing of the latest two Italian supply convoys vital to Rommel's army in Libya – had almost totally destroyed both convoys, sinking ten merchant ships and two destroyers without loss to themselves. ('C' hastened to reassure Winston that a dummy aeroplane reconnaissance had been flown just before the naval operation, to camouflage the true source of the deadly Intelligence).⁵²

On the previous night however, when R.A.F. Bomber Command had attempted to raid Cologne, Mannheim, and Berlin in foul weather, the bombers had largely missed their targets and one in ten of the five hundred planes had been shot down. That meant the certain death of over three hundred of their finest young airmen.

Churchill expressed anger at these needless casualties at his next cabinet meeting, at five o'clock on November 11: Cadogan ascribed the bomber catastrophe to 'hopeless ignorance about weather conditions & rather too much enthusiasm on [the] part of Peirse' – Air Chief-Marshal Sir Richard Peirse, the commander-in-chief of Bomber Command. 'P.M. angry,' he continued in his diary, '& sad his instructions had been ignored. *Bombing does not affect German morale: let's get that into our heads, & not waste our bombers on these raids.*'⁵³ This outburst was clearly not just Cadogan's private view: Churchill fired off one of his feared ACTION THIS DAY minutes to Sinclair and Portal, rebuking them for forcing the night bombing of Germany without regard to weather. 'We cannot afford losses on that scale,' he dictated, 'in view of the failure of the American bomber programme.' 'It is now the duty,' he laid down, 'of both Fighter and Bomber Command to regather their strength for the spring.'⁵⁴

Three days later he was still snarling that such raids should only be carried out in favourable weather. 'The losses lately have been too heavy.'⁵⁵

Portal had to assure him that the rest of the month's bombing programme would not be carried out unless the weather conditions were 'reasonable.'⁵⁶

THAT SATURDAY evening, as the P.M. and his family gathered at Chequers, Adolf Hitler was in Munich broadcasting a long, taunting speech against him. His own troops were now less than seven miles from Leningrad, he claimed; he mocked Churchill's habitual 'drunkenness,' and boasted that he was longing for the British to invade Norway, France, or even Germany itself. Nazi Germany, as Hitler pointed out, now had three-hundred and fifty million people working for her.



Much of what Hitler said in Munich was uncomfortably true.

The British empire might outnumber the Reich in sheer millions, but three-quarters of its area, and six-sevenths of its population, were in the Indian and Pacific regions. In the Indian empire, difficulties were arising over the continued internment of Pandit Nehru's followers for civil disobedience.

On November 8 the secretary of state for India, Leo Amery, received a recommendation from Lord Linlithgow, the viceroy, that they release all these prisoners except for known communists and revolutionaries.⁵⁷

Amery privately held to the view that having momentarily won the political battle in India, Britain could afford what he called a 'measure of contemptuous clemency.' It would be a 'very serious thing,' he felt, to overrule the viceroy and his new, and predominantly Indian, Executive. Churchill, to whom the mere word India was like a red rag to a bull, automatically disagreed, and for the remainder of November he fought bitterly over this issue.⁵⁸

As you know [he cabled to the viceroy on November 12] I have always felt that a man like Nehru should be treated as a political *détenu* and not as a criminal, and have welcomed every mitigation of his lot. But my general impression of this wholesale release is one of a surrender at the moment of success. Undoubtedly the release of these prisoners as an act of clemency will be proclaimed as a victory for Gandhi's party. Nehru and others will commit fresh offences, requiring the whole process of trial and conviction to be gone through again.⁵⁹

‘Winston and the cabinet frighten me badly,’ Amery wrote five days later, ‘and they are completely out of touch on this question with the mass even of Conservative opinion. I felt very inclined to tell him that he had better release me instead of the prisoners.’ ‘He was smoking a cigar an inch thick and about nine inches long,’ he wrote after that night’s defence committee, ‘a fearsome looking object, and was a little after-dinnerish. A strange combination of great and small qualities.’⁶⁰ When the prime minister finally suggested, later in the month, a quiet release of the prisoners with no public announcement at all, the viceroy, in a further telegram, emphatically rejected the idea as incompatible with the prestige of the government of India.⁶¹ ‘Winston will have to give way,’ recorded Amery, not without satisfaction, after a furious cabinet wrangle on the twenty-fourth, ‘but he is really not quite normal on the subject of India.’⁶²

‘WITH ALL his merits,’ this minister recorded after one cabinet meeting dragged on for nearly three hours, ‘Winston is not a good chairman and the discussion does tend to wander rather aimlessly all over the place.’ ‘A dreadful waste of time,’ he found, writing a few days later.⁶³ As Robert Menzies had discovered it was through his oratory that Churchill directed his war.

On Monday November 10 he delivered the traditional speech at the Lord Mayor’s banquet. Elizabeth Layton, his secretary, who accompanied him on the drive up to London that morning, saw how earnestly he prepared the drafts of these great speeches. ‘It was difficult at first,’ she wrote admiringly in her diary, ‘trying to write in the joggling car, and several times I almost landed on top of him with a bump. However he was quite oblivious to any kind of interruption.’ With his right hand he gesticulated just as he would during the delivery of the actual speech; he gently lisped, or rasped, according to the mood of each dictated sentence. ‘I don’t think anyone,’ Miss Layton concluded, ‘after hearing Churchill composing a speech, could possibly doubt his utter single-mindedness and nobility of purpose.’

It was midday when they arrived at No. 10 Downing-street and he was due to speak at one-fifteen, ‘Now run inside and type like Hell,’ he commanded her. He called in Eden and sent for Miss Layton too: ‘I want the foreign secretary to hear that bit about “this time last year” – just read it.’⁶⁴

We shall examine his remarks about Japan – the passage on which he wished to hear Eden’s views – in its proper context later. Elsewhere in the speech he also claimed to have an air force equal in size to Hitler’s Luftwaffe.

At these words even Sir Archibald Sinclair winced. Churchill's claim was true, the secretary of state for air told one editor, only if they included all the R.A.F.'s training machines; as for their raid on Berlin before the weekend, Sinclair admitted that they had suffered far more than the mere thirty-seven losses announced in the press; the average bombing error had moreover been seven miles, nor was accuracy improving.⁶⁵

Churchill displayed a comparable lack of candour about the submarine war. On average, Germany was manufacturing twenty U-boats a month, while Britain was sinking only two.⁶⁶ He now knew from codebreaking that the enemy had ordered twenty-five submarines from the Atlantic into the Mediterranean. Their first victim was the aircraft-carrier *Ark Royal*, torpedoed on November 12. He sent for Eden and told him the sad news.⁶⁷

IN HIS telegram of the fourth of November 1941 to Stalin the prime minister had asked whether, 'in order to clear things up,' he might send his generals Wavell and Paget to visit him – the latter having been secretly designated C.-in-C., Far East: 'Do you want them?' he asked.

Stalin did not. He replied with unusual speed that he was not interested in meeting the generals 'whom you mention,' unless they could conclude far-reaching agreements on war aims, 'mutual military assistance against Hitler' in Europe – a reference to a Second Front – and the post-war peace.⁶⁸ Ambassador Ivan Maisky handed over this response in Churchill's room at the House at midday on the eleventh. Churchill found its tone chilling and evasive. Eden, who witnessed the confrontation, described his master in his diary as being 'excusably very angry & pretty rough with Maisky.'

He suggested to the prime minister afterwards that the telegram's bark was worse than its bite: it scolded Churchill for his reluctance to declare war on Finland, and the British for not properly crating the aircraft sent to Archangel – they were arriving 'broken.'⁶⁹ At that evening's cabinet, Churchill admitted there had been 'some frank speaking' with the Soviet ambassador. Beaverbrook charitably suggested that Stalin's difficulties were no doubt shaping his current mood. Churchill decided not to dignify the Russian telegram with any response.⁷⁰

Over dinner that night he suddenly blurted out that if anything should happen to him then Eden would take over. This was the first time he had made this explicit. The foreign secretary murmured unconvincingly that he had no ambitions that way ('tho' it is flattering to be thought worthy!' he conceded to his diary). Bracken, the only other dinner guest, nodded his

approval. Churchill repeated his decision that Eden should succeed him when they were joined by the Chief Whip and P. J. Grigg at one A.M.⁷¹

There were now grounds for complacency. On the one hand CRUSADER was to begin in five days' time. On the other, the codebreaking source MAGIC was generating a flood of Japanese intercepts that revealed a steady diminution of America's prospects of staying out of the war.

PARLIAMENT HAD begun a new session and he had had a difficult morning there, with fifteen Questions to answer and a slew of supplementaries, which he always resented.⁷² He delivered a surly address to the House on November 13; he refused to review the war as a whole, and his remarks went down badly. He did not care. The Oracle showed that Rommel was still unaware of CRUSADER; meanwhile the German and Italian forces in Cyrenaica were taking a hammering from Tedder's desert air force. The other comforting burden of the ultra-secret intercepts was that Hitler's armies investing Moscow were running into increasing difficulties.

Churchill's mighty battleship *Prince of Wales* – fast enough to 'catch and kill' any Japanese warship – was now at Capetown; the director of naval Intelligence was carefully watching the telegrams of the Japanese Consul-General for word of *Prince of Wales*' arrival. 'He has no doubt that it will be reported,' Admiral Pound assured the prime minister, 'and expects that we shall know of this report from two to three days after it is made.' Coupled with Churchill's fiery language at the Guildhall, the First Sea Lord predicted, the battleship's arrival would leave neither the Japanese authorities 'nor our press' in any doubt as to her eventual destination. Churchill wrote 'good' on this information.⁷³

Things seemed to be shaping up very nicely in the Indian Ocean after all. There was one voice raised in criticism. When the new Eastern Fleet's commander, Tom Phillips, flew up to Pretoria to meet Jan Smuts, the tiny rear-admiral evidently expressed misgivings: the South African premier telegraphed a warning, a prophetic warning, to Churchill: 'If the Japanese are really nippy there is an opening here for a first class disaster.'⁷⁴



Churchill had dined amply on Friday, November 14, 1941 with his old cronies of the Other Club. In a comfortable haze, he predicted to Tory newspaper owner Lord Camrose, sitting next to him, that it would not be

many days now before the United States finally entered the war.⁷⁵ Word shortly reached the dining room of the day's vote on the Neutrality Act in Washington. The House of Representatives had voted to allow the arming of American merchant ships. It was by the narrowest of margins. 'The thing is,' triumphed Churchill to Lord Camrose, 'that the president now has the power to act, and the size of the majority will soon be forgotten.'

'Stuffy' Dowding came to stay the night at Chequers that Friday. After dinner, Churchill had the whole house-party watch a Soviet-made film – 'Everybody raved, but I thought it crude,' wrote the air chief-marshal afterwards. Later, he broached the subject of his memoirs. Churchill had now read the draft, but strongly disapproved of the passage concerning Britain's traditional foreign policy of preserving the balance of power, saying that it would be quoted by their enemies. Still in the toils of the Indian-prisoner crisis, he added that he himself found it hard to believe in either world harmony or the deliberate mixing of the races – now known more fashionably as 'multi-culturalism'; he compared the latter with the result of 'mixing together the paints in a child's paintbox,' as Dowding recorded. The book's publication was disallowed.⁷⁶

THAT WEEKEND Churchill also faced up to the problem of what to do with Sir John Dill, the C.I.G.S. A few days earlier, when a Tory member had asked inconvenient questions about the alien birth of Lord Cherwell, Churchill had hissed to his parliamentary private secretary George Harvie-Watt, livid with rage: 'Love me – love my dog!'⁷⁷ He expected a canine devotion from those he appointed.

Like Dowding, Dill might be mildly eccentric, but he had a mind of his own, and Churchill frowned on that. Day and night he wrestled with the problem. Half-dressed and still shaving, he had told Leo Amery on Thursday November 13 that he had decided to retire Dill 'as a little tired and not quite enough of the tiger,' and to appoint him Governor of Bombay, which once again shows how little store he set by the empire. Eden was unhappy at the news, feeling that the prime minister had underrated his friend Dill; besides, the P.M. had not consulted him. Churchill merely responded that he had made up his mind. 'I know that you will not agree.'⁷⁸

Who should replace Dill? Winston preferred a little known lieutenant-general, Sir Archibald Nye, who was only forty-five, and he invited Nye and Sir P. J. Grigg, permanent under-secretary at the war ministry, down to Chequers for Saturday night. When Margesson, the secretary for war, in-

sisted that General Alan Brooke be the new C.I.G.S., Churchill offered Nye the Vice-Chief's job instead. Grigg pointed out that that job was already taken by Pownall; the P.M. declared that he would send Pownall out to replace Air Chief-Marshal Brooke-Popham as commander-in-chief Far East at Singapore.⁷⁹ Winston invited Alan Brooke down on Sunday and offered him the job. 'We have,' he lisped, 'so far got on so well together.'

Brooke accepted. A long palaver ensued, and they went to bed at two A.M.

Churchill followed Brooke up to his bedroom, took his hand and said, gazing into the general's eyes with a kindly look, 'I wish you the very best of luck.' Churchill only now informed Dill that he was to retire soon and charged him meanwhile not to breathe a word to General Pownall.⁸⁰ On Monday November 17 Churchill favoured his cabinet with word of these changes.⁸¹ When General Dill privately complained to Lord Hankey about this shabby treatment of himself and Pownall two days later – the same day that the astonished Army Council learned of the top-level changes from their morning newspapers – Hankey suggested that the prime minister had acted unconstitutionally too; but Dill pointed out that Churchill had acted as minister of defence, not prime minister, so they could not touch him.⁸²

It seemed maladroit to make such changes on the eve of *CRUSADER*. As the towering storm clouds of war gathered on the horizons of the Pacific, however, Churchill may have had some other reason for wanting to see both Dill and Pownall posted far away from London. Both generals had been 'indoctrinated' in *MAGIC* – let into the formidable secret of the British and American intercepts of Tokyo's cypher messages. Dill moreover was an opponent of Churchill's war; he had already indicated in 1940 that he suspected the P.M. of 'cashing in' on it, politically speaking.*

FOR A TIME, in the absence of British military assistance, Anglo–Soviet relations froze over. Sir Stafford Cripps pleaded yet again to return to London. Eden thought that Cripps would do better to stay in Moscow for the time being. Churchill expressed himself more pungently, telling the foreign secretary on November 14 that he wanted Cripps home at once, to 'put my fist into his face.' Beaverbrook, summoned to No. 10 at the same time as Eden, shared the general antipathy toward Cripps. He proposed that Cripps be empowered to negotiate in the Kremlin about a post-war settlement: this would keep him quiet, said Beaverbrook, and nothing would come of it

* See vol. i, page 374.

anyway as he happened to know that Stalin thought little of the ambassador. When Eden suggested it was time he himself went to Moscow to keep Cripps quiet, Churchill would not hear of it. 'Winston,' recorded Eden, 'is impressed with the strength of our hand in dealing with Stalin. His need of us is greater than our need of him.' Eden, ruled the prime minister, would not go unless Moscow gave him the full red-carpet treatment. 'It will not be long before you are in control,' he placated his protégé on this occasion. 'Then you can do as you like about relations with [the] Soviet [Union].' So long as he was around however, he added, they would be fighting strictly on the basis that he laid down.

Eden recognised that there were really two underlying problems – namely 'Winston's instinctive hatred of Red Russia and his deep reluctance to consider post-war problems at all.'⁸³

In a cunningly phrased telegram he advised Sir Stafford Cripps not to return to London yet. 'The Soviet government,' he dictated, 'as you must see upon reflection, could never support you in an agitation against us because that would mean that we should be forced to vindicate our action in public, which would necessarily be detrimental to Soviet interests and to the common cause.'⁸⁴ After all, he continued, Britain had 'wrecked' her own tank and air force expansion programmes for Stalin's sake, and she had already lost twice as many planes and aircrew in operations designed to detain the Luftwaffe in the west as in the whole Battle of Britain in 1940.

Stalin kept up his rude campaign, badgering Britain at least to declare war on Finland. On November 21 Churchill reluctantly agreed to do so, but only if Finland did not stop fighting in the next two weeks – and only provided that Stalin still wished it. He offered to send Eden out to Moscow, but deftly sidestepped Stalin's demand that he set out Britain's war aims, apart from a vague reference to preventing Germany 'and particularly Prussia' breaking out for a third time. On the question of the post-war peace he assured Stalin that Britain, America, and the Soviet Union would all meet at the council table of the victors – a statement which betrayed his certainty that the United States would soon be formally at war.⁸⁵

Visiting him that afternoon, Eden was annoyed to find that the prime minister had drafted this message to Stalin. 'He is obsessed that [a] personal telegram is [the] way to do business,' recorded Eden afterwards, 'despite [the] mess into which [his] last effort had landed us.' He lectured the P.M. that he preferred the diplomatic approach, and that he was not keen to go out to Moscow unless the political groundwork had been properly laid. He

secured some modifications to the message before it went off, but even then the foreign office did not like it.⁸⁶

The Soviet leader sent a more measured response.⁸⁷ The element of blind hysteria was now vanishing from Stalin's messages. Churchill was currently laying odds of six to four that the Germans would *not* capture Moscow (his chiefs of staff put the odds no better than fifty-fifty). Churchill, observed Sir Alexander Cadogan, was still in an 'anti-Russian, defeatist' frame of mind. He had meanwhile spent two weeks unenthusiastically drafting a private appeal to Marshal Gustav Mannerheim, president of Finland: 'I am deeply grieved at what I see coming,' he wrote, 'namely that we shall be forced in a few days out of loyalty to our Ally Russia to declare war upon Finland.' He urged the Finns simply to halt where they were and cease fighting – to 'make a *de facto* exit from the war.'

My recollections of our pleasant talks and correspondence about the last war lead me to send this purely personal and private message for your consideration before it is too late.⁸⁸

The British government reluctantly issued to Finland, Romania, and Hungary an ultimatum ordering them to cease fighting by December 5 (Eden had wanted December 3: Churchill insisted on the later deadline). The P.M. was genuinely loath to rush ahead: Mannerheim must have time to reply. 'I don't want to be pinched for time,' he minuted Eden on November 29.⁸⁹ The foreign secretary, anxious to carry some tangible *bonne bouche* to the Kremlin, replied that it would make 'the most deplorable impression' on Stalin if he were to receive from the prime minister yet another message inquiring whether he really meant what he said in his telegram of November 23. 'I believe the declaration of war by Great Britain will be reasonable and necessary,' Eden lectured Winston. 'I do not see how my mission to Moscow could have any chance of success if I have to start with this question still unsettled. Maisky has already told me [*changed to: us*] that this is the question between us and Stalin over which Stalin feels most hurt.'⁹⁰

Churchill was distracted by other problems, however, and by other deadlines of global importance. On December 3 he warned Eden, 'We must not let ourselves be hustled.'⁹¹ Lord Cranborne, secretary for the Dominions, feared that these would react unfavourably if Britain declared war on Finland. The defence committee decided that there was now little merit in sending two British divisions to Russia merely for psychological effect;

Brooke, present as C.I.G.S. for the first time, Pound, and Portal were 'strongly in favour of keeping everything for the Libyan battle.'⁹² Eden was instructed to fly to Moscow in a few days' time, to explain this to Stalin and to offer him tanks and aircraft instead of troops. On the fourth Churchill explained this to an anxious and impatient cabinet. 'The talk rambled along discursively,' wrote Amery afterwards, 'finishing and then starting off again with some remark of Winston's for an hour or more. I am afraid he is really a very bad chairman.'⁹³ Eden was terrified of going to the Kremlin empty-handed. Later that night, after further argument at what Churchill called a 'staff conference,' he insisted that Britain must send ten fully-equipped R.A.F. squadrons to Stalin's hard-pressed Rostov front, in the south-east.

At 7:10 P.M. that evening, December 4, Finland's reply had arrived in London, routed through Washington. Mannerheim courteously but firmly refused to stop fighting the Russians.⁹⁴ Receiving a note from Eden the next day, pointing out with evident relief that war with Finland seemed inevitable, Churchill scribbled, 'Speak to me about this when you come here at 5:30.'⁹⁵ Their ultimatum to Finland would expire at midnight.

The prime minister left for what was to prove one of his most memorable weekends at Chequers. A message arrived from Lord Halifax – Finland had made one last plea, via Washington, that her operations were 'defensive warfare.' The prime minister telephoned the foreign office just after midnight to agree that it did not justify any further delay. 'Therefore,' as John Martin noted his words, 'declaration of war on the three countries should follow now.'⁹⁶ Churchill seems by this time to have become certain that something else was about to happen – something which would sweep this pathetic episode off the front pages of the newspapers.

9: *Westward Look*

‘**B**UT WESTWARD LOOK – the land is bright!’ Churchill could not put those words of Arthur Hugh Clough out of his mind. He prayed for whatever episode would catapult the United States into the war at Britain’s side. Meanwhile he consulted with Roosevelt by letter, by telegram, by telephone, by courier and through his own secret M.I.6 cypher channel at each fresh juncture in the unrolling of history.

IN OCTOBER 1941 he had begun a long letter to F.D.R. with the encouraging promise that ‘some time this Fall’ General Auchinleck would attack Rommel’s armies in North Africa. At midnight on November 18 he sent a message round to Grosvenor-square for the U.S. embassy to rush across to the president. ‘Words in my letter “some time during the Fall” mean now.’¹

After five months of waiting and preparation CRUSADER had begun. In pouring rain, the Eighth Army under General Alan Cunningham – brother of the admiral – rolled westward into the Cyrenaican desert from the Sollum–Jarabub line which it had held since June.

The auguries were excellent. From his ‘most secret sources’ Churchill knew that General Rommel, famed commander of the enemy *Panzergruppe Afrika*, was worried about his dwindling tank forces and depleted fuel supplies.

The British knew not only which supply ships were sailing, but precisely when and whence. Of sixty thousand tons of war supplies promised to him, a baffled Rommel complained in one intercepted telegram, only eight thousand tons had arrived.²

The latest intercepts showed that he had flown away to Rome a few days before, awarding himself a few weeks’ leave, oblivious of the imminent British offensive.³

At first the reports reaching Churchill on CRUSADER were only sparse. John Martin, his private secretary, wrote in his diary: 'P.M. very impatient at absence of news of its progress.' Chauffeured over to the Palace for his regular Tuesday luncheon with the king, Winston still had nothing to report.⁴ At ten-thirty P.M. a radio message arrived from Auchinleck informing Churchill that since his field commanders were observing radio silence and blinding rain was drenching the battlefield, he had no firm information either. Dining privately with Lord Hankey in London the next evening, the embittered General Dill was already expressing anxiety about the heavy rains, since these might well bog down the tanks.⁵

This silence from the desert was all very hard for Churchill to bear. He had looked forward to intervening from on high. He confirmed to Cairo on the nineteenth, 'I have forbidden all mention in press of big offensive, but . . . we are puzzled at hearing nothing from you.'⁶

During the day, General Cunningham's troops had in fact captured the important desert strongpoint at Sidi Rezegh and had advanced to within ten miles of the German troops besieging the port of Tobruk, still held by a British empire garrison. On November 19 a message came from Auchinleck and Tedder expressing the hope that the rains were affecting Rommel's forces more than theirs. There had been no enemy air activity. 'It still seems as if Rommel may not yet have appreciated scale of our operations in the air and on the land. For this reason we are *most anxious not* to disclose this in our communiqués or by any other means for the present.'⁷

The buff boxes brought over to Churchill by the secret service contained the latest ULTRA intercepts. Those of November 19 showed that Rommel had now returned, but was still oddly unaware that a British offensive had even started. This was not encouraging. Even more oddly, Auchinleck's headquarters now issued a communiqué on the offensive – one is entitled to wonder at whose behest? – praising the skill and deception employed. The B.B.C. broadcast the news, and the London morning newspapers splashed CRUSADER across their headlines. Later on the twentieth Churchill made a flamboyant speech in Parliament about this second Battle of Blenheim, this new Waterloo, although, as Hankey angrily reflected, the enemy had merely fallen back and the real fighting still had to begin. 'It may turn out all right,' he wrote, 'but it was a foolish thing to start boasting so soon. He always does it's – 'he' being the prime minister. Rommel's diary shows that it was all this publicity that finally dispelled his last doubts.

AT FIRST, it is true, there seemed good cause for Churchill to rejoice. On November 21, the third day, Auchinleck signalled that the hounds were 'in full cry.' He claimed that Tedder had gained air supremacy over the desert battlefield; the enemy had lost many tanks, and the Tobruk garrison was sallying forth toward the relieving Thirty Corps.⁹ Encouraged, Churchill signalled: 'The moment we can really claim a victory I propose to address the president about an offer to Vichy. . . Everything seems to have gone splendidly so far.'

The night of November 22 however saw an ominous setback. Rommel's troops recaptured Sidi Rezegh; suddenly Thirty Corps had lost two-thirds of its armour and was retreating, leaving the Tobruk garrison with a huge new salient to defend. It now became plain that Auchinleck's initial reports had exaggerated Rommel's tank losses: he had more tanks – and better – and the battlefield remained in enemy hands. Churchill thought it prudent to remind Auchinleck to ensure that no ULTRA-secret material was ever carried into the battle zone.¹⁰

There was good cause for disquiet about security, as the enemy was now rampaging across the battle lines, harassing, killing, and capturing without regard for rank or seniority. On November 23 the signals from Cairo were perceptibly more sombre as Rommel rushed on toward the Egyptian frontier. 'The main body of English 7th Armoured Division is probably surrounded,' read the German intercept which 'C' brought round to No. 10. 'Numerous prisoners, among whom is a general.'¹¹ It was a bold military fling, typical of this German commander, and it rattled the Eighth Army commander General Alan Cunningham badly.

On that day the codebreakers at Bletchley Park read a signal describing the sailing to Libya of two Italian oil tankers, *Procida* and *Maritza*, as being of 'crucial importance' to Rommel. Having watched his commanders miss so many opportunities before, Churchill seized the reins and emphasised to Admiral Pound the need to destroy these tankers. 'Request has been made by enemy,' Churchill signalled to Admiral Cunningham, 'for air protection.' 'The stopping of these ships,' he added, 'may save thousands of lives, apart from aiding a victory of cardinal importance.'¹² He told the secret service to stress this latest intercept to Cairo. To camouflage the true source, it was forwarded to Cairo with the mischievous preamble, 'Following three documents [were] seen at Admiralty Rome on November 24...'

Armed with this information Cunningham's Force 'K' sailed from Malta and sank both tankers. Cadogan recorded tersely, 'Battle not going so well,

but we've sunk the two vital supply ships.' On the twenty-fifth 'C' brought over nineteen more intercepts to No. 10, one of which, from Rommel's quartermaster, began with the words: '*Procida* and *Maritza* attacked by enemy surface naval craft about 1300, Nov. 24. Total loss to be reckoned with. Cargo: 2,300 cubic metres of B4 [roughly half a million gallons of aviation fuel], and 104 vehicles.'¹³ With a laconic red-ink tick, Churchill acknowledged the success of the operation.

If only things in the desert went so smoothly. General Cunningham was showing signs of nervous strain. Auchinleck and Tedder flew to his forward headquarters, and Churchill shortly received a message from Auchinleck describing Cunningham as 'perturbed' at the very few tanks left running, and fearful that if *CRUSADER* continued they might well lose the rest, and Egypt too.¹⁴ Oliver Lyttelton, Minister of State in Cairo, reported separately to the P.M. that Cunningham appeared 'shaken' and was even thinking in terms of withdrawal from Libya into Egypt. Auchinleck had ordered him to press on with the offensive.¹⁵ This telegram arrived while Churchill was dining with the Edens, the Sinclairs, and the Nyes. Lyttelton had added that Auchinleck wanted to replace Cunningham with Major-General Neil Ritchie. 'We agreed this must be done if A. thought it right,' noted Eden. Ritchie, he commented, was one of their best young generals – he had himself sent the general out to Egypt while at the war office.

Churchill drafted an answer to Lyttelton. It was cruel and abrasive, and his ministers had to persuade him to take out one phrase about showing 'no mercy to weaklings.'

It hinted however that the C.-in-C. should indeed make the change – 'General Auchinleck's authority over all commanders is supreme and all his decisions during the battle will be confirmed by us.'¹⁶ 'I cordially endorse your view and intentions,' he signalled in a separate message to General Auchinleck, 'and His Majesty's government wish to share your responsibility for fighting it out to the last inch, whatever may be the result. It is all or nothing, but I am sure you are stronger and will win.'¹⁷ Placed on the sick list, General Cunningham was retired to a hospital at Alexandria suffering from nervous exhaustion. Ritchie took over the Eighth Army, with orders to resume *CRUSADER*.

SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH this most unwelcome crisis in the desert – which could not have come at a worse time – Churchill was grappling with the continuing problem of India. The cabinet had agreed to the release of the

internees, spread over several weeks; but the viceroy had declared it essential to announce the release publicly, and Churchill was refusing to take this jump. The tedious, time-wasting row boiled over in cabinet at five-thirty P.M. on November 24. Amery was surprised to find Churchill, 'possibly aggravated by the uncertainty of the Libyan battle,' in one of his very worst moods. 'He held forth interminably and quite irrelevantly about the whole ignominious surrender.' The secretary for India stood up to him robustly. 'I don't suppose,' he boasted in his diary that evening,

Winston has been so vigorously answered in cabinet since he has been in office, and I think most of the members got a good deal of quiet fun out of it. I am afraid I was pretty angry at the end and as the cabinet broke up I went up to Winston and told him that his behaviour was intolerable and I didn't think I could stand it much longer. He growled back that I had no right to make such a remark to him in the cabinet room and that I could come and see him any time I liked.¹⁸

Churchill sent a personal telegram to India rebuking the viceroy. By November 28 he had received a firm reply, insisting that a public announcement must be made. On the first day of December 1941, which was to become a momentous month in the empire's history, the cabinet would discuss Libya, Russia, the Far East – and then India: 'Winston looked round the room,' recorded Amery in his diary, 'and said: "I give in," adding *sotto voce*: "When you lose India don't blame me."¹⁹



For two weeks or more the outcome of CRUSADER was uncertain as the surviving German, Italian, and British tanks milled around between the Egyptian frontier and the besieged port of Tobruk. The tide of battle ripped across limitless oceans of sand, explored the desert and escarpment, favouring now Rommel's forces, now those of Cunningham. 'Rommel is not done yet,' signalled Auchinleck on November 26, 'but we have regained the initiative, I feel.'

In dogged gunnery duels the British eliminated one-third of Rommel's tanks. A buff box from the 'usual source,' as the P.M. informed Auchinleck, brought news that Rommel had ordered elements of his elite 21st Panzer division, which had been raiding Sidi Omar, to fall back toward Tobruk.²⁰

'C.I.G.S. and I both wonder,' Churchill signalled Auchinleck on the evening of the twenty-seventh, 'whether, as you saved the battle once, you should not go up again and win it now. . . . However this of course is entirely for you to judge.'²¹

Auchinleck refused to be tempted, having just appointed Ritchie to command the Eighth Army. Not easily dissuaded, the P.M. wired him again, two days later: 'C.I.G.S. and I do not intend to suggest that you should in any way supersede Ritchie. What we still think would be wise is for you to visit the battlefield should a new impulse be clearly needed.'²² Auchinleck bowed to Winston's whim, and duly went forward on December 1, to remain at Ritchie's advanced headquarters for the next ten days.

Late on November 30 one of Rommel's top generals, the commander of the 21st Panzer division, fell into Eighth Army hands, and the British Thirteenth Corps punched its way through to the beleaguered Tobruk. The raising of the seven-month long siege was a fine sixty-seventh birthday gift for the prime minister. 'Tobruk,' the corps commander signalled to him, 'is as relieved as I am.'²³

ONE CLOUD lifted from Churchill's brow, but the brooding thunderclouds of uncertainty elsewhere remained. Lunching the next day, Monday December 1, with Bracken and the new editor of *The Times* – Robin Barrington-Ward, who was no admirer – Churchill seemed spry and different from the bloated politician whom the journalist had last set eyes on in 1939. 'His cheerful, challenging – not to say truculent – look is good to see just now,' wrote Barrington-Ward in a diary afterwards. 'But it covers up a great deal of caution, even vacillation at times.'²⁴

The prime minister's mind may have been far away.

That day the MAGIC intercepts had begun casting frightening shadows. They revealed Tokyo secretly instructing Japanese embassy staff in London and elsewhere to destroy their code machines.

10: *Gaps in the Archives*

UNTIL DECEMBER 1941 no possibility had caused greater anxiety to Churchill than that Japan might strike against Britain's possessions in the Far East and that the United States might nonetheless stay out. Even as this likelihood receded, there remained a residual possibility – that Japan, starved of petroleum since July, might choose instead to strike at the Dutch East Indies. All Churchill's endeavours were devoted therefore to ensuring that when the time came the American people were faced with no choice other than to declare war on Japan. 'The suspicion must arise,' one British historian has stated, 'that Churchill deliberately courted war in the Far East in order to bring America in.'¹

Whatever connivings and concealments were afoot between prime minister and president in November and December 1941, history does not yet know. Despite a thirty-year effort by us, the transcripts of their secret telephone conversations have not come to light; and the messages now known to have been exchanged through secret-service channels still have to be released.* After the Japanese weighed in with their own pre-emptive strike, officials in the United States spent the next four years purging their files of all evidence that might lead to an impeachment of the president or the disgrace of his military advisers. Telephoned one evening in November 1944 by Roosevelt's secretary of the treasury, the secretary of war Henry L. Stimson would snap that he was tired out 'from working the last two weeks on [the] Pearl Harbor report to keep out anything that might hurt the Pres[ident]'.²

In Britain there was no such bungling and incompetence to conceal from post-war investigators, but the files on Japan were doctored before their

* See Appendix I.

release to the public, or destroyed. No indisputable proof has been found that Churchill had deduced Tokyo's precise intentions in enough time and detail to alert Washington, but we shall find that many indications point that way.³

Fortunately it does not come within the purview of a biography to open yet another inquiry into the machinery of government in Washington in those dark days. Suffice it to remark that American historians have signally failed to spot the evidence of high-level falsification in their own archives. As he had hinted to Henry R Morgenthau Jr., Stimson tampered with the evidence, removing scores of pages from his diary entries of September, October, November, and December 1941 and having them retyped. The cleansing of his diaries was done perhaps too thoroughly, so that the retyped version not only omits all further reference to the American plans to strike first at Japan, and to the *MAGICS* which he was still receiving; between November 9 and 25, 1941, the diary is innocent of any reference to the Far East at all. The most obviously sanitised pages ('obviously,' because the pages are shortened and typed by a different hand), include all Stimson's dictation for December 3 and 4, and page three of the entry for December 7 – the point at which the president has just phoned to Stimson the grim news of the disaster about which we are shortly to learn.⁴

Similarly, the key Japanese intercept which we shall meet on the way, known to historians as the 'WINDS-EXECUTE' signal, has disappeared from all wartime American files, thereby relieving certain generals (including George C. Marshall, Leonard T. Gerow, and Walter Bedell Smith) of the need to explain why nobody at the highest levels had paid heed to it. Harry Hopkins, whose papers were normally as dishevelled as their author, produced a well-groomed narrative of his president's actions on the 'day of infamy' itself which also bears all the imprints of having been retyped at a later date.⁵

IT IS many years since the United States government released to its national archives 130,000 pages of its *MAGIC* intercepts. Some of these in fact clearly originated from Bletchley Park. It is however the manner in which the British archives were purged and cleansed that provides the most compelling evidence of guilty consciences. Until 1993 the British government released only the German *ENIGMA* intercepts.⁶ For forty-five years they refused to release even the *MAGICS* long before released by the American authorities in Washington let alone their own Japanese and other diplomatic intercepts

(the 'BJs').⁷ For forty-five years London did not even concede that Britain had been reading the wartime Japanese cyphers. Were it not for explicit references to 'Black Jumbos' in diaries like the one kept by General Pownall, there would have been no hard evidence for forty-five years to the contrary.⁸ The files on Anglo-Japanese relations for September and October 1941 are still closed.⁹ The prime minister's 'Japan' files for December 1941, and for January and February 1942, are missing, as is the entire 'Japan' file from Eden's papers.¹⁰

In November 1993 the British government placed in the public domain 1,273 codebreaking files which included for the first time some scattered Japanese materials. 'None of the intercepts,' commented the government archives in a public release at the time, 'obviously indicate [*sic*] the British sources were aware in advance of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour although it was clear that Japan was about to enter the war.'¹¹

This view was willingly endorsed by other writers. The internal history of Britain's Naval Intelligence Division, written in 1945 and released at the same time, had also stated, 'We had not penetrated the Japanese plan to attack Pearl Harbor.' If Naval Intelligence did not know, historians argued, Churchill, although prime minister, could not have either.¹²

FOR MANY years the prime minister's November 1941 file of cables and messages to President Roosevelt was also closed. Even now there are gaps: there are indications that Churchill sent one or even two as yet unreleased messages to Washington after one that we shall meet later as his 'thin diet' telegram of November 26. That date was unquestionably a turning point in the crisis.¹³ A passage relating to that very date even seems to have been trimmed from the printed official Gilbert biography of Churchill.¹⁴ The P.M. received seven 'BJs' on November 21; on November 26 he called for one of them (intercept No. 097,983) a second time, but it is now missing from the files. There is no indication of what it was.¹⁵

These MAGIC intercepts are not all that is wanting. As with the American official archives, all trace of Tokyo's crucial 'WINDS-EXECUTE' broadcast has been stripped from British archives too, although monitoring stations throughout the empire were combing the radio æther listening for it from November 25 onwards, and although it was certainly picked up in Hongkong early on Sunday December 7, 1941, as we shall see.^{16*}

* See page 237.

BY LATE November 1941 there was palpable unrest in Washington about Britain's unwillingness to exchange codebreaking materials with the Americans. It is necessary to review the history of this exchange since early 1940 to understand the underlying reasons – an unusual amalgam of jealousy, national pride, anti-Semitism, and strategic necessity. The British led in deciphering the European codes; the Americans in the Japanese.

The British had concentrated their interception of Japanese military and air signals in the Far East at the Combined Bureau, recently evacuated from Hongkong to Singapore. The F.E.C.B. operated on slack reins; Bletchley Park had no overview of the Japanese messages intercepted or decoded. The bureau had read the main Japanese army cypher partially until May 1940; it read Japanese army air and transport codes, until late 1940.¹⁷

The British had known in the summer of 1940 that the Americans were working on Japanese cyphers with, as they then believed, little success. Bletchley Park had long believed that the Americans were not even currently reading the Japanese diplomatic machine code known as PURPLE, or the military attaché cyphers.¹⁸ In about November the Americans had suggested a frank interchange of cryptographic material. 'C' had refused, and forbade his colleagues to divulge what they knew on the German and Italian codes.¹⁹

This principle – that Washington was not to be indoctrinated in the success in breaking ENIGMA – prevailed right through to 1942. In December 1940 the admiralty advised Flag officers that U.S. navy observers in British warships were not to be given intelligence gleaned from the 'most secret sources.'²⁰ The admiralty repeated this in January 1942.²¹ As late as June 1942, 'C' would state in a letter that only one person in the entire United States was privy to this secret, and that was General Marshall himself.²²

Certain American experts were however taken into Bletchley Park's confidence, on the understanding that they were not allowed to discuss it with their own government. This exchange of confidences had begun at the end of 1940. On December 18 the foreign office was informed that three U.S. codebreaking experts, a 'Lieutenant-Colonel Freeman' (in fact a civilian, the famous William F. Friedman, whose place was shortly taken by Captain Abraham Sinkov), a Lieutenant L. Rosen of the U.S. army and a Lieutenant Currier of the U.S. naval reserve (a fluent Japanese speaker) would bring about a ton of the latest code-machine equipment by British warship to the British Isles. This expert delegation would be in a position 'to discuss [the] diplomatic side' in addition to basic cypher matters.²³

They arrived at Bletchley Park in the first week of February 1941, becoming known there by the inconspicuous sobriquet of ‘our friends.’ The records confirm that they arrived with a ‘very valuable contribution to our Japanese work’ – it was in fact two of the precious MAGIC machines. As Commander Denniston, head of Bletchley Park, later emphasised, ‘In February 1941 *they* put us in the Jap picture firmly.’ He suggested that it was from that date that Britain’s collaboration with the Americans began on the German cyphers.²⁴ In fact it was only a very limited collaboration. The Americans had seen examples of the German naval ENIGMA, but they were ignorant of the Luftwaffe and army ENIGMA traffic. After a few days, Denniston, keen to exploit American know-how on the use of Hollerith punched-card computers for codebreaking, asked his superiors for permission to be frank with their guests on every subject, on the understanding that they would not reveal what they knew to anybody other than their immediate chiefs.²⁵

This was the origin of the extraordinary working-level transatlantic exchange of information. These American visitors agreed to secrecy. Lieutenant Robert H. Weeks of the U.S. navy signed for a hand-written undertaking, dated March 3, that he would inform only the head of their section, known as Op-20-G, in Washington – that was Commander Laurance F. Safford – and then only by word of mouth. An unsigned memorandum confirms that ‘our American colleagues have been informed of the progress made on the ENIGMA machine.’²⁶ Sixteen days later Weeks signed a receipt for British materials received from Denniston, which included Russian naval, Italian attaché and consular, and German naval codes, French materials, ‘material’ from the mathematician Alan Turing, and the German naval map-grid.

At this, of all times, a devastating rivalry broke out between the British and American codebreaking services at top level, in which each side accused the other of selling them short, and each began trying to blackmail the other into greater openness – an openness which the British were not, at this stage in the war, willing to manifest toward their still untested cousins. The British alone had broken the German ENIGMA machine, using the fabled *bombe* – a whirring marvel of calculating-machine cog-wheels and second-hand telephone-exchange relays which electromechanically tried every possible solution for a code until each day’s keys were broken. Perhaps innocently primed by one of ‘our friends,’ the American higher-ups suspected that this was so; the British refused to part with the *bombe*. The U.S. navy department, which had made the greatest inroads into PURPLE,

now began, as an element of their blackmail, not turning these over by secret cable to Bletchley Park, but holding them back for several days, despite their urgency. The British retaliated in kind.

IT WAS that summer of 1941 that the Americans sent a letter to Bletchley Park blandly asking outright for 'a cypher-solving machine,' in other words the *bombe* – the heart of the British codebreaking endeavour. Denniston was aghast, as nothing was ever put on paper about 'E' – the ENIGMA secret. With a degree of frostiness in his reply, he reminded the Americans that while ENIGMA was of academic interest to them, it was a matter of life and death for the British. As for providing a *bombe* machine, it would be many months before they had one to spare, and 'we have six out of the thirty-six which we require.' For reasons of security Bletchley Park would never permit anybody else – and that included the U.S. government – to construct the *bombe*; each one was being hand-built by a firm under British government control, the British Tabulating Machine Company.

'German signal security never stands still,' he decided he must remind these Washington upstarts when he went over there in August 1941. 'They [the Germans] are constantly tightening up their [cypher] discipline and evolving new methods.' Britain's codebreakers felt they were teetering 'on the edge of a precipice,' he wrote – they might be struck blind at any moment by a sudden German innovation.²⁷

The Washington talks would tackle the most sensitive subject, namely the further exchange of codebreaking materials. 'At present,' Denniston noted, 'this exchange is working very well, but only on Japanese' – a reference to the MAGICS. Britain could not transfer the ENIGMA secrets to Washington; at most they might ship raw ENIGMA intercepts to the Americans and invite them to try their hand at solving them. He hoped to set up a triangular liaison, Bletchley Park – Washington – Ottawa.

He visited Washington on about August 12, and would then visit Ottawa ('if this can be arranged without any chance of meeting Yardley').²⁸

There were problems in each capital. Canada's chief codebreaker Herbert Yardley was considered a security risk. As for Washington, the relationship between J. Edgar Hoover's F.B.I. and 'our friends' – the American codebreakers – was not known. The F.B.I. already liaised closely with 'C,' noted Denniston.²⁹

Denniston was shaken by what he found in Washington. He visited the U.S. navy's radio monitoring station at Cheltenham, thirty miles from Wash-

ington, but the country had nothing like Britain's own empire-wide 'Y' (radio-monitoring) service. Worse, the navy and army were at each other's throats: they ran independent cryptographic sections. (Lieutenant-Colonel J. H. Tiltman, visiting them in early April 1942, confirmed that one reason was anti-Semitism, 'the dislike of Jews prevalent in the U.S. navy,' since, as he explained, 'nearly all the leading Army cryptographers are Jews.'³⁰ This was true: the best codebreakers were Friedman, Sinkov, Solomon Kullback, and Wallace Winkler). There was bitter enmity between the services and their sections: the army attacked the Japanese diplomatic code PURPLE on even days, the navy's section Op-20-G on odd. It seemed incredible, but this, reported a baffled Denniston, was what the powerful 'vested interests' involved had decreed. Dissemination was equally harebrained: the U.S. war department circulated codebreaking summaries one month, the navy did so the next. The navy had but a hundred codebreaking staff. Their main effort was on PURPLE, in which they enjoyed great success, and these had prior claim to the Hollerith machine room; Denniston warned, 'I feel they have really neglected the [Japanese] naval work.' As a result of his visit, the U.S. navy codebreakers had only now undertaken to begin collaborating with Bletchley Park and the F.E.C.B. in Singapore in investigating Japanese naval cyphers, 'and they now regard this, as we do, as one of their most important research jobs.'³¹

At a conference in Washington August 15 it was agreed that the telegraphic communications between Op-20-G and Bletchley Park were already highly satisfactory. Mail communications would go through the British Intelligence agent Captain Edward G. Hastings, RN, who was billeted at the city's Hay Adams Hotel. Denniston reported that they might now set up a small research section in Melbourne, Australia, 'where Commander Nave was now working' (Eric Nave, an Australian, was one of the wartime experts on the Japanese cyphers; but he was unable to live in the Tropics).³²

WHILE HE believed that he had established rapport with the Americans, and had agreed with them the proper apportionment of their joint codebreaking effort, Commander Denniston carried back to his team at Bletchley Park in England the gloomiest impressions of the broader political situation. He had seen for himself that the average American had less intention of joining the war now than ever – now that Russia was doing all the fighting in the east, and Japan had got cold feet and was seeking accommodation. 'F.D.R. told the Mountbattens,' noted Denniston, summarising his impressions,

'[that] he had done all that one man could to get them in – the inference being that he could and would do no more and is now concentrating on getting production for themselves up to par.'³³

The American codebreakers, he repeated, lagged behind the British in everything except PURPLE. 'Japanese naval and Japanese military [cyphers] are still behind.' He proposed that Washington work on the eastern, *i.e.*, Japanese, cyphers, and Britain on the European.³⁴ He appears to have succeeded, because on October 9 he wrote to Hastings that everybody was glad that Washington would now concentrate on those two big eastern cypher problems (naval and military).³⁵ As for the Japanese diplomatic telegrams, previously Lord Halifax had sent a minion to the navy and war departments to copy them and wire them back to London; but now the material would be exchanged direct (to the ambassador's distress, as he had enjoyed and learned much from these decoded Japanese telegrams).³⁶

WITH THE easing of archival restrictions begun by John Major's government in the 1990s, it is now clear that during the crucial weeks of November 1941 the British and American codebreakers had begun spitefully withholding data from each other, in a welter of accusations of bad faith and short-changing.

The Americans made the running. By late October they were making no secret of their resentment that the British were holding back certain European cyphers and keys. Admiral Harold Stark, the chief of naval operations, and Admiral Leigh Noyes, his chief of naval communications, complained about this at several levels – first to 'C's' liaison officer Captain 'Eddy' Hastings and then to Brigadier Menzies himself. Churchill's naval representative in Washington, Admiral Sir Charles 'Tiny' Little, wired to the admiralty that the U.S. navy department had 'got it into their heads' that the British were not playing fair.

Their contention is [reported Admiral Little] that whereas they have exchanged all the information they have regarding Japanese codes with us, we have not done the same in regard to our cryptographic work in the case of the German codes.³⁷

Noyes had put this forcefully to Hastings, claiming that his department had given to 'C' their knowledge only on condition that there was a free exchange of all Axis intelligence; the British military and naval attachés had

agreed to this, he claimed, and Bletchley Park's Denniston had confirmed it during his August visit to the United States. The Americans now felt cheated.

In retrospect, the last week in November 1941 was not the most propitious moment for such a dispute. As Noyes suggested to Hastings on November 26, with the Far East situation deteriorating hourly, any delay in exploiting an operational message might 'be serious.' There was a hint of blackmail in the words – a threat to start holding back Japanese PURPLE intercepts deliberately from the British codebreakers. This threat became explicit later that day, when Noyes secured the moral support of General Miles, his counterpart at the U.S. War Department. Hastings advised 'C' in a lengthy telegram that the Americans were expressing 'grave unrest and dissatisfaction.' 'Noyes,' he added, 'is in a mood to withhold further information unless he receives full reciprocal information on European work.' Noyes had rejected his argument, which was that Britain understood that European cyphers should be handled only in London. 'You will appreciate the importance of this matter,' Hastings suggested to his chief, 'as United States [codebreakers] are developing rapidly.' There must be a rapid settlement, if relations between the two countries' codebreakers were not to break down.³⁸

'C' had no intention of weakening Britain's monopoly on ENIGMA. Currently there was a complete interchange on PURPLE, since each side possessed the MAGIC machine: each was supposed to supplement the other's traffic. Both sides were also co-operating on developing the decoding of Japanese naval and military traffic, and neither side had as yet had much luck with the German diplomatic codes, he suggested to Captain Hastings. As for the German naval codes, 'C' remained evasive: 'If and when we have any results which can affect U.S.A., the admiralty are passing them to the Navy Department.' He reiterated that the British would not release German military or air decoding results to the Americans, as they affected areas in which Washington, not being at war, had only an academic interest. 'What more does Admiral Noyes want?', exclaimed 'C.' He concluded by instructing Hastings, who was about to return from Washington: 'Put nothing in writing, and burn this before you leave.'³⁹

Hastings feared that Admiral Noyes would not be fobbed off so lightly. The United States had after all provided to Britain those two MAGIC machines in February, and the fruits of their research on PURPLE; Noyes, advised Hastings, knew damn' well that the British had captured certain German code books and keys. Unless the British came clean, he repeated, 'our mu-

tual relations will deteriorate.'⁴⁰ Admiral Little echoed these words – since Stark had now complained directly to him, just as Noyes had to Hastings. 'The Navy Department,' he wrote to Pound on December 2, 'have got it into their heads that we are not playing quite square in regard to the exchange of information regarding special intelligence.' Stark too was complaining that Britain had not reciprocated for MAGIC with the German secrets – with ENIGMA.⁴¹

ALTHOUGH BRIGADIER Menzies had suggested differently, the British had almost certainly made some inroads into the important Japanese naval cypher JN.25, a new five-figure additive code introduced in June 1939. Commander Denniston wrote in a wartime manuscript that early in 1939 their naval section and its 'Japanese' section, still then in Hongkong, had 'full control' of Japanese diplomatic and attaché traffic, were 'reasonably fluent' in all the main Japanese naval cyphers, and 'knew quite a lot about' the Japanese Army cyphers being used in China.⁴² It is a sensitive subject still. As late as 1989 the British government stopped publication of the memoirs of Commander Eric Nave, the codebreaker concerned.⁴³

When 'our friends' had visited Bletchley Park in February 1941 they had also offered some partly reconstructed JN.25 code books.* Bletchley Park histories confirm that the British gave the Americans what they described as the products of their own work on JN.25.⁴⁴ The Americans remained convinced that their British cousins had made no further progress with JN.25.⁴⁵ Nave would allege that this was not true. The best available estimate is that by November 1941 the Americans were reading ten or fifteen per cent of JN.25 – and the British perhaps more. 'One thing is certain,' Nave claimed. 'Had Britain shared with the Americans its full knowledge of the work against Japanese naval codes . . . [Japanese Admiral Isoroku] Yamamoto's task force [in the Pacific] would have been decimated in a well-laid trap.' At that time, said Nave, he had assumed that Britain was sharing all such information with the Americans.⁴⁶

The pains taken by Britain to conceal whatever were her actual successes against the naval cypher JN.25 are evident from one incident in 1942. On May 10 of that year the German raider *Thor* captured from the British steamer *Nankin* secret weekly British Intelligence reports to the commander-in-chief of Churchill's new Eastern Fleet; from these the Germans realised

* See vol. i, page 343.

the extent to which JN.25 had been penetrated.⁴⁷ In August Berlin authorised Admiral Paul Wenneker, their naval attaché in Tokyo, to show the captured *Nankin* documents to the Japanese. The British never revealed their loss even after the war. When Whitehall restored captured naval records to Germany in 1958, German historians noted that pages of *Thor*'s log had been retyped with all reference to the *Nankin* documents deleted. The official study on the *Nankin* affair, written in August 1945 by the admiralty's codebreaking expert, the late Commander M. G. Saunders, is missing from the files released to the British Public Record Office and the Naval Historical Library. There may of course be innocent civil service explanations for all these coincidences.

THE AMERICAN codebreakers remained disgruntled to the very eve of war in December 1941. Bletchley Park still refused to release its ENIGMA secrets to Washington. On December 5, the archives show, Commander Denniston nevertheless cabled to Captain Hastings in Washington: 'I still cannot understand what Noyes wants.' With regard to PURPLE, he grumbled, the British had given the American army codebreakers all they asked for, thus enabling them 'to read all that we can read.' Noyes was wrong, he protested, in thinking that the British were still withholding Japanese or German codebreaking materials. 'The main means of communication is the ENIGMA,' added Denniston. 'Twice, February and July 1941, we captured keys for the month which we sent to Washington.' He refused however to send over an ENIGMA machine itself to Washington – deeming that Britain just did not have one to spare.⁴⁸

The Americans did not believe him, and continued to obstruct.



Slowly choking under the oil embargo which Roosevelt and Churchill had proclaimed in July 1941, Japan's military leaders had decided early in November to resort to war if negotiations failed to lift the embargo.⁴⁹ From Japanese records discovered in the mid-1960s it is now clear that on November 2, 1941 there was a seventeen-hour session in Tokyo which ended with a decision to declare war on December 1 in that event. Four days later this secret decision was ratified by an imperial conference, attended by the president of the Privy Council and Emperor Hirohito himself. Only the outer shell of these events was perceived by the British and American

codebreakers. On November 2 Tokyo cabled to Washington advising Ambassador Nomura that the cabinet would meet on the fifth and instruct him to resume negotiations. 'This will be our government's last effort to improve diplomatic relations,' it read. 'The situation is very grave.'⁵⁰ The Americans translated this message on the third. On November 4 the Americans intercepted a further message from Tokyo to Washington: 'Well,' this confirmed, 'relations between Japan and the United States have reached the edge.' The cabinet had decided to have a last stab at persuading Washington. If this failed, the message added, 'I am sorry to say the talks will certainly be ruptured.' To add weight to the talks, an experienced former ambassador, Saburo Kurusu, would leave for Washington immediately.⁵¹

On November 5 Tokyo transmitted detailed bargaining instructions, which again the Americans read. Ambassador Nomura was to commence by presenting 'at earliest possible moment' proposal 'A': under it, Japan would offer minimal concessions, but would still refuse to renege on her treaty obligations to Germany and Italy, or to withdraw her troops from Indo-China or China for twenty-five years. If this hard-line proposal was flatly rejected, Nomura was to offer a milder proposal, 'B,' but this really was the very last offer. It was vital, he was told, for 'all arrangements for the signing of this agreement [to] be completed by the 25th of this month.'⁵²

To the codebreakers it was clear that in Tokyo an ominous timeclock had begun to tick. (November 25 was in fact the day that Admiral Yamamoto's fleet was scheduled to sail into the darkness of radio silence).

Churchill, as we know, also followed these *MAGICS* and with a morbid fascination. He would write disingenuously in his memoirs, 'The *MAGICS* were repeated to us, but there was an inevitable delay – sometimes of two or three days – before we got them. We did not know therefore at any given moment all that the president or Mr Hull knew. I make no complaint of this.'⁵³

This was a perhaps necessary deceit. Churchill was receiving largely the same *MAGICS* as those two gentlemen. He had however reposed the conduct of Far East policy in their hands. 'Roosevelt promised Winston at the Atlantic meeting,' recorded General Pownall in his diary, '... that he would keep the Japanese in play, and he has succeeded in doing so far longer than the one month he originally estimated. We have passed the buck of handling Japan on to the Americans, merely promising that we will follow their lead and go to war if they do.'⁵⁴

The Chinese, facing the most critical phase in their long war with Japan, provided the third variable in the already complicated Far East equation. The Americans alerted them to the rumours of Japanese plans to attack Yunnan from their new bases in Indo-China, beginning on November 2; the loss of Kunming would cut the Burma Road on which China's supplies depended.⁵⁵ Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, the Nationalist Chinese leader, appealed to both Roosevelt and Churchill to provide air support against Japan's forces, arguing: 'Once she is rid of [us] she will attack you as and when it suits her.'⁵⁶

This Japanese offensive did not materialise, but the rumours caused Churchill to discuss the generalissimo's telegram at his midday cabinet on November 5, suggesting that the Japanese seemed to have taken no final decision and that their Emperor Hirohito was exercising restraint.⁵⁷ He drafted a telegram – which the cabinet now approved – to Roosevelt proposing a warning to the Japanese not to launch such an attack. Referring, in this draft, to the Japanese danger to Singapore, he admitted that this great British base was already short of air strength, but he would be prepared to send out pilots 'and even some planes.' 'When we talked about this at Placentia,' he wrote, reminding the president of their August meeting, 'you spoke of gaining time, and this policy has been brilliantly successful so far. But our joint embargo is steadily forcing the Japanese to decisions for peace or war.' If Chiang Kai-shek's resistance were to collapse, the Japanese would have the forces with which to attack north (Russia) or south (the Dutch East Indies). 'I hope you might think fit to remind them that such an attack . . . would be in open disregard of the clearly indicated attitude of the United States government.' Britain, he promised, would do likewise. 'I myself,' he concluded, 'think that Japan is more likely to drift into war than plunge in.'⁵⁸

Speaking monotonously, and almost inaudibly, at this cabinet meeting Sir Earle Page expressed Australia's misgivings about Churchill's attitude of 'insisting that the United States should take the lead.' He pressed the prime minister not to turn his back on Australia, and pleaded for Britain to send planes to Singapore. The P.M. explained that he was now committed to supplying two hundred planes per month to the Soviet Union; and lest that fail to impress the Australians, he mentioned the old bogey of a possible Nazi invasion of Britain. 'The one situation he was anxious to avoid,' Churchill stressed to his cabinet colleagues, 'was a war with Japan without American help.'

That evening, it seems, Churchill telephoned the president to hint at making a pre-emptive strike against Japan.

The evidence that there was such a 'telephone job' is from Roosevelt's cabinet meeting two days later.⁵⁹ After recalling that at Placentia Bay Churchill had urged him to 'go in with England and the Dutch East Indies in an attack on Japan,' the president related to his cabinet that he had on that occasion turned the idea down, as he wanted to play for time. 'The president,' recorded one cabinet member, 'said that he had conversed with Churchill a day or so ago on the matter, and that Churchill was convinced now that it was wise to delay three months ago, but urged firmness now.'⁶⁰

The prime minister would soon have his big gunboats out there, of course, and the president was already bringing up his B-17 bombers within striking range.* Roosevelt evidently reminded Churchill however that only the Congress could declare war. It would moreover be a folly to act in advance of American public opinion.⁶¹

After revealing what he called this 'conversation,' Roosevelt polled each member of his cabinet in turn around the table with the question: What would be the American public's reaction in case 'we get into shooting with Japan.' (Stimson eerily recorded the president's words as: '*In case we struck at Japan down there.*'⁶²)

From Stimson's diary note it is plain that Roosevelt was contemplating using the B-17 bombers now assembling in the Philippine islands for fire raids against Tokyo and other cities. The army air force was recommending general incendiary attacks to set the wood-and-paper structures of the densely populated Japanese cities on fire.⁶³ General Marshall warned the president however in a memorandum that the bomber force would not be fully capable even of a deterrent role until mid-December; the advice of both Marshall and Stark was to avoid provoking Japan for the time being.⁶⁴

Roosevelt therefore signed a discouraging reply to Churchill's telegram, which he dispatched on November 9, stating that the United States felt that their own efforts in the Philippines, coupled with the British (naval) effort in Singapore, would tend to increase Japan's hesitation – 'whereas in Ja-

* Churchill showed no reluctance to fire-bomb the Japanese cities, and later suggested they quote the Ladybird song to 'the Japs': 'Ladybird, ladybird, fly away home. Your house is on fire, and your children at home.'⁴⁷

pan's present mood,' the telegram admonished, 'new formalised verbal warning or remonstrances might have, with at least even chance, opposite effect.'⁶⁵ What he was trying to educate his English friends about was the imponderable *quantité* known as 'face,' the preservation of which plays such a part in oriental society.⁶⁶

THE PRIME MINISTER disregarded Japanese 'face' to an extent which could scarcely have been greater had he wanted to goad the Japanese into attacking. Speaking at the Mansion House luncheon on November 10 in London, he addressed words of calculated insult to the Japanese. He unabashedly printed the entire passage in his memoirs.⁶⁸ The abuse was deliberate, for he consulted Anthony Eden first, as we have seen. (This was why he had commanded his new Canadian secretary Elizabeth Layton as they drove back to No. 10, 'Now run inside and type like Hell'*).

While he had always been a sentimental old well-wisher to the Japanese, he said in this speech, nevertheless

I should view with keen sorrow the opening of a conflict between Japan and the English-speaking world. The United States' time-honoured interests in the Far East are well known. They are doing their utmost to find a way of preserving peace in the Pacific. We do not know whether their efforts will be successful, but if they fail I take this occasion to say – and it is my duty to say it – that should the United States become involved in war with Japan the British declaration will follow within the hour.

Viewing the vast, sombre scene as dispassionately as possible, it would seem a very hazardous adventure for the Japanese people to plunge quite needlessly into a world struggle in which they may well find themselves opposed in the Pacific by States whose populations comprise nearly three-quarters of the human race.

If steel is the basic foundation of modern war, it would be rather dangerous for a Power like Japan, whose steel production is only about seven million tons a year, to provoke quite gratuitously a struggle with the United States, whose steel production is now about ninety millions; and this would take no account of the powerful contribution which the British empire can make.

* Page 149

'Every preparation,' he declared, 'to defend British interests in the Far East, and to defend the common cause now at stake, has been and is being made.' He referred portentously to the mighty British warships which were even now on their majestic way out to the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

THE JAPANESE were not a people easily cowed, and their leaders were steeped in traditions similar to the lesson he had commended so recently at Harrow – never, never, to give in to mere force, however overwhelming. The tone of his speech was a mistake. The Japanese took it as a calculated insult. 'In view of the way it fits in with the conditions obtaining at the moment,' reported the Japanese ambassador in London, 'it is impossible to think that he was bluffing.' He added that Churchill evidently 'had no intention of seeing a rapprochement made [by the United States] with Japan at the expense of Chiang.'⁶⁹ This was not quite true: he felt nothing for the Chinese, but he did want to see the United States at war.⁷⁰

The new Japanese foreign minister, Shigenori Togo, a career diplomat with a German wife, protested to British ambassador Sir Robert Craigie about the speech. Craigie responded amiably at first, presuming that the Japanese talks in Washington were only preliminary.

'On the contrary,' replied Togo. 'The imperial government has submitted its final proposals, and has made this fact absolutely clear to the United States.' Referring to Churchill's admission, in his speech, that he did not know what was going on in the U.S.–Japanese negotiations, Togo challenged: 'Would it not be more pertinent if, instead of making threats without knowing what he's talking about, he were to try to understand the issues more clearly and to co-operate in an effort to resolve them?' The foreign minister concluded that he fully expected Washington to sign their final proposal within ten days. 'Domestic considerations,' he said, 'brook no further delay.'

Craigie betrayed evident astonishment, according to the Japanese PURPLE dispatch reporting their interview, and indicated that he had not realised how critical the situation was.⁷¹

AMBASSADOR NOMURA had arrived at the state department early on November 7 to present the first of the two proposals, the hard-line proposal 'A.'⁷² Churchill devoted the rest of November to torpedoing the negotiations. It was not easy, as Washington was telling him nothing. He was dependent on the MAGICS. (This diplomatic estrangement between the British

and Americans at this crucial hour may well be the real reason why the 'Japan' and several 'North America' files of late 1941 are still sealed).

Since Tokyo had obligingly briefed Ambassador Nomura in full on 'B,' Hull found it relatively easy to reject 'A.' The real crisis, from Churchill's point of view, would come when the Japanese showed up with the more attractive offer, under which the Japanese would offer to withdraw their troops from southern Indo-China if the United States resumed oil supplies.



It is likely in retrospect that if 'B' had gone through, war in the Far East would have been avoided. British Intelligence now knew that the Japanese in Indo-China were constructing twelve airfields within range of Malaya; but evacuating Indo-China would make a Japanese attack on Malaya and Singapore impossible.⁷³

By sabotaging the negotiations, Churchill took a calculated risk, choosing to set the Far East on fire – plunging it into the war which would eventually spell the ruin of his country's empire.

Sir Robert Craigie certainly held this view, and made no bones about it on his repatriation from Japanese internment in 1942.

'He's going to be a curse,' wrote Eden's permanent under-secretary Sir Alexander Cadogan in October 1942 after Craigie's return to London. 'During his captivity he has rehearsed all the events leading up to war – and all his grievances. He's got it all pat.'

In his final report Craigie voiced powerful disagreement with Churchill's policy of leaving Washington to handle their Far Eastern affairs. 'Judging from telegrams received by me during October and November [1941],' he wrote to Eden, with unmistakable undertones of reproof, 'you were disposed to consider that the warnings reaching me from Japanese sources were part of the Japanese "war of nerves."' Not surprisingly Cadogan read into this 'vast argumentation' a savage indictment of Britain's entire foreign policy leading up to the outbreak of war in the Pacific. 'Shall do very best simply to squash it,' he noted. 'On reading some of it, I find I disagree with almost every word.'⁷⁴

He wrote a wounding attack on this ambassador on the last day of October 1942 and took extraordinary steps to prevent the wider circulation of Craigie's report, fearing disastrous consequences within the Dominions. Craigie had however managed to take away the original typescript, which

was rather more trenchant than the amended one that remains in the official archives. 'I consider,' stated Craigie even in this toned-down version,

that had it been possible to reach a compromise with Japan in December 1941 involving the withdrawal of Japanese troops from Indo-China, war with Japan would not have been inevitable.⁷⁵

The trouble with heresies is that on occasion they turn out to be true. The row over Craigie's beliefs simmered throughout 1942 and much of 1943. On November 9, 1942 Eden assured Churchill that he would not circulate the document at all until his Far Eastern department could append a proper riposte to it. Craigie flatly refused to withdraw any of 'the more controversial parts' of his own report, and remained adamant in placing on record, in paragraph 19, his view that 'war with Japan could have been postponed and perhaps averted'; Eden ordered the document's circulation restricted to the king and war cabinet.

The riposte was not ready until May 1943; in its conclusions, which Eden ordered deleted, even his own Far East department indulged in lugubrious speculation about post-war Russian and American expansionism in Asia.⁷⁶

Churchill did not read either document until after Italy's capitulation. He was dismayed even by the amended version of the Craigie report – writing to Eden that it was 'a very strange document' and to be kept most scrupulously secret. 'A more one-sided and pro-Japanese account of what occurred I have hardly ever read.'

Craigie, he scoffed, wrote of the breach with Japan as if it were an unmitigated disaster. 'Greater good fortune has rarely happened to the British Empire than this event which has revealed our friends and foes in their true light, and may lead, through the merciless crushing of Japan, to a new relationship of immense benefit to the English-speaking countries and to the whole world.'

He directed the foreign office however: 'There should be no question of circulating this dispatch to anyone.'⁷⁷ Eden ordered 'all copies' to be recalled.

To Churchill only one thing mattered in November 1941 – bringing the United States in.

11: *A Sorry Pass*

ROOSEVELT'S NEW CHIEF of Intelligence, Colonel William B. Donovan, had sent over a Major William Dwight Whitney to represent him in Whitehall. But for his American birth, Whitney could almost have been English – he had studied at Oxford, been called to the Bar, taken an English wife, and even held a commission in the Guards. He had arrived in the British capital late on November 3, 1941 and wrote to the prime minister asking for an early interview.¹

Churchill received Whitney a week later at Chequers. The major brought letters of introduction from both Donovan and Roosevelt, who informed him that Donovan, his new 'Co-ordinator of Information,' was setting up 'a small staff' in London.

At Chequers and during the drive up to London the next morning, Churchill had a long talk with Whitney about the war and the future.² He dismissed the renewed Russian demands for a Second Front and spoke of the losses of R.A.F. Bomber Command. He was optimistic about the Russian front. Only recently he had laid odds of five to four that Hitler would take the Soviet capital; now he reversed those odds.

'His intuition tells him,' Major Whitney summarised afterwards, 'that there is [a] real chance that the Nazis are stopped before Moscow.'

Showing some military insight, Churchill also predicted that the Germans would find the mountains between Batum and Baku a formidable obstacle.

Asked about the post-war period, he expressed the hope that the British people would put up with the current national government for some years to come to lay a 'solid basis for reconstruction.'³ From the U.S. embassy, Whitney cabled to his masters a listing of Winston's order of priorities: he would prefer, said Whitney, to have Japan stay out of the war; failing that, to

have *both* the United States and Japan in. The possibility that Japan might come in while the United States stayed out was, he growled, 'unthinkable.'⁴

ASSIGNED A ROOM in the war cabinet offices next to General Ismay, Whitney defined his task as being to deflect any unjust criticism of British activities by the Americans. To 'Pug' Ismay it seemed rather nebulous. He warned the prime minister that there were 'obvious dangers' in having an American agent planted so close to the centre of British power.

Right away Whitney asked to be supplied with Britain's regular operational summaries, censorship analyses, and secret service reports. 'I submit,' Ismay advised Churchill, 'that Mr Whitney should have a watch-dog, not only on the military but also on the civil side of his work.' Churchill approved, writing: 'Yes, but watch it vigilantly.'⁵ With the prime minister's backing, Ismay directed his colleagues to show Whitney nothing – he emphasised *nothing* – relating to future operations or derived from codebreaking.⁶

They never felt at ease with this American spy in their midst. When Whitney fell ill in January 1942, Donovan tried to replace him with a Mr Percy Winner; the British declined to grant him the same privileges.

A FEW DAYS after Whitney's visit to Chequers, Churchill received 'C' at Downing-street. Everybody was now trying to divine what was in the Japanese mind. The Americans believed the Japanese could not undertake any operations in Indo-China for some time, but the British Joint Intelligence Sub-Committee appreciated that the oil embargo was forcing a drastic choice on Japan – either to wind up the 'China Incident' or to risk war.

In which case, which way would Japan strike first? At Russia (principally toward Vladivostok)? Japan was not strong enough. At Thailand, and then Malaya? This would bring in Britain, but not necessarily the United States. At the Dutch East Indies? This must logically bring in Britain too, although Churchill had muttered to his cabinet on several recent occasions that since the Dutch had done little for Britain until Hitler invaded them in 1940 they could not claim a firm promise of help from Britain now.⁷ 'From the Japanese viewpoint,' the J.I.C. concluded, 'her best move, the one with least chance of bringing on a general war, would probably be the occupation of Thailand.' From bases here she could later attack Malaya and the Dutch East Indies.⁸ As for the possibility of Japan attacking the United States of America, the Joint Intelligence Committee did not consider it.

The *MAGICS* provided to Churchill a disturbing picture of how close Washington was to cutting a deal with Tokyo. He knew that Tokyo had set a firm deadline of November 25.⁹ He knew too that Ambassador Nomura had handed the tough initial proposal ('A') to Cordell Hull on the seventh; in this, Tokyo insisted that the United States cease providing aid to China. A few days later – deliberately taking his time – Hull replied that they would have to secure Chiang Kai-shek's approval before China could be discussed.

Nomura reported this unsatisfactory interim outcome to Tokyo on the thirteenth.¹⁰ Two days later Hull put to Nomura the not entirely unacceptable condition that Japan abandon her pact with Germany and Italy.¹¹

The talks dragged on, and Tokyo several times reminded Ambassador Nomura of the approaching deadline. 'The fate of our empire hangs by a slender thread of a few days,' they signalled to him in *PURPLE* on the fifteenth, 'so please fight harder than you did before.'¹² On the same day a message to Kurusu, who had arrived in Washington to back up Nomura, warned that 'the crisis [is] fast approaching.'¹³

Kurusu made his first appearance with Nomura at the state department on November 17. Roosevelt was present too. Kurusu warned Hull and the president of the possibility of an 'imminent explosion' unless they reached agreement. 'There is no last word between friends,' Roosevelt amiably chimed in.¹⁴ The Japanese had still not played their last card, proposal 'B'; instead the emissaries radioed to Tokyo that 'it seems very clear that they [the Americans] are of a mind to bring about a compromise after making sure of our peaceful intentions.' Kurusu had on his own initiative left the Americans this suggestion for a temporary agreement: 'If the Japanese were now to withdraw their troops from Indo-China, could the United States ease their oil and economic pressure to the point of sending small quantities of oil?'¹⁵

This was the first time the Japanese had played their card of withdrawing from Indo-China, which would remove the spectre of war. Hull saw in it a gleam of hope, and told Halifax that evening that the idea was 'attractive enough to warrant its being tried at least.'¹⁶ On the following day he said as much to Nomura; according to the cable which the ambassador sent to Tokyo, Hull had proposed nothing less than a return to the status quo before Britain and the United States had imposed the July embargo:

I mean [Hull had said, according to the *MAGIC*] Japan should evacuate southern French Indo-China, and in return the United States should re-

scind the freezing order. If the atmosphere remains calm in this manner, there will be no need of [the British] sending warships to Singapore or [the Americans] strengthening military facilities in the Philippines. Then we should continue talks.¹⁷

A further Japanese signal from Washington to Tokyo on the nineteenth suggested that agreement was imminent on the terms proposed.¹⁸ As for the troublesome Tripartite Pact with Germany, on the same day Tokyo was heard assuring Ambassador Nomura that he need not worry about that: 'You may point out that the [Japanese] empire can decide independently. . .'¹⁹ Nothing was fixed however even now, and the two emissaries radioed a suggestion that they try for 'a practical settlement' even before putting forward the more amicable proposal 'B.'²⁰ At this, a frantic note entered the responses intercepted from Tokyo. Time was running out: with only six days to go to the 'November 25' deadline, the Japanese government instructed Nomura to go the whole hog and put forward 'B' immediately – and to make 'no further concessions.'²¹ If Washington refused to accept, 'the negotiations will have to be broken off.'²² Nomura protested that this would charge the situation with dynamite: nevertheless he had to visit Hull on the morning of November 20.

Receiving the proposal 'B' – of which he had known for some time – Hull made clear that the United States would not give up its aid to China; he first promised to think it over 'fully and sympathetically,'²³ then postponed a final decision, explaining that he must first consult with the British, Dutch, and Chinese. Tokyo may have begun to smell a rat, but Kurusu still radioed that he anticipated agreement by the weekend. Tokyo grudgingly agreed to extend the deadline by four days. 'It is awfully hard for us to consider changing the date,' added Tokyo, explaining: 'There are reasons beyond your ability to guess why we wanted to settle the Japanese–American relations by the twenty-fifth.' 'This time we mean business,' the message continued, with emphasis – 'that the deadline absolutely cannot be changed. *After that things are automatically going to happen.*'²⁴

This MAGIC intercept – translated on November 22 – produced in Washington a war scare without parallel since Orson Welles' broadcast in 1938 that Martians were invading. Other MAGICS showed that Japan was not bluffing. Tokyo's cypher messages on the twentieth showed her evacuating her nationals from Singapore before hostilities began, and grooming agents to operate behind the lines in this British territory.²⁵ Two Tokyo messages in

the middle of the month had instructed the Japanese embassy in Washington on emergency procedures for destroying its code machines, and this embassy was heard preparing to evacuate its staff by sea.²⁶ Some or all of these PURPLE despatches were forwarded to or read independently by the British. The Japanese may even have wanted them to be read, as an element in a war of nerves.

ON SATURDAY November 22, 1941, therefore, Washington knew that Tokyo's new secret deadline was set to expire just one week later on the twenty-ninth. Cordell Hull hoped however to have struck a deal, a *modus vivendi*, with the Japanese before then.²⁷

After seeing him on Saturday the twenty-second Lord Halifax typed into his secret diary the observation that Hull evidently thought that he might 'find himself at war with Japan at any time without much notice.'²⁸ Chinese foreign minister T. V. Soong, who learned about this interview, told others that Lord Halifax was upset to hear about the *modus vivendi* now proposed by the Americans and had told Hull that he would have to consult London; Cordell Hull, said Soong, had retorted that the British would have to like it or lump it.²⁹

Over the weekend the state department staff hammered out a counter-proposal which would meet the Japanese demands without, Cordell Hull felt, betraying the Chinese. The United States would allow Japan enough oil for civilian use, as well as food products, pharmaceuticals, raw cotton, and raw silk; in return Japan must pull her forces out of southern China, station no more than twenty-five thousand troops in Indo-China, and stay put for the next three months. There should thereupon be a final settlement, which would be agreed on later.³⁰

Informed of this counter-proposal, the secretary of war, Henry Stimson, was worried that even these terms would be 'too drastic' for the Japanese emissaries to accept; Stimson would record in his diary Roosevelt's gloomy prediction that the Japanese might even attack on the coming Monday, the first day of December. 'The Japanese,' reflected the president at a midday conference on November 25, 'are notorious for making an attack without warning.'³¹

Hull had the same nightmare. This alarm was a clear by-product of the MAGICS. He now had his heart in the deal. Above all it would give the American armed forces the three months' respite that they still desired.

Winston Churchill had spent a mellow weekend at Chequers preoccupied, most probably, with the troubling news of the CRUSADER battle in Libya. The police log shows that he arrived with bodyguard 'Tommy' Thompson and private secretary Francis Brown at midday on Saturday the twenty-second, joined during the afternoon by Clemmie, Mary, and their friends the Montagu women – mother Venetia and teenage daughter Judy.

The only other callers of note aside from the regular Sunday afternoon masseuse were the P.M.'s doctor, the Prof., and a 'Major Winter.'

This latter was undoubtedly Major Whitney, who had probably brought word from Washington – perhaps even a clandestine message which seems to have come from the president himself.³² It made clear that Hull was asking Britain's approval to relax the embargo on Japan.

Churchill made no official reply to Washington at first. Instead, he dictated on November 23 a minute to the foreign secretary discussing Hull's proposal, a document whose full text makes plain that for a moment Churchill too was inclined to appease Japan, or at least hesitated to throw down the gauntlet to her.³³

My own feeling is that we might give Hull the latitude he asks.*

Our major interest is: no further encroachments and no war, as we already have enough of this latter. The United States will not throw over the Chinese cause, and we may safely follow them in this part of the subject. We could not of course agree to an arrangement whereby Japan was free to attack Russia in Siberia. I doubt myself whether this is likely at the present time. . . The formal denunciation of the Axis Pact by Japan is not in my opinion necessary. Their stopping out of the war is in itself a great disappointment and injury to the Germans. We ought not to agree to any [Japanese] veto on American or British help to China. . .

Subject to the above, it would be worthwhile to ease up upon Japan economically sufficiently for them to live from hand to mouth – even if we only got another three months. These however are only first impressions. I must say I should feel pleased if I read that an American–Japanese agreement had been made by which we were to be no worse off three months hence in the Far East than we are now.

* Quoting his own minute in *The Second World War*, vol. iii: *The Grand Alliance* (London 1950), page 526, Churchill omitted this telling sentence.

Oliver Harvey's diary shows that his master, Eden, and Churchill did confer on Hull's proposal: the prime minister rather liked it, repeating that he did not want anything to worsen the Far East situation yet. Eden however saw Hull's proposal only as the thin end of the appeasement wedge. The United States must stand firm, he said. In his simplistic view this would force Japan to yield still further, rather than fight.³⁴

Unless Churchill replied by his direct M.I.6 secret channel to the president, he made no formal response on Monday the twenty-fourth either. He still had manifold other preoccupations as we have seen. This was the day when Leo Amery found him in 'one of his very worst moods' in cabinet.³⁵ The P.M. was learning of General Cunningham's nervous breakdown in CRUSADER; India was bothering him, and so were his teeth – he would visit the dentist's chair several times over the next two weeks.³⁶

Thus London had made no response for Lord Halifax to use by the time that Hull disclosed the formal details of the proposed American–Japanese deal to the Australian, British, Chinese, and Dutch ambassadors in Washington that Monday evening, November 24.

As he described it, the United States would be allowing to Japan a tiny amount of 'more or less inferior' oil, against a ninety-day respite. When Lord Halifax admitted that he had still not heard from Churchill agreeing to this, Hull was most displeased, describing the situation as a crisis and the silence from London as most embarrassing.³⁷

In the absence of firm support from London, the Americans found themselves isolated: their proposal attracted shrill telegrams (which Hull would term 'hysterical'³⁸) from Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and his supporters in Chungking, his capital, addressed to powerful citizens in Washington and London. The Chinese protested that the Americans were preparing to sell them out to Tokyo. Chiang Kai-shek evidently communicated with both Churchill and Roosevelt, demanding that Hull delay further action until Churchill had ruled on his 'appeasement' proposal.

Hull decided however that he would hand the *modus vivendi* to the Japanese on Wednesday, November 26.

NOVEMBER 25, 1941 is a difficult day to reconstruct in the unfolding of the Pacific drama, because important documents are missing or have been subtly changed in official publications. We do however have a word picture of Churchill on this day, as he received a tedious U.S. Congressman, J. Buell Snyder, at No. 10 Downing-street. The prime minister had to humour

Snyder, a rotund Democrat from Pennsylvania, as he was chairman of the military sub-committee of the Appropriations Committee. General Raymond Lee, the U.S. military attaché, describes the P.M. sitting this day at the cabinet table, with a thick gold watch-chain draped across his paunch, puffing at a cigar and talking about CRUSADER, the battle of attrition just beginning in the Libyan desert. 'For the first time,' he said, 'the Germans are getting a taste of their own bitter medicine.'³⁹ Japan, he added, was probably waiting to see how CRUSADER went before making her own move. As he rambled on about the unity of the British and about the working-class support for this war, Lee found himself studying that famous face again: 'He is a short, fat, round-headed, cherub-faced little man,' he wrote, 'whose eyes are his best feature. They are blue and fierce. It seemed to me that his face is somewhat more worn and the veins on his temples seem to stand out more than I have ever noticed before.'

The Congressman plagued the P.M. to stand next to him for a snapshot – 'just for Mrs Snyder.' Winston obliged; he seized upon the opportunity to lead the importunate politician outside the famous front door for this purpose, ignored the American arm stretched around his shoulder as the shutter clicked, and left Mr Snyder there.

During the day a telegram came from President Roosevelt, explaining and justifying the offer which Cordell Hull proposed to make to the Japanese on the twenty-sixth. The telegram had been drafted by Hull, except for a postscript which Roosevelt had in fact added in his own hand.⁴⁰ This read,

This seems to me a fair proposition for the Japanese but its acceptance or rejection is really a matter of internal Japanese politics. I am not very hopeful and we must all be prepared for real trouble, possibly soon.

ROOSEVELT.

EVIDENTLY FUELLED by breezy, confident reports from Lord Halifax, Eden had, as we have observed, taken the view that Japan was bluffing. (Churchill too would later once again admit that he himself had never really expected Japan to strike at the United States or the British empire).⁴¹ Messages meanwhile arrived from the (increasingly agitated) Chinese, Dutch, and Australians, objecting to Hull's proposed offer. Eden argued against Churchill that to appease Japan now would be a betrayal of the Chinese: stand firm, said Eden, and the Japanese would climb down. He sent a telegram, or

telegrams, to Lord Halifax in this vein (which still have not been released), instructing him to invite Hull to beef up his proposal to the Japanese.

Churchill went along with this more confrontational line, though perhaps for other reasons: the first 'WINDS' message had come into view. This startling piece of Intelligence reached him – but not yet the Americans – from his codebreakers during the evening of November 25. Six days earlier, this revealed, Japan had secretly circulated to her embassies in London and elsewhere, using PURPLE, details of a system of messages which they would conceal in the daily weather reports on short-wave radio broadcasts from Tokyo; from them, her envoys would know – even after they had destroyed their PURPLE machines – whether war was imminent and, almost literally, which way the wind was blowing:

The international situation is tense and we cannot tell when the worst may happen. In such an event, communications between the [Japanese] empire and the enemy countries will immediately cease. Therefore when our diplomatic relations are on the point of being severed, we shall broadcast, as the weather report, the following phrases in the middle and at the end of the news in Japanese in our overseas broadcast service –

The three Japanese phrases, each to be broadcast twice 'in a resolute voice,' then followed: *Higashi no kaze ame* ('easterly wind, rain') if relations with America were 'in question'; *Kita no kaze kumori* ('northerly wind, cloudy') if Japan and the Soviet Union were concerned; *Nishi no kaze hare* ('westerly wind, fine') in the case of Britain including specifically Thailand and 'an attack on Malaya.' Upon hearing these code phrases the Japanese embassy was to destroy its cyphers and secret documents.⁴²

'C's' codebreakers deciphered this week-old PURPLE on November 25. The Americans deciphered it for themselves three days later, on November 28; it was only then that American radio stations were instructed to mount an immediate listening watch for the coded 'weather reports' that the WINDS message set up.⁴³ This is the clearest proof that Churchill's codebreakers, for whatever reason, had kept it to themselves; Washington's investigators did not retrieve the corresponding British MAGIC from Bletchley Park's secret archives until 1945. Churchill thus had a head start on Washington. Around the world on November 25 British empire radio monitors began listening for the 'WINDS-EXECUTE' signal, the cryptic 'weather forecast.' On the same day, we now know, Tokyo secretly signalled orders to Vice

Admiral Chuichi Nagumo's task force, using the Japanese naval cypher JN. 25, to put to sea the next day and sail to the first rendezvous point. The Americans did not even intercept the signal; there is no evidence whether the British did, let alone decipher it.⁴⁴

THAT DAY TOO, November 25, 1941, 'C' sent a noteworthy message to his principal agent in the Pacific, Gerald Wilkinson. Wilkinson was an old friend of Winston's, based in Manila as the local sugar-broker for a large Hawaiian sugar trading corporation, Theo H. Davies & Co. In fact he had married one of Davies' daughters; to the irritation of U.S. army Intelligence in Manila, which suspected M.I.6 of 'duplicity, evasion, bargaining, horse-trading of information and . . . international intrigue,' Wilkinson never registered as a foreign agent, contrary to United States law.⁴⁵ 'C's' message to him now, on November 25, stated that a 'usually reliable' secret source had reported that Japan was planning a seaborne invasion of the Kra Isthmus of Thailand on the first day of December 'without any ultimatum or declaration of break.'

His source was evidently the British consul-general at Saigon.⁴⁶ Since this isthmus was the narrow strip of land that widens into the Malay peninsula in the south, this revealed a very real danger to Singapore, Britain's naval base at its southernmost point. The invasion forces, 'C' had learned, would embark at Hainan and Formosa, and land mainly at Songkhla (Singora). He passed this warning on to the American naval and military Intelligence authorities in Washington too.⁴⁷ Wilkinson received this warning on the twenty-sixth and forwarded it to Harry Dawson, his M.I.6 subordinate (and British vice-consul) in Hawaii; the next day the G-2 (U.S. army Intelligence) in Honolulu passed it to the local army commander and FBI headquarters, and the Fourteenth Naval District (Hawaii) sent it to the chief of naval operations in Washington on the twenty-eighth.⁴⁸

WHATEVER THE cause, and whatever its content, the foreign office urgently communicated around midnight on November 25 to Lord Halifax, who wrote it in his secret diary, that 'a message' was on its way from the prime minister to President Roosevelt, and that Cordell Hull must not show his proposal to the Japanese yet.⁴⁹

The state department in Washington was already nervous about the long silence from Churchill. Lord Halifax would summarise in his diary, 'Endless talks these last two days with Hull about the question of a temporary and limited agreement with the Japs.'

The message which now arrived from London dismayed Cordell Hull: Eden refused to go along with appeasing the Japanese. As Lord Halifax observed, continuing his diary entry: 'London is inclined to be stiffer than Hull wants to be, but I think it is very difficult for them [London], having left the whole business to Hull. We have always told them that this did mean in effect that we were handing over our diplomacy pretty completely, however unavoidable it may have been to do so.' Then Halifax recorded: 'I got a message in the evening to ask Hull to hold his hand until Winston has sent a message to the president. I don't know what this may be, but I hope it won't be a case of our grumbling and giving way, which does no good at all.'⁵⁰

After midnight, Eden came over to No. 10 Downing-street bringing an item that had, he said, just come in from Washington. He told Winston that J. C. Sterndale Bennett, the head of his Far Eastern department, felt that the Americans were treating their ally Chiang Kai-shek rather shoddily; Eden too felt that Cordell Hull was 'giving away too much.'

His diary shows that he and the prime minister together mapped out a warning telegram to Roosevelt 'about Chinese reactions.'⁵¹

'Your message about Japan received tonight,' Churchill's message – the famous 'thin diet' telegram – began.*

Also full accounts from Lord Halifax of discussions and your counter-project to Japan on which the foreign secretary has sent some comments. Of course, it is for you to handle this business and we certainly do not want an additional war. There is only one point that disquiets us. What about Chiang Kai-shek? Is he not having a very thin diet? Our anxiety is about China. If they collapse our joint dangers would enormously increase. We are sure that the regard of the United States for the Chinese will govern your action.

'We feel,' Churchill concluded, making the point he had laboured more than once before, 'that the Japanese are most unsure of themselves.'⁵²

* The word 'tonight' is puzzling, unless it alludes merely to Eden's having brought the file round so late. The foreign office had received at 1:10 P.M. on November 25 a short telegram from President Roosevelt ('On November 20th the Japanese Ambassador. . .'). There may have been a later item, still omitted from the files. It is noteworthy that nowhere in the public files of their exchanges (PRO file FO.371/27913) is there any reference to the Japanese 'November 29' deadline.

At 3:20 A.M. the prime minister's private secretary Anthony Bevir sent this text round by hand to the U.S. embassy for telegraphing 'as soon as possible' to Washington.⁵³ The embassy transmitted it to Washington as telegram No. 5670 at six A.M. Since Cordell Hull would later blame the British, under Chinese pressure, for causing him to break off the negotiations with the Japanese, it is worth recording that Sterndale Bennett would four years later place it on record that what became known to historians as Churchill's 'thin gruel' [*sic*] telegram had been sent 'off his [Churchill's] own bat, without any prompting from the Chinese.'⁵⁴ It was the only telegram that the F.O.'s North American department were not able to see before it went off.⁵⁵ It would cause the United States to break off their talks with Japan. It was this telegram which helped to cast the die for war.



Barely perceptible from London, the pendulum in Washington finally tilted toward war that day, November 26, 1941. Churchill's overnight 'thin diet' telegram had arrived at the state department. For Cordell Hull it was the last straw. As Stimson narrated to his diary, Hull 'phoned him around nine A.M. that he was about ready 'to kick the whole thing over.' Hull's memoirs place the blame for his change of mind squarely on the telegram. Henry Morgenthau Jr. was visiting Roosevelt's bedside at breakfast time when – according to his diary, a forkful of kippered herring was poised halfway to the presidential lips – Hull had 'phoned there too. 'He had not touched his coffee,' dictated Morgenthau that same day. 'He was talking to Hull and trying to eat his food at the same time. By the time he finished his conversation his food was cold, and he didn't touch it.'⁵⁶

According to the later investigation Stimson also 'phoned, with word now of a sighting of up to thirty Japanese ships carrying perhaps fifty thousand troops, south of Formosa; Roosevelt allegedly 'blew up,' and described it as evidence of Japan's bad faith.⁵⁷ There is some doubt about the authenticity of this episode, since the convoy movement had been foreshadowed six weeks before in the MAGICS, and on the previous day, in a letter to the president which he later concealed, Stimson had quoted his Military Intelligence division as describing it as 'more or less a normal' troop movement into Indo-China; he enclosed for the president a British intelligence report, dated November 21, predicting that 'Japan will make a last effort at agreement with U.S.A.,' failing which she might order troops into Thailand.⁵⁸

General Marshall called an emergency conference in his office at ten-forty A.M., and revealed that Roosevelt and Hull believed that the Japanese would soon 'cut loose' with 'an assault upon the Philippines.' 'We know a great deal that the Japanese are not aware we know,' he added, 'and we are familiar with their plans to a certain extent.' They decided that the navy's two aircraft-carriers based on Hawaii should at once ferry fighter planes from there to Wake and Midway islands in the Pacific, to provide proper escort cover for the forty-eight B-17 bombers.⁵⁹ This would halve the fighter strength left in Hawaii, but Washington had evidently seen no grounds yet to indicate that this base was endangered.

Visited by Hull at 3:50 P.M. to discuss what to tell the Japanese emissaries when he saw them at five, Roosevelt instructed him to abandon the *modus vivendi* proposal, and serve up instead Ten Points that both men knew would be totally unacceptable. He may have asked Hull to bring with him all the arguments that spoke in favour of such a course of action, because there is such a memo in Hull's papers.⁶⁰ The Chinese ambassador Hu-Shih had also taken a 'very stiff' message from their leader, Chiang Kai-shek, to Roosevelt, who had dismissed it as 'alarmist.'⁶¹

Late that day Churchill received from Roosevelt a secret message, evidently in response to some equally secret epistle which he had sent through the direct M.I.6 link: 'Negotiations off,' reported the president. 'Services expect action within two weeks.'⁶²

That the negotiations were off, he may shortly have learned from his codebreakers anyway. According to the despatch which Nomura radioed to Tokyo, Hull had rejected the proposals which they had presented on the twentieth, saying: 'I am sorry to tell you that we cannot agree to it.' He therefore proposed a mutual non-aggression treaty between Tokyo, Washington, Moscow, the Netherlands, Chungking, and Bangkok (London was not mentioned or even shown a copy of this document); further, an agreement on the inviolability of French Indo-China, and the evacuation of *all* Japanese troops from both China and French Indo-China. The emissaries had immediately dismissed this as unacceptable. 'In view of our negotiations all along,' reported Nomura in PURPLE to Tokyo, 'we were both dumbfounded, and said we could not even co-operate to the extent of reporting this back to Tokyo.' The two Japanese both argued 'furiously,' but Hull had remained adamant. 'Why,' speculated the Japanese ambassador, 'did the United States have to propose such hard terms as these? Well, England, the Netherlands, and China doubtless put her up to it.'⁶³

It seems remarkable that Cordell Hull had fought to preserve his deal until this day, only to wilt under the combined onslaught of Churchill's secret messages to Roosevelt and the 'violent telegrams' from Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek which had rained down on official Washington the day before.

The British ambassador gathered that 'the Chinks' had kicked up a row, whereupon Hull had 'apparently' abandoned his deal for the time being, handing to 'the Japs' a general statement, an essay on high principles, instead.⁶⁴

For a few days there were those in the U.S. state department who prided themselves that they had thereby called the Japanese 'bluff.' Dr Stanley K. Hornbeck, the anti-Japanese head of the Far East desk there, now wrote to Hull laying odds of five to one against Japan going to war. 'In days to come you will look upon the decision which was made, and the action you took yesterday, with great satisfaction.' (The letter was later removed from state department records and destroyed, as an embarrassment to all concerned; but a private copy had by then illicitly been made).⁶⁵

Reminiscing about Washington diplomacy as seen from the British embassy, Sir William Hayter would write to the foreign office in 1943, 'We only learnt of the decision to drop the *modus vivendi* and present the November 26th memorandum (a snap decision if ever there was one) when Hornbeck telephoned to me on the evening of the 26th, in his most professorial manner ("Now mind you get this straight") to tell me that it had already been done. And as you know it was not until several days later that we were allowed to see the text of the memorandum.'⁶⁶

Cordell Hull did not share Hornbeck's complacency. Halifax and other non-American sources portray his fury at having seen his peace plan squelched by interfering outsiders – primarily Churchill and the Chinese. 'He opened up,' recorded Lord Halifax in his secret diary after visiting the secretary of state, 'on the way in which his careful efforts to postpone the row had been blown out of the water by the intervention of many people who didn't understand how delicate the balance was.' Hull also blamed Stimson and other members of Roosevelt's cabinet for this. 'Hardly veiling his language,' continued Halifax, Hull criticised the president's habit of taking diplomatic advice from outside the state department.

This had perhaps a familiar ring to the ambassador; had he not endured much the same improprieties as foreign secretary to Churchill? He commiserated with Hull. 'But,' continued Lord Halifax, a trifle naïvely, 'I told

him that I did not think he had any complaint against the matter of Winston's messages to the president, because he always knew what those were. . . '67

IN LONDON on this disastrous day, November 26, Major Desmond Morton came round to No. 10 and reminded Winston that he would be sixty-seven in four days' time. 'I forgot my birthday last year,' reminisced Winston. 'At that time we had won the war in the air, although we did not know it. This year, we have won the war on the sea. Next year,' he predicted, 'we shall have won the war on the land. And then I shall retire and amuse myself by watching the people who are trying to win the peace.'⁶⁸

His teeth were enraging him: an early dental appointment was fixed. Perhaps until then he adopted the 'old fashioned treatment' of which his daughter Sarah would describe as one of which her Papa approved: 'Holding neat whisky in my mouth. Oh, delicious anæsthesia! Local, then total!'⁶⁹



What was in the 'general statement,' 'the memorandum,' the 'document' which Hull had handed to the two Japanese ambassadors? Halifax did not know. Nobody in London knew officially either, and for the next week the Americans refused to say. It marked an extraordinary *baisse* in Anglo-American relations. Halifax told the F.O. that he felt that Cordell Hull had 'behaved badly,' as it was 'an important document that we have never seen.'⁷⁰ This American discourtesy invited equal slights in reprisal. Explaining the delicate Japanese–American negotiations to the chiefs of staff two days later, the F.O.'s Sterndale Bennett had to admit that Washington was keeping them totally in the dark – 'It appeared,' the record relates, reflecting a tone of wan realisation, 'that there was some danger that the Americans and ourselves might not keep in step with regard to measures to be taken in the Far East.'⁷¹

Newspapers, evidently inspired by the Chinese, freely spoke of the talks having finally broken down.⁷² Recriminations flew. It was plain to the seasoned diplomats in Whitehall that the Japanese would have been offended by the American procedure – what on earth had induced Hull, asked one, to put his 'general statement' to the Japanese, 'unsweetened by any concrete offer.'⁷³ The Americans blamed the British. Sumner Welles confirmed to Halifax that in view of Churchill's 'thin diet' message and the 'little support' which Hull had received from London the *modus vivendi* was dead.⁷⁴

Hull said the same to the Australian envoy.⁷⁵ The foreign office gathered from Halifax that Hull, having nearly succeeded in reaching a settlement with the Japanese, however much it might smack of Munich, was sore that the Chinese and British had stayed his hand at the last moment. That was bound to rankle.⁷⁶

In Washington, Roosevelt snatched the reins of events away from his elderly secretary of state. On the morning of November 27 he authorised the immediate issue of formal 'war warnings' to American outposts in the Pacific, and the notification of Britain to this effect through their naval liaison office in London. He himself signed the warning signal issued to Francis B. Sayre, his High Commissioner in the Philippines, that afternoon.

Preparations are becoming apparent . . . for an early aggressive movement of some character, although as yet there are no clear indications as to its strength or whether it will be directed against the Burma Road, Thailand, Malay peninsula, Dutch East Indies, or the Philippines. Advance against Thailand seems most probable.

I consider it possible that this next Japanese aggression might cause an outbreak of hostilities between the U.S. and Japan.⁷⁷

Francis Sayre was instructed to call Admiral Thomas B. Hart, the commander-in-chief of the U.S. Asiatic Fleet, and General Douglas MacArthur, the local army commander, into a conference. At two P.M. Admiral Stark, chief of naval operations, sent an explicit war warning not only to Hart in Manila but to Admiral Husband F. Kimmel, commanding the Pacific Fleet based on Hawaii, and (as instructed) to the American admiral in London.

This despatch is to be considered a war warning [the signal read]. Negotiations with Japan looking toward stabilization of conditions in the Pacific have ceased and an aggressive move by Japan is expected within the next few days. The number and equipment of Japanese troops and the organization of naval task forces indicates an amphibious expedition against either the Philippines, Thai or Kra peninsula or possibly Borneo. Execute an appropriate defensive deployment preparatory to carrying out the tasks assigned in WPL46. Inform District and Army authorities.

A similar warning is being sent by war department. SpeNavO [Admiral Robert L. Ghormley, U.S. Special Naval Observer in London] inform British...⁷⁸

A more Delphic signal went out at five P.M., transmitted over Marshall's name to General Walter C. Short, commanding general in Hawaii. It was the literary product of an *ad hoc* committee consisting of Stimson, Stark, and General Leonard T. Gerow. 'Negotiations with Japan appear to be terminated to all practical purposes with only the barest possibilities that the Japanese government might come back and offer to continue. Japanese action unpredictable but hostile action possible any moment. . . The United States desires that Japan commit the first overt act.'⁷⁹ The rest was so choked in double-negatives and caveats as to be incomprehensible except to those who had drafted it, but that need not concern us here.

At two P.M. Roosevelt had had the Japanese ambassador Nomura in to see him with Cordell Hull. Nomura reported to Tokyo that he expressed to the tired-looking president Japan's disappointment about the 'general statement.'

'To tell you the truth,' the president had countered, 'I too am very disappointed that the situation has developed in the manner that it has.'

He talked of the cold douche that the Japanese occupation of southern French Indo-China had been for American public opinion in July. 'According to recent intelligence,' he continued, 'there are fears that a second cold-water douche may become an actuality.'

During all these months of talking, he said, he had seen no concrete proof of any peaceful intentions of the Japanese leaders. Twice since last weekend he had postponed going out of town. 'I am leaving tomorrow afternoon, Friday, for the country,' Roosevelt continued, 'for a rest.'

He hoped that when he returned on Wednesday they could discover some basis for a settlement.⁸⁰

Nomura reported all this at once to Tokyo, using the PURPLE code.

AS FOR the precise content of that 'general statement,' the British still had no official notion. Hull had quickly read it out to Lord Halifax, rather as Hitler's foreign minister Joachim von Ribbentrop had once famously gabbled his 'reasonable terms' to the Polish ambassador on the eve of war in 1939. Halifax had to transmit its substance to London from memory. The British ambassador's telegram arrived in Whitehall around breakfast-time on November 28.⁸¹ But neither Hull nor Roosevelt ever formally informed Churchill about their momentous interviews with the Japanese. Unless this was sheer oversight, this was, with great empires and the lives of millions at stake, bizarre behaviour indeed.

ON THE morning of November 28 the admiralty received instead, by courier from the American embassy, a message informing Admiral Pound that a full 'war warning' had arrived as a priority despatch from the U.S. chief of naval operations addressed to his fleet commanders. As we have seen, this signal began, 'Negotiations with Japan regarding conditions in the Pacific have broken down.'⁸² This was a stunning shock to Whitehall. Admiral Pound broke it to the British chiefs of staff that evening. The British consul-general in Saigon was, he said, also predicting a Japanese attack on the Kra Isthmus in Thailand in the near future.* He told his colleagues that he had asked the Commander-in-Chief, Far East, Air Chief-Marshal Brooke-Popham in Singapore, for his opinion.⁸³

The foreign office, represented at this meeting by Sterndale Bennett, was perplexed at this turn of events. He revealed that he had yet to receive anything from the state department which would confirm Stark's message. Everybody agreed that the foreign office would do well to ask what on earth was going on. As a pale echo of Churchill's earlier optimism, there was still disbelief expressed here that Japan would actually risk taking on the world's two greatest maritime powers. In their tight-lipped conclusions, the chiefs of staff

invited the foreign office to maintain the closest contact with the United States Government during the present emergency.⁸⁴

It was indeed a sorry pass in the relations of these two great powers – as the last days of peace in the Pacific slipped away.

A few minutes after midnight – it was now November 29 – the admiralty passed on the text of the American 'war warning' in a HUSH MOST SECRET signal to its commanders-in-chief China and East Indies, adding this gloomy rider: 'Enquiries in U.S.A. have failed to get any corroboration that negotiations have broken down.' The admiralty accordingly reminded these commanders that this British signal was *not* to be taken as a warning telegram.⁸⁵

At six-thirty P.M. the war office sent a further signal to the C-in-C Far East. This said that while hitherto it had not been clear that Operation MATA-

* See page 190.

DOR would lead to war – MATADOR was a planned rapid pre-emptive move by British troops from Malaya into neutral southern Thailand to hold the line across the Kra Isthmus near Singora – the situation had now changed: the indications of an imminent Japanese attack on Thailand ‘would make MATADOR certain to lead to war with Japan which it is still our policy to avoid as long as possible.’⁸⁶ Unless therefore Britain could obtain an advance assurance of American support, there could be *no* move into Thailand.

At eleven P.M. a third message went from London to Brooke-Popham, stating that the U.S. War Plans Division had now informed the R.A.F. delegation in Washington that they had briefed American army commanders in the Far East that offensive action by Japan against Thailand, the Dutch East Indies, or the Philippines was to be expected at any time.

This message also contained the, for Churchill, painful revelation: ‘U.S.A. commanders have been instructed to await initial offensive move by Japanese and carefully to avoid overt action on their own part.’⁸⁷

THE DIPLOMATIC darkness deepened. The British government was still demanding to be shown the ‘general statement’ which Hull had handed to the Japanese. These were however the very days in which the U.S. navy department was blackmailing, or at least arm-twisting, the British secret service to provide access to its holiest codebreaking secrets – including ULTRA – and hinting at retaliating by a policy of non-cooperation.

The foreign office suspected that Hull was ‘sulking’ and intended the British to learn the document’s text only through the newspapers, a procedure which Eden’s mandarins called ‘most unsatisfactory.’

Lord Halifax was instructed again to demand sight of the document.⁸⁸

The telegram which arrived from the ambassador on Saturday November 29 threw little fresh light on the situation in Washington. He had visited Sumner Welles, Hull’s under-secretary, the day before. Welles had now shown him the note taken by Cordell Hull of the interview between the Japanese and President Roosevelt, who had that day left Washington for a short break in Warm Springs, his winter estate in Georgia. The Japanese tone had been one of regret; the president’s, one of obstinacy. For all practical purposes, the negotiations were dead.

‘From intercept telephone conversations,’ Halifax’s report continued, possibly referring to MAGIC, ‘United States Government understood that there was an internal crisis going on in Japan and that communication by cable from Japan had been suspended for some hours to-day between 10:30

A.M. and 3:30 P.M.' The Japanese were now presumably awaiting instructions.⁸⁹

WITH ROOSEVELT away from Washington, London could no longer expect early decisions from him on MATADOR. Sterndale Bennett read out the ambassador's despatch to the chiefs of staff at a meeting called that day to discuss this planned pre-emptive invasion of Thailand. Everybody now had the jitters. The chiefs of staff stressed the need not to fall out of step with the United States. 'Unless our vital interests were directly threatened,' the record showed them agreeing, 'we should avoid taking any action which would involve us in war with Japan, unless we were certain that America would join us.'⁹⁰ They accordingly drafted a telegram disclosing to Washington that Britain was preparing to launch MATADOR to forestall the Japanese – 'provided that we could be sure that the United States would immediately join us should this move lead to war with Japan.' Time was of the essence.

It seems almost certain [the draft concluded] that this move would involve us in war with Japan, and we cannot therefore afford to undertake it unless we can be certain that the United States would immediately join us in the fight.⁹¹

'Pug' Ismay sent the draft to the P.M. and Eden.⁹² Churchill felt that this final paragraph would fail to elicit the requisite assurance from Roosevelt. Eden had gone home for the weekend, but discussing it on the 'phone with the prime minister he agreed.⁹³ Churchill changed the text to read:

To allow the Japanese to establish themselves so near the Malay frontier would be an obvious threat to Singapore, even though at present season it might not develop at once. We have also to bear in mind the encouragement which Japanese success would give to their extremists. Japanese appetite would inevitably grow and other Far Eastern people would be correspondingly depressed. It looks therefore as though, to ensure the defence of Singapore and for wider reasons, we might have to take proposed action to forestall the Japanese.⁹⁴

Before Roosevelt returned to the White House several days might elapse. Until then, Brooke-Popham would have to hold back on MATADOR.

WASHINGTON STILL resisted British efforts to learn officially the contents of Hull's 'general statement' to the Japanese emissaries; so Britain's officers in the Far East were informed.⁹⁵

Lord Halifax went to see Hull on the morning of the twenty-ninth. His despatch on this interview arrived in Whitehall at 9:40 P.M. Hull had made clear his belief that 'it was pretty well inevitable' that the Japanese would strike soon. He had advised the U.S. armed forces to prepare for war. Reviewing the events of the last few days, he spoke with bitterness about the part played by the Chinese foreign minister T. V. Soong in bringing Stimson round to a harder line; he also believed that Chiang Kai-shek had somehow applied pressure to the British government.

As Halifax reminded the foreign office, the 'plain answer to all this' was that Hull had failed to consult with the British. He assured Hull, somewhat improbably, that Eden had been fully prepared to go along with the earlier proposed settlement with the Japanese; but Hull replied that Chiang Kai-shek's intervention and Churchill's 'message of sympathy' with the Chinese had convinced him that that was no longer possible.

The Chinese had always wanted to see Britain embroiled with Japan, and now Chiang 'looked like being successful,' sniffed Hull.

Challenged yet again for a copy of the hard-line 'general statement' handed to the Japanese, Hull rummaged in a pile of papers on his table, but apologised that he could not lay his hands on it.

Halifax wearily promised London to try again – 'if I can get it without pressing in such a fashion that he might resent.'

Asked outright what the United States would do if and when the Japanese now attacked Thailand, Hull said in effect that, since Stimson had wrecked his diplomacy, that was now his pigeon. He made a parting remark about the folly of allowing China to dictate their foreign policy for them.

'While he showed no signs of appreciating [it], and what in the circumstances would have been unprofitable to rub in to him, is that a good deal of this might have been avoided if he had been willing to give us longer opportunity of discussion in advance,' concluded Halifax.⁹⁶

There remains little surprise that these British telegrams from Washington were concealed from the public gaze in the Public Records office for fifty years.

EDEN FOUND himself on the telephone all that day, November 29, 'mostly about Far East but also about Russia.' He spoke several times with Churchill, Sterndale Bennett, and the chiefs of staff.⁹⁷

In Washington, Halifax went over to the state department again, seeking the desired assurances on MATADOR. 'Have seen Hull,' he cabled to London, 'who left me in no doubt as to his own personal opinion, which would be to do immediately what we want.'

Hull promised to telephone Roosevelt at Hyde Park; he advised that meanwhile Britain's Admiral Little should prevail upon Admiral Stark to call on the President. Advance copies of this telegram from Halifax were sent in the early hours of the thirtieth to the prime minister.⁹⁸

Within the foreign office anger at Washington's behaviour grew; several more items in the British files are blanked out to this day. The Americans still refused to come clean about their 'general statement.'

On December 1 even the mild-mannered Cadogan felt that the Americans ought 'in all courtesy' to provide a copy of the document.⁹⁹ Halifax tackled Sumner Welles again about it, even if it was now 'somewhat academic.'¹⁰⁰

Not until the evening of the second – already December 3 in London – did Welles provide copies. He pleaded with the British ambassador not to publicise the note which Hull had handed to the Japanese; it was obviously unacceptable and had been intended to be so.¹⁰¹

It was finally received at the foreign office in Britain, principal ally of the United States, at around nine A.M. on the third, eight days after it had been handed to the Japanese, their common enemies.¹⁰²

12: *Day of Perfidy*

THE FIRST that Churchill knew of Roosevelt's war warning was on Friday, November 28, 1941 when Admiral Ghormley of the U.S. Navy passed it on to him.¹ That day too the Americans finally decoded the original 'WINDS message' which Tokyo had broadcast on the nineteenth (and which Bletchley Park had decoded three days earlier).²

The British codebreakers in Singapore now sent their own decrypt of this to the U.S. naval commander Admiral Thomas B. Hart in Manila.³ That day Tokyo was heard radioing to Japanese embassies around the world, again in the PURPLE code, a precise schedule of times and frequencies – perhaps to help them to listen for the ominous 'weather reports.'⁴ Later that day the U.S. government ordered its listening posts to watch for the reports.

That these might be heard at any time, with all that this implied, became evident from instructions radioed by the Japanese foreign minister to his emissaries in Washington, instructing them that Tokyo would shortly break off the talks. 'However,' Togo instructed, 'I do not wish you to give the impression that the negotiations are broken off. Merely say to them [the Americans] that you are awaiting instructions.'⁵ Tokyo was stalling for time.

In Tokyo the 'liaison conference' of military and political leaders had been in almost permanent session since the report of Cordell Hull's rebuff had arrived. On Saturday November 29 they finally decided on war.⁶ London, still formally in the dark about the outcome of the American–Japanese talks, instructed Lord Halifax to make further inquiries in Washington.

THAT SATURDAY morning Churchill summoned his car and left for the English countryside. The morrow would bring his sixty-seventh birthday, and he wanted to spend it with his family at Chequers.⁷ Sarah was already out there; Clementine arrived soon after. An ample luncheon followed, with

the wealthy Ronald Trees and representatives from the U.S. Congress. With the arrival that evening of his brother Major John Churchill, Randolph's universally attractive young wife Pamela, and Diana with her husband Duncan Sandys, the whole Churchill brood was there.

Worries about the Far East and Libya, where CRUSADER was in the balance, overshadowed the weekend. A messenger brought a new telegram from Lord Halifax. At nine-thirty that morning Cordell Hull had confirmed to him that the Japanese threat was now hanging 'just over our heads.'

The diplomatic part in our relations with Japan [the ambassador reported] is now virtually over. The matter will now go to the officials of the Army and Navy, with whom I have talked. . . Japan may move suddenly and with every possible element of surprise.

Hull was blaming Churchill for this. 'When Churchill received Chiang's loud protest about the *modus vivendi*,' Hull chided Lord Halifax, referring to the events of the twenty-fifth, 'it would have been better if he had sent Chiang a strong cable to brace up and fight with the same zeal as the Japanese and Americans were displaying.'

Instead, the prime minister had passed the Chinese protest on to Washington, without raising any objection on Britain's part.⁸

LATER THAT Saturday a call came from Eden reporting what steps the chiefs of staff, meeting in London, felt they could take against Japan's reported designs on Thailand. If Britain launched her proposed operation MATADOR, the pre-emptive move into neutral Thailand, she might find herself at war with Japan alone, without the backing of the United States.

The chiefs of staff were flatly against taking any action unless Britain's 'vital interests' were affected and unless the United States would definitely join in. They did support the idea of occupying the Kra Isthmus *after* Japan invaded Thailand, in the hope of preventing a further southward advance on Malaya.⁹ Eden and Churchill felt however that they would have to put even this modest plan to Washington for approval. For what it was worth, Churchill said that he also intended to urge Roosevelt to issue a warning to the Japanese.¹⁰ Thus indecision was compounded by vacillation and lack of resolution.

The silence from Roosevelt, who was now weekendening at Warm Springs in Georgia, was unhelpful. A telegram went to Lord Halifax, instructing



[Facsimile of magic intercept]



him to draw the president's attention to the threat to Singapore and to ask for an 'urgent expression' of the United States' views.¹¹

In the early hours of Sunday Churchill sent out telegrams polling the prime ministers of the Dominions about MATADOR. 'There are important indications,' he explained, 'that Japan is about to attack Thailand and that this attack will include a sea-borne expedition to seize strategical points in the Kra Isthmus.' He reported the chiefs of staffs' arguments, and warned that for the well-known constitutional reasons it was unlikely that Roosevelt could give a 'prior guarantee' of support. He asked their individual views.¹²

During the course of that Sunday their answers arrived, from around the world, and revealed an empire in disarray. The soldier Jan Smuts thought that they should take the risk and act to forestall any Japanese invasion of Kra, arguing that Roosevelt was bound to help if Britain got involved in war with Japan. New Zealand said the same, but added the forlorn suggestion that they might approach Bangkok and ask the Thais for the now fashionable 'invitation-to-invade'; the danger was however that the Thai prime minister would at once pass this on to the Japanese: General Pibul Songgram (Luang Phibunsongkhram) was known to be pro-Japanese. The Australian view was somewhat incoherent. If Japan did invade Thailand, said Canberra, Britain should 'at once take warlike measures.' This might, or might not, have meant going to war; the Australians kept their own counsel on the meaning of those words.¹³

Mackenzie King, Canada's elder statesman, rendered the most thoughtful reply. He warned strongly against getting into any conflict with Japan until such time as Washington provided firm assurances of support. The U.S. Congress would see little reason to come in if it was merely to help Britain preserve her empire in the Far East. He predicted that the United States would not lift a finger to help, and would leave Britain 'holding the baby.'¹⁴ To his private diary, the Canadian prime minister observed that since they would not be ready for four or five more months the Americans would have no choice but to prevaricate. 'However when men get war-minded, their reason begins to desert them. Their attitude becomes one of fight and die, if necessary, let the consequences be what they may.'¹⁵



Despairing of extracting an honest declaration of intent from the United States, Churchill tried another approach, perhaps influenced by the Prof.

who arrived at Chequers that last day in November 1941. The foreign secretary certainly had a hand in it too, for he noted that Winston had rung up that morning to thank the Edens for their birthday message, after which 'we discussed a possible message from himself to Roosevelt about Thailand.' Eden encouraged Churchill to send it, noting: 'I think that we should get a line-up with the U.S. next week about Thailand, but I am most anxious that [the] Japs move first.' So far, he complained, he could not get the chiefs of staff to contemplate making any move without the Americans.¹⁶

At three P.M. Churchill sent the message up to Grosvenor-square and asked Ambassador Winant to transmit it to his president: in it, the prime minister suggested that despite the constitutional difficulties, the president should try one important means of averting war between Japan and 'our two countries,' namely 'a plain declaration, secret or public, as may be thought best, that any further act of aggression by Japan will lead immediately to the gravest consequences.' Winston concluded this rambling message with the words, 'Forgive me, my dear friend, for presuming to press such a course upon you, but I am convinced that it might make all the difference and prevent a melancholy extension of the war.'¹⁷

When President Roosevelt returned to his capital he would pay scant attention to the P.M.'s suggestion.¹⁸

AT CHEQUERS, the prime minister's Sunday afternoon masseuse came and went. It was time now for the empire to flex its muscles. In England, a message from the India Office reached Leo Amery during lunch at his home, reporting that it had issued the preparatory warning for war with Japan.¹⁹ The empire's far-flung outposts were formally notified of the looming danger. Malaya Command ordered a permanent guard posted on all vulnerable military points, anti-sabotage measures, and all troops alerted to stand-by in barracks and under arms; beach defences and operations rooms were manned, anti-aircraft and fixed gun defences deployed, booms put out across rivers, and the country's northern frontier facing the Kra Isthmus secured by the Third Indian Corps.²⁰

Eden advised Lord Halifax by telegram that evening that it now looked as if the Japanese would open any hostilities with an attack on British or Dutch interests, rather than American. 'Should however the United States or Japan declare war on each other before any such attack, it is essential that we should be in a position to fulfil the pledge given in the Prime Minister's Mansion House speech of 10th November that [the] British declaration

would follow "within the hour." In that event Halifax was to telephone Eden immediately, and cable a pre-arranged code word to him.²¹ That Sunday, the Japanese did ask to speak with the British ambassador in Washington; reluctant to risk splitting the Anglo-American front, Halifax made his excuses, and Eden subsequently approved.²²

Churchill drove back to London early on Monday, December 1. A few hours later, Roosevelt arrived back in Washington, and the final week of peace in the Far East began.

ONE CURIOUS entr'acte, as this dramatic week began, needs relating if only to illustrate the unaccustomed twinges of anti-American feeling that were now afflicting Churchill. Nevile Butler, head of the foreign office's American department, pointed out to Eden that both Cordell Hull and Sumner Welles were reproaching Whitehall for backing the Chinese misgivings rather than following the American lead. Before the Japanese 'took the plunge,' suggested Butler, the prime minister might like to send to Roosevelt a brief note of appreciation of American 'negotiating skills;' he prepared a fulsome draft for the prime minister's signature. Despite Eden's encouragement, Churchill doggedly refused: 'I am not very keen on this at the moment,' he wrote on December 3, adding: 'How much do you want it?'

Eden panicked: 'Not strongly. If you feel against it, let it be.'²³

Prime Minister Churchill did so feel. While Washington was blaming him, Britain, he reflected, had Washington's 'negotiating skills' to thank for the fine mess she was about to find herself in.

SUMMONING WHAT he now called a 'staff conference' at midday on Monday, December 1, he found it wise to steer an even more cautious course than the chiefs had adopted before the weekend: he even defined that for the Japanese to invade and occupy the Kra Isthmus, despite the proximity to Singapore, would not *ipso facto* threaten Britain's 'vital interests.'²⁴ Later, Eden, the Dominions Secretary Lord Cranborne, and the Australian representatives were called in to this meeting. When Sir Earle Page lamented that although the crisis was almost on top of them they had still taken no firm decisions, Churchill had to spell it out that Britain should neither resist nor attempt to forestall a Japanese attack on the isthmus unless she had the advance assurance of American support. There were, he said, still many Americans longing to raise an outcry about the United States 'again being dragged into a British war.'²⁵ 'The same,' Churchill added, enlarging on his

own wider apprehensions, 'would apply with even more force in the event of a Japanese attack on Russia, or aggression in the Netherlands East Indies.' Stanley Melbourne Bruce, the Australian high commissioner, adopted an uglier tone, stating that if Britain chickened out over Thailand now, or failed to assist the Dutch, it 'would create an atmosphere in Australia which might lead to a request for the withdrawal of Australian troops from the Middle East, and to the despatch of Australian naval forces to escort them back.' Churchill choked on those words, and talked of such a withdrawal taking 'several months.' He referred to the useful support that had come from Ottawa – the fear that the Americans might leave Britain to 'hold the baby.' Eden expressed himself 'far from happy' at Churchill's reluctance to take a firm stand, and reminded the prime minister that the Dutch were co-operating loyally with the British empire. '[They] would certainly look to us,' he said, 'if they were attacked.'²⁶

Churchill was however in an odd, ill-humoured mood. Peering over his half-lensed eye-glasses, he saw confronting him a sheer rockface of uncertainties beyond which his vision could not penetrate. It seemed that in Libya Rommel might thwart CRUSADER after all: Hitler was about to hurl a mighty winter offensive at Moscow: India was struggling to break free. The ambitious sequence of victories to which Churchill had aspired since September – Tripoli, Tunis, Sicily, Italy – was receding into the future, and Eden had begun nagging him about what 'hamper' of offers he could take to Moscow.

No doubt at his dictation, Pound signalled to Tom Phillips, aboard *Prince of Wales*, 'It is possible . . . that during the present period of uncertainty whilst conferences are in progress you might consider it desirable to send *Prince of Wales* and/or *Repulse* away from Singapore in order that the uncertainty of their whereabouts would disconcert the Japanese.'²⁷

The uneasy, defeatist mood persisted at the cabinet that followed. Once again Churchill came out against taking any pre-emptive action in Thailand – Britain could not assume that the United States would automatically enter into a war between Britain and Japan. Up for discussion at that cabinet was, of all topics, the proposed publication of the 1939 documents on the origins of the war. But who remembered Poland now? Eden was in favour of publication, but Churchill was not and said so.²⁸

His teeth were plaguing him, and he knew only one remedy. (On the previous day General Marshall had reminisced to Lord Halifax in Washington on how he and a glowering Winston Churchill had followed General John J. Pershing at a victory review of American troops. It was the era of

Prohibition. 'What a magnificent body of men,' Churchill had lisped sympathetically, suddenly breaking his silence. 'And never to look forward to another drink!'²⁹)

A fifteen-minute visit from the dentist was slotted into the P.M.'s appointment card at three P.M.³⁰

THIS THEN was the situation of which the admiralty apprised Brooke-Popham, Layton, and Phillips on Monday, December 1: the American–Japanese talks in Washington had broken down but were 'apparently' not yet finally broken off. The Japanese ambassador Kurusu had not left Washington; Roosevelt had handed him a vague note, reiterating the American stand on, *inter alia*, the integrity of China and the need for Japan to abandon the Tripartite Pact. The Americans, the summary continued, had abandoned the *modus vivendi* described in 'my' earlier signal of the twenty-ninth – the use of the first person might imply that, although signed by Pound, the signal was drafted by Churchill – 'largely because of hostility to it shown by Chiang Kai-shek,' and on the twenty-eighth Washington had placed its forces in 'the first state of readiness.'

Mr Hull had meanwhile told Lord Halifax on the twenty-ninth that he felt 'pretty sure' that Japan would take some early action under pressure from extremists.

His Majesty's government had informed President Roosevelt that it might be necessary for the British to take action to forestall a Japanese landing on Kra Isthmus and they asked whether they could expect American support in that event; the president's reply was not likely to be received before later this day, Monday, December the first. 'Mr Kurusu is seeing Mr Hull at 10:00 today Monday, but nothing is known about subject to be discussed.'³¹

Several people noticed how irritable the prime minister was this day – his flights of oratory were devoid of their usual colour; Eden thought the fight had gone out of him.

His mind was elsewhere. His teeth were probably murdering his sleep. He knew he was on a threshold, leading the empire out of a door that would in a matter of days be closed for ever.

WITHIN THE next twelve hours a dramatic change came over him, and we now know why. It was not just a despatch which he received from Lord Halifax, reporting his visit to the White House, where Roosevelt had now

returned, it was the locked buff dispatch-box which brought a sheaf of Black Jumbos from his own private Oracle.

In the former Halifax reported that President Roosevelt had received him with Harry Hopkins, his intimate adviser, at lunchtime on Monday December 1. He said that he had considered uttering a warning to Japan, but now thought it wiser to phrase the message as a 'friendly' inquiry, inviting the Emperor to explain what his forces were up to. 'It [is] plain,' Halifax reported him as saying, 'that if the Japanese [do] in fact send reinforcements to Indo-China, they [are] not going there for their health.' Meanwhile the R.A.F. and American units should continue their air reconnaissance patrols off Malaya and the Philippines. Roosevelt mentioned that he had issued orders for three American submarines to watch the most likely waters and 'act if attacked.' He did not however reveal to Halifax that he had also ordered Admiral Hart to charter three schooners in Manila immediately, manned by Filipino crews but flying the Stars and Stripes, to 'observe' any Japanese movements in the West China Sea and the Gulf of Siam. The schooners were to have a 'minimum number' of American naval ratings. The American intention was to trail their coats in the hope of provoking the Japanese into sinking one or more boats wearing U.S. colours.³² The Japanese would shortly do just that, though the boats would be larger.

'At one point,' the ambassador continued, 'he [Roosevelt] threw in an aside that in the case of any direct attack on ourselves or the Dutch, we should obviously all be together.' Churchill sidelined these promising words on his copy. Suddenly things were looking up. On MATADOR, Brooke-Popham's proposed invasion of the Kra Isthmus, the president had been less helpful – it would be nice, he had suggested, if Thailand invited the British empire troops in, otherwise Britain 'must clearly do what strategic necessity dictated.'³³

At five-thirty P.M. the chiefs of staff chewed over this Washington telegram with Eden and Cadogan; then they all adjourned to No. 10 Downing-street, where Churchill presided over another 'staff conference.' As Eden too pointed out, Roosevelt had clearly had a change of heart, speaking about all being 'in it together'; that he had made his observation as 'an aside' was less promising. Now Britain must try to pin him down. Churchill stressed the importance of letting Washington take the lead in any action, but Eden murmured that this might lead to an awkward hiatus after any Japanese attack on, for instance, Dutch territory, while each great power waited for the other to respond first.

To this Churchill responded that 'he did not think that a Japanese move was immediately imminent,' and he wanted to think it over before sending further instructions to Lord Halifax.³⁴



Society itself was undergoing a change in England. In a dull, flat speech to the House on Tuesday December 2, 1941 the P.M. proposed a motion to conscript women for war labour – the young ones as army drivers, and the older married women to man the factory benches. 'There was no indication,' wrote editor Cecil King, 'of what is to be done about all the children.' Churchill appeared oblivious of the wider ramifications: of how the new measures would impact upon English family life.³⁵ He moved in lofty circles; he was as remote from the factory floor as were his desk and his War Room from the Japanese task forces now ploughing in total radio silence across the South Pacific and the China Seas.

Early on Tuesday December 2, Whitehall learned that Sumner Welles, speaking off the record the day before to senior American journalists, had concluded his remarks by saying, 'The British cannot allow the Japanese to occupy Thailand. It is too close to Singapore, Burma and India. The British will fight and we will move in behind.'³⁶ But why would Roosevelt not say so openly? Churchill lunched that Tuesday, as usual, with His Majesty. He told him nothing of all this.

WASHINGTON BELIEVED that war might even now have been averted. On December 1 however the U.S. army's codebreakers had found the imperial Japanese government confidentially advising its ambassadors on the previous day that it could no longer continue negotiations with Washington.³⁷ Hull's document of the twenty-sixth, said another intercepted message, which was translated in Washington on the first and at Bletchley Park six days later, had contained an 'insulting clause' and was clearly a trick.³⁸ The American codebreakers found Tokyo confiding to ambassadors Nomura and Kurusu in Washington that 'to prevent the United States from becoming unduly suspicious' they had been advising people that the negotiations were continuing.³⁹

These messages showed that some kind of mischief was afoot; several were not deciphered by the British for several days, but Washington does not seem to have shared them.

The American anger at the British refusal to share their German ULTRA secrets was unabated. Reflecting this mood, and seeking to explain the Intelligence stand-off, Admiral Little reported from Washington on December 2: 'The atmosphere is very tense here owing to the present Pacific situation, but I am still of the personal opinion that war in that area will be avoided by the Japanese.'⁴⁰ The British secret service was less complacent. On Tuesday December 2 they signalled Gerald Wilkinson, their man in Manila, that Japan was accelerating airfield and railroad construction in Indo-China, and that 100,000 troops had arrived there since November 10 with multitudes of planes, tanks, and 75-millimetre guns. On the basis, as 'C' later explicitly clarified, of the latest MAGICS, he told Wilkinson: 'Our considered opinion concludes that Japan envisages early hostilities with Britain and U.S. Japan does *not* intend to attack Russia at present but will act in South.' Wilkinson circulated this to S.I.S. agents across the Pacific including his own head office in Honolulu.⁴¹ The firm's president at once telephoned his office in San Francisco to cancel all shipments across the Pacific to the Philippines.⁴²

Learning from the MAGICS that Japanese embassies and consulates around the world had been ordered to destroy their files, at ten A.M. on December 3 Captain Irving H. Mayfield, the Fourteenth Naval District's Intelligence officer at Honolulu, asked the F.B.I. to check. Two hours later F.B.I. wire-tappers in Hawaii heard the consulate's cook telling a friend that the consul-general was burning all his important papers.⁴³ The local American authorities, to whom all this was told, still took things less seriously.

CHURCHILL TOO knew what was coming. A locked buff box had brought a fresh sheaf of Black Jumbos to his desk at No. 10 – the PURPLE messages that his own codebreakers had deciphered. Like a salvo of lightning flashes in a darkening storm these suddenly revealed to him not only that the Japanese sword arm was already raised and about to descend: but that it was about to fall on Britain *and* the United States equally, and that Hitler was certain to declare war on Roosevelt in consequence. The mighty burden of uncertainty was lifting from Churchill's shoulders.

One such MAGIC which Churchill had read on December 1 was a message which Togo had sent to the Japanese ambassadors in Berlin and Rome, a week earlier, on November 24, putting them on notice that they might have to seek audiences with Hitler and Mussolini shortly: with war looming now between Japan and the United States and Britain, this message

said, it was time to overhaul the obligations imposed by the Axis alliance; but the ambassadors were to say absolutely nothing until then.⁴⁴ Another MAGIC read on this day by Churchill and initialled in his red ink showed that that time had now come: the document briefly illuminated the Japanese foreign minister Togo in Tokyo as he instructed his ambassador in Berlin two days earlier to brief Hitler and Ribbentrop on the breakdown of the Washington talks and on the plans of Britain and the United States to move troops into East Asia. 'You should therefore see Führer Hitler and Foreign Minister Ribbentrop at once,' ordered Tokyo. 'It is greatly to be feared that an armed collision will occur and we shall find ourselves in a state of war with Britain and America. You should add that this may happen sooner than is expected.' In the same red ink, the British prime minister sidelined Tokyo's statement that Japan would not fight Russia unless attacked – 'that it is on the South however that we lay most emphasis,' meaning Malaya and the Philippines, 'and that we propose to refrain from deliberately taking positive action in the North,' against the Soviet Union.⁴⁵

On December 2 Bletchley Park translated a second highly significant Japanese telegram, from Bangkok to Tokyo, which reported that in order to 'set up' Britain as the aggressor against Thailand, elements in the Thai cabinet were suggesting that Japanese forces should land at Kota Bharu, obliging the British forces in Malaya to invade from Padang Besar, whereupon Thailand would declare war on Britain.

Washington had once again initially withheld both this and the sinister Tokyo-to-Berlin intercept ('this may happen sooner than is expected') from the British; at Eden's request Commander Denniston sent a MOST IMMEDIATE telegram, using Bletchley Park's secret link, directing 'C's' man in Washington to 'ask our friends' whether, to save time, they would make available these two intercepts to the ambassador, Lord Halifax. At the same time the war office notified Brooke-Popham in Singapore and the British commander-in-chief in India about the worrisome Bangkok intercept.⁴⁶

THERE WERE several important messages which may, or may not, have independently come to British ears. On December 2, at eight-thirty A.M. (London time), the British empire's radio monitors picked up Tokyo's 'operational directive No. 6,' encyphered in JN. 25, radioed on four powerful transmitters to the Japanese fleet. It was a four-word order to 'climb Mount Niitaka,' highest mountain in the Japanese empire, on December 8.⁴⁷ Did the British decipher this? The Russians, it later transpired, had already de-

detected the Japanese fleet suddenly changing all its radio call-signs on December 1.⁴⁸ A December 4 Japanese fleet signal, again encyphered in JN. 25, contained sufficient clues to deduce the date and target of attack: the Americans deciphered it only four years later.⁴⁹ But the British? Again history cannot yet say. We are left with conjecture, spiced with tantalising glimpses of the unrevealed. On December 17, ten days after the Japanese attack that brought Japan into the war, newspaper proprietor Cecil King learned over a Fleet-street luncheon with another prowler in the corridors of Whitehall a 'sensational item' which he confided only to his hand-written diaries – that Britain had had 'five days warning' of the attack.⁵⁰



On December 3, 1941, Churchill's own codebreakers certainly deciphered the telegram sent by Togo two days earlier to the Japanese embassy in London, instructing: 'Please take steps for the immediate disuse of the cypher machine at your Embassy.' Essential parts were to be dismantled and destroyed, and the code books burned.⁵¹ The embassy was to transmit to Tokyo, *en clair*, the words RECEIVED and DISPATCHED, confirming that the instructions had arrived and been executed respectively. 'C' told Churchill these two words had been duly monitored on December 2.⁵² So that was that. Without a code machine the embassy, like the British government, was now reliant on hearing the WINDS-EXECUTE message for further information.

There were now reports that Japanese submarines were moving southwards from Saigon. The prime minister sent this directive to Eden about their Far East policy:⁵³

Our settled policy . . . is not to take forward action in advance of the United States. Except in the case of a Japanese attempt to seize the Kra Isthmus (which is unlikely)* there will be time for the United States to be squarely confronted with a new act of Japanese aggression. If they move, we will move immediately in support. If they do not move, we must consider our position afresh.

* Not surprisingly, Mr Churchill omitted both the three words in parenthesis and the second paragraph from *The Second World War*, vol. iii: *The Grand Alliance* (London 1950), page 534. The Japanese invaded the Kra Isthmus on the first day.

2. An attack on the Kra Isthmus would not be helpful to Japan for several months.

Churchill then considered the marginal case: what should Britain do if Japan attacked only the Dutch possessions? Here too he proposed that Britain at first do nothing, so that the United States were affronted by the full impact of this new Japanese aggression.

'If the United States declares war on Japan,' he announced once more, 'we follow within the hour.' If however Washington proved incapable of decisive action, Churchill felt that Britain should act alone to help the Dutch. 'Having regard to the supreme importance of the United States being foremost, we must be the sole judge of timing the actual moment.'

The foreign secretary was dismayed by this policy of 'wait-and-see;' to Eden it smacked of a 'lack of fire.' He wanted a clear-cut telegram sent to Roosevelt announcing that Britain intended both to occupy the Kra Isthmus and to aid the Dutch if attacked, and that she presumed the United States would support her. 'But P.M. is defeatist,' recorded Eden's equally baffled private secretary that day, 'and appeasing where Far East is concerned.'⁵⁴

GENERAL POWNALL, the former Vice-Chief of the Imperial General Staff, came in that evening to say farewell before sailing to take over, some weeks hence, from Brooke-Popham in Singapore, which might well soon become a battleground. He sat in on Winston's 'staff conference' and heard Eden plead yet again for something more concrete to offer Stalin in Moscow.

The meeting finished so late that the P.M. invited Pownall to dine with him, Clemmie, and his physician. Churchill drank to Pownall's success in Singapore, and confessed that he had only evicted Pownall from the war office to make room for his new friend General Nye. 'Not that it is any reflection on you,' he murmured, 'my dear general.'

Pownall found himself wondering how David had laughed it off with Uriah the Hittite when sending him into the forefront of the battle because his master had fallen in love with somebody else.

Churchill consoled him with word of the capital ships he had sent out: the mighty *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse* would soon both be at Singapore.

'I had to overcome a lot of admiralty resistance,' he boasted, 'before I could get it done.'⁵⁵

Tempers in London were brittle. Hearing that Australia's new left-wing foreign minister Dr Herbert Vere Evatt was publicly criticising Britain's reluctance to declare war on Finland, Hungary, and Romania as Stalin was demanding, Churchill sent a wounded telegram to Canberra justifying the delay and inviting the Australians to refrain from further criticism.

'We have never said a word in public,' he admonished Evatt, 'about [the] Australian government's insistence upon the withdrawal of all troops from Tobruk, which cost us life and ships, and added appreciably to General Auchinleck's difficulties in preparing his offensive; and no one here, or I presume in Australia, outside the circles of Government has the slightest inkling of the distress which we felt.'

As proof of Britain's continued commitment to Australia, he pointed to the arrival of *Prince of Wales* in Far Eastern waters; he offered Britain's condolences on the recent loss of the Australian navy's cruiser *Sydney*, and revealed Britain's own loss of *Barham*, torpedoed by an enemy submarine with the loss of seven hundred lives in the Mediterranean: 'This is being kept strictly secret at present,' he advised, 'as the enemy do not seem to know and the event would only encourage Japan.'⁵⁶

The torpedoing of *Barham* was a cruel blow. 'She blundered straight onto the submarine,' confessed Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham in a letter – an escorting destroyer had picked up the enemy's Asdic echo, but dismissed it as non-submarine in origin. 'It was a most daring and brilliant performance on the part of the submarine,' he added with a chivalry that was characteristic of this fine officer, 'who fired from a position about 200 yards ahead of *Valiant*.'⁵⁷

EDEN WOULD be leaving London for Moscow on the coming weekend together with Sir Alexander Cadogan, permanent head of the foreign office. With what suppressed relish the prime minister must have listened at the intervening meetings to his young foreign secretary's self-important prattle about his mission!

Mr Eden believed that he would be the centre of attention, a Saint-Bernard scaling the Kremlin's snowy heights, bearing slung around his neck a barrelful of succour for the embattled Soviet leaders.

Churchill calculated otherwise: around the same time, the Japanese would be scaling a mountain of their own. This was evidently in his mind when he suddenly remarked to Eden on December 3 that he wanted to see a Japanese–American war start – which Britain would immediately enter; rather

than a Japanese–British war, which the Americans might, or again, might not.⁵⁸

What however should Eden actually offer to Joseph Stalin? Churchill sent to the chiefs of staff a message showing he had not abandoned the plan to send British empire troops to Russia. ‘There is,’ he wrote, ‘therefore no reason to withdraw from our project of placing the 50th and 18th Divisions plus an Indian Division upon the Russian Southern flank wherever it may rest . . . provided always that Stalin prefers troops to supplies.’⁵⁹

Ismay put this to the chiefs of staff on December 3.⁶⁰ General Sir Alan Brooke, attending for the first time as C.I.G.S., was aghast; this would mean shutting down *CRUSADER*, the battle for Libya. Britain’s policy, he insisted, must be to clear the enemy out of North Africa before anything else.⁶¹ The bickering spilled over into the midday cabinet. Frantic to take something of substance to Stalin, Eden nagged his colleagues about speeding up their declaration of war on Finland, Romania, and Hungary. Churchill grumbled about this empty gesture, and called it an ‘historic mistake.’ He instructed that the cabinet minutes should record his distaste: this declaration of war would neither assist Britain’s cause nor aid the Russians. The minutes duly quoted him as saying: ‘The sole justification for it was that it was necessary in order to satisfy the Russians.’⁶² His jaw was hurting, and at three p.m. he was back in the dentist’s chair.⁶³

Later, at five-thirty, the defence committee pondered the same issues. After two hours, they all – Beaverbrook, Margesson, Amery, Eden, Sinclair, Attlee, and the rest – hoped that they had ridden him off his ‘two divisions’ gift to Stalin.⁶⁴ Amery observed in his diary that he himself had urged that *CRUSADER* ‘should not rest till we have cleared the whole of North Africa.’ Brooke took the same line.⁶⁵ ‘I tried to begin to make him realise,’ wrote the general in his own record, ‘that we must have one definite policy for the conduct of the war.’ Churchill however was wedded to his proposed expedition to the Caucasus, having already hinted at it in messages to Stalin – a ‘reckless’ promise, Beaverbrook termed it. Eden recorded afterwards: ‘We all agreed that it would be wrong to send a small land force to South Russia as things are at present.’ Beaverbrook suggested offering five hundred tanks and five hundred aircraft instead, alleging that Stalin would much prefer these.⁶⁶ The defence committee ruled that Eden could offer equipment, but not troops; apart from anything else, supplying Churchill’s proposed expedition would choke the single railroad line carrying Lend–Lease supplies through Iran to the Soviet Union.

Yet the row dragged on into Thursday the fourth, when the full cabinet met at six P.M. to examine what Eden sardonically called ‘my hamper for Russia’ once again. While everybody now agreed it would be unwise to send the two divisions, the chiefs of staff were equally unwilling to ‘put up’ tanks or aeroplanes. The mood was ‘Libya first.’

Eden found those cabinet members who had not been at the previous day’s defence committee singularly unhelpful – ‘All maintaining that I needed nothing, and ignoring that Stalin had been told I was bringing armies!’ His one reliable ally on this, Lord Beaverbrook, was away. Herbert Morrison, the home secretary, stung Eden by expressing the hope that the foreign secretary would ‘not be unmindful’ of his own country’s interests while in Moscow. Eden retorted acidly that this was not his first such trip. ‘He & K-W. [Kingsley-Wood],’ recorded Eden afterwards, ‘are terrified of allowing anything to leave these shores and I had to remind them that, if we had followed their line last year, we should have lost Egypt long since.’⁶⁷



‘We had already discussed that on the defence committee before,’ recorded Amery, exasperated, ‘but Anthony was very sticky about facing Stalin with what he thinks will be a disappointment.’⁶⁸ A tedious, rambling, revolving discussion followed. ‘Debate became interminable,’ wrote Brooke that night in his leather-bound, padlocked diary, ‘Anthony Eden rather like a peevish child grumbling because he was being sent to see Uncle Stalin without suitable gifts, while Granny Churchill was comforting him and explaining to him all the pretty speeches he might make instead!’

They decided that Eden should offer 300 tanks and 300 planes. ‘Self interests,’ remarked Brooke with distaste in the same diary, ‘seemed to predominate.’⁶⁹

There was however now a good message from Roosevelt about the Far East, and Eden induced the prime minister to issue a full assurance to the Dutch government-in-exile on the strength of it. ‘Admiralty still inclined to wriggle,’ he observed, ‘but Winston took my view. It is an immense relief to have cleared up all this false position.’ Thailand, he added, remained the principal cause for anxiety.⁷⁰

It was now Thursday December 4. During the day, a buff box brought several MAGICs from Bletchley Park. The first revealed General Oshima reporting to Tokyo on a meeting suddenly requested by Hitler’s foreign

minister Ribbentrop late on November 28 (once again Washington had translated this several days earlier but not passed it to London). Explaining that Göring and other Nazi top brass had just been meeting at the Führer's residence to discuss the coming year's campaign, Ribbentrop had urged Japan to enter the war. In reply to his question, Oshima reported that he had told Ribbentrop that he had not yet received any official news about the Japanese–American negotiations. Ribbentrop said that there had never been a time when close co-operation between the Axis partners was more imperative. 'If Japan determined on war against Britain and America, not only would this be to the common advantage of Japan and Germany but, he believed, it would be to Japan's advantage also.' Asked whether Ribbentrop really expected war between Germany and America, the foreign minister remarked evasively 'that Roosevelt was diseased, and there was no knowing what he would do.'

Churchill lined the next paragraph of General Oshima's dispatch in red ink:

I [Oshima] asked if they intended to carry on without attacking the British Isles. Ribbentrop said that Germany was of course making preparations for this; but according to reports reaching Germany the internal situation in Britain was not any too good. For instance the split in the Conservative Party, the lack of confidence in Churchill and the revolutionary ideas of Bevin, the Labour leader, were making internal conditions quite difficult. There were of course some people who did not believe this; but the Führer believed that conditions in Britain were bad and thought that as the result of Germany's future operations, even, it might be, without an invasion, Britain would be beaten.

Oshima then added this important information for Tokyo. 'Should Japan become engaged in a war against the United States,' Ribbentrop had said, by way of encouragement, 'Germany would, of course, join in immediately.' He concluded by asking Oshima to keep all this under his hat.⁷¹

So Churchill knew that his gamble had come off. Berlin would definitely declare war on Washington. But if he chuckled at Oshima's concluding words, other intercepts which he received by landline from Bletchley Park or by box from 'C' on this Thursday provided less cause for amusement.

They included ominous, no-nonsense messages transmitted in cypher by Japan over the last three days to her embassies, legations, and consulates

overseas. On Monday the foreign minister Togo had been heard briefing his embassy in Hanoi: 'Instructions have been sent to London, Hongkong, Singapore, and Manila to discard the cypher machine, and Batavia's machine has been returned to Japan.' The Washington embassy would however retain one cypher machine and cypher.⁷² Another Black Jumbo read by Churchill that Thursday showed Tokyo instructing Admiral Nomura in Washington as recently as Tuesday to burn all cyphers except for one copy each of the current cyphers designated 'O' and 'L.' 'You are also to discard one complete cypher machine,' – while no doubt also retaining at least one. 'As soon as this is done you should telegraph the one word HARUNA.' The embassy was also to destroy its files of secret documents.⁷³

There had probably been identical instructions to the Japanese embassy in London. On Tuesday too, Togo had informed his envoy in Rome that he had sent instructions to burn all cyphers (except 'OITE' and 'L') to all Japanese missions in North America ('including Honolulu'), Canada, Panama, the south seas, and Singora (Songhkla, a coastal port on the Kra Isthmus); the same instructions, he said, had gone to the Japanese embassies in London and Dutch possessions.⁷⁴

All these messages Churchill read on Thursday the fourth (again, the Americans had translated them days earlier, but had not told him). From now on these British empire outposts would have to rely on picking up the 'WINDS-EXECUTE' message.

Almost at once that Thursday, at one-thirty P.M. (GMT), Tokyo's powerful overseas broadcasting station J.A.P. was heard by the Americans transmitting, on its 'European Schedule' intended primarily for London, the 'WINDS-EXECUTE' message – and the cryptic phrases concealed in the weather forecast corresponded to the imminent outbreak of war against Britain, the Dutch East Indies, and the United States, but not against Russia.⁷⁵ The Americans heard it, but in the ensuing military muddle they fumbled the ball and the vital Intelligence got nowhere; there is no evidence that the British empire's operators also heard it as early as this, on Thursday December 4.

A message went however from London to the British minister in Bangkok advising him confidentially of the planned operation MATADOR. 'It is important that [this] operation should not meet with Thai resistance,' advised the foreign office, 'and that if possible it should be carried out with their co-operation.'⁷⁶

THE STRAIN of this final week was ripping at Churchill's nerves. Late on this Thursday he called a ten P.M. 'staff conference' in the underground Cabinet War Rooms – adding Eden, Attlee, and even young Mountbatten to the spectacle.⁷⁷ During the dinner-and-drinks interval between the cabinet and this staff conference, he swung right round again on the sore subject of aid for Stalin. There was a full-blown row with his chiefs of staff. Eden found himself on what he called a 'battlefield.' The P.M. abandoned the idea of giving any military hardware at all to Moscow, in favour of ten R.A.F. squadrons to be sent to Russia when CRUSADER was over. His toady, Portal, agreed but thought that the offer was too numerically definite. 'This,' recorded Brooke, 'produced the most awful outburst of temper. We were told that we did nothing but obstruct his intentions, we had no ideas of our own, and whenever he produced ideas we produced nothing but objections.' Eden heard Churchill complain that his chiefs of staff never proposed anything, that they only turned everything down (could Churchill but have known it, Adolf Hitler was wont to say the same about the German general staff). First Attlee, then Eden placated the prime minister, but to no avail. 'Finally,' wrote Brooke, 'he looked at his papers for some five minutes, then slammed them together, closed the meeting, and walked out of the room!'

Eden records the same lengthy pause – the prime minister silent and glowering, his ministers hushed like recently chastised schoolchildren. Eden hurried upstairs behind the departing prime minister, and helped him to calm down. Distressed that the P.M. had not even bidden them good night, Brooke ascribed the tantrum to overwork. 'God knows,' he wrote in this unpublished fragment of his diary, 'where we should be without him, but God knows where we shall go with him!'⁷⁸

ALTOGETHER ON Thursday, December 4, he had already had eight 'BJs' to read including a PURPLE telegram from the Japanese consul-general in Capetown to his foreign ministry in Tokyo, transmitted six days before, reporting on the camouflage of a certain British warship, no doubt *Prince of Wales* as she passed through; the diplomat had speculated that Britain's object in publicising the visit was, 'in a word, a warning from the democracies.'⁷⁹ That night there was a fresh MAGIC to consider. The teleprinter printout with the advance draft reached the prime minister around midnight from Bletchley Park. This time it was the translation of instructions from Tokyo to the Japanese consul in Mombasa in British Kenya, to burn immediately and 'as inconspicuously as possible' all cyphers except 'O' and 'L,' and then

to telegraph the one word *HARUNA en clair* to Tokyo.⁸⁰ The Japanese were dotting every 'i' and crossing every 't' before striking.

The empire's monitors had however still not heard the cryptic Japanese 'WINDS-EXECUTE' message.

Privately still wondering whether or not Japan was about to attack the United States too, Churchill was chauffeured down to Chequers on Friday the fifth, taking a detective and John Martin with him.⁸¹ The foreign secretary left London for Binderton, his country estate, to prepare for his sea journey to Russia. Eden's diary for the fifth contains only scattered trivia; it seems evident that Churchill was keeping the *MAGICS* about Tokyo's dramatic orders to destroy the code-machines to himself. In his formal instructions to Eden he had conceded that the two divisions of troops were no longer available to Russia; and he continued to pursue his plan to send ten R.A.F. squadrons.⁸² What could the British empire yet do with ten such squadrons! He did not allow the thought to cross his mind.

He had imparted to the Soviet ambassador before leaving for Chequers advance details of this offer. 'He thought,' Ivan Maisky reported, 'that Stalin would derive greater political advantage from a large and highly visible British air contingent.' For a while the P.M. talked about post-war frontiers. When Maisky asked about a reply to Stalin's telegram of November 23 about Finland, Churchill first ducked, then wove, then caved in. 'Very well,' he declared ungraciously, 'if Comrade Stalin so desires, we'll declare war on Finland, Romania, and Hungary.' 'He told me,' Maisky also told Stalin, 'that Britain and Japan are clearly on the brink of war and that Hongkong is liable to a sudden attack which the British could hardly resist.'

Winston had confided to Maisky that he had now received word from Lord Halifax that the United States would 'support' Britain.⁸³



Support? What kind of support? Lord Halifax was now seeing the president almost daily, and found him a willing listener, but an evasive talker. When Henry Morgenthau had visited Roosevelt at two-thirty P.M. on December 3, 1941 the president told him with a chuckle that he was 'talking with the English about war plans as to when and where the U.S.A. and Great Britain should strike.'⁸⁴ So Churchill's old idea, of launching a preemptive attack, had somehow surfaced again. The foreign office asked Lord Halifax to clarify what precisely Roosevelt would *do*. 'We note particu-

MOST SECRET.

TO BE KEPT UNDER LOCK AND KEY: NEVER TO BE REMOVED FROM THE OFFICE.

Togo to Japanese ambassador, Washington, Dec 2, 1941, No. 867, secret ['Dept note: compare to our 098509']

Of the telegraphic cyphers with which your embassy is provided you are to burn all (including the cyphers of other Ministries in your charge) except one copy each of the machine cypher now in use, cypher 'O' and cypher 'L.'

2. You are also to discard* one complete cypher machine.

3. As soon as this is done you should telegraph the one word 'HARUNO.'

4. You should deal with files of in and out telegrams and other secret documents in an appropriate and suitable manner at your discretion,.

5. The cyphers brought by Cypher officer KOSAKA [? should all be burnt]. (Consequently the need to get in touch with MEXICO referred to in my telegram No. 860 [not received] [last word].

[Dept. Note: *The word used, 'haiki,' can mean 'cease to use,' 'abolish,' 'discard.' It is not the normal word for 'destroy.']

British codebreaking *Japanese Intercept No. 098,540 (also BJ/87), translated on December 4, 1941, forwarded by 'C' with a covering letter C/8244, and initialled 'WSC, 4 XII.'*

larly,' the F.O. telegram had said, 'President's statement that in case of any direct attack on ourselves or the Dutch we should obviously all be together.'⁸⁵ Late on the third Sumner Welles had taken the British ambassador straight over to the White House to get Roosevelt's response. The president had certified that by 'support' he really did mean 'armed support.'⁸⁶ Halifax had reported this to London.

Churchill decided to put to the Americans a *fait accompli*. On his instructions the chiefs of staff sent this bold signal early on Friday December 5 to Brooke-Popham in Singapore, announcing that the British government had now received 'an assurance of American armed support' in the following three contingencies:

- (a) If we undertake MATADOR either to forestall a Japanese landing in the Kra Isthmus or as a reply to a Japanese violation of any other part of Thailand.
- (b) If the Japanese attack the Dutch East Indies and we go at once to their support.
- (c) If the Japanese attack us.

Accordingly Brooke-Popham was directed to launch MATADOR without further reference to London, if either he had good information that a Japanese expedition was bearing down on the Kra Isthmus, or if the Japanese violated any other part of Thailand. Similarly, in the event of a Japanese attack on the Dutch East Indies, Brooke-Popham would now have authority immediately to put into operation the plans he had agreed with the Dutch.⁸⁷ Brooke-Popham copied this signal to Admiral Hart, the American C.-in-C. in Manila, that same afternoon.⁸⁸

Hart was baffled at the reference to American 'armed support.'⁸⁹ This went far beyond the 'exchange [of] full military information' he had been authorised to conduct. He signalled Washington: '[I] learn from Singapore we have assured British [of] armed support under three or four eventualities. Have received no corresponding instructions from you.'⁹⁰ Events however allowed too little time for a reply.

ORAL ASSURANCES from Roosevelt were all very well, but the foreign office still felt that ink on paper would be nicer. Another lengthy telegram went to Lord Halifax, reaching him after dinner on the fourth. He went straight down to see the president at the White House toward midnight. 'Had a

very useful talk with him,' recorded Halifax, 'until half past twelve.'⁹¹ He sent a dispatch to Whitehall on this, which arrived just after three P.M. the next day, December 5. While Roosevelt was refusing to include a Japanese attack on the Burma Road as being a *casus belli*, as it was not sufficiently 'defensive' to satisfy the Congress, he privately agreed that Britain, the United States and the Dutch government in exile should all issue similar warnings to Tokyo within the space of a few hours, covering any attack by Japan on Thailand, Malaya, or the Dutch East Indies. He would prefer, added Halifax, that the United States get her warning in first.⁹² The ambassador reminded London that it was important that Washington 'not appear to follow ourselves.'⁹³

How could they get Roosevelt to take the fateful first step however? He was boxing very cunning. Roosevelt would go no further than confirming orally that he would also give 'armed support' to a British pre-emptive strike designed to prevent the Japanese invading Thailand; he still stopped short of saying this to his own public – or even to his own commanders. Even so, Cadogan thought it a good message, and he 'phoned it down to Chequers on Saturday morning, December 6.'⁹⁴



Upon all this flurry of telegrams between his foreign office and Washington the prime minister had confidently turned his back that rainy weekend. Preoccupied with his forthcoming Moscow adventure, Eden wrote only three lines in his diary as he worked in bed all morning – noting 'numerous telephone calls' from Cadogan, Churchill, Portal, Beaverbrook, and the American ambassador.⁹⁵

Public or private – oral or in writing; it probably all made no difference to the P.M. He now knew that the United States would be in the war by Sunday night whether they liked it or not. By this Saturday a sheaf of intercepts proved that Tokyo was methodically racking Berlin and Rome into a firm commitment of war against the United States before Japan's historic 'mountain climb' began.⁹⁶ Oshima was told to arrange an interview with the Führer. Hitler however was unavailable, and genuinely so. He was visiting the eastern front – he had a growing crisis on his hands there, and he was quite unaware of what was brewing in the Pacific.

Nor was there much doubt as to the imminence of war: on this very Saturday the sixth, the Americans heard Tokyo transmitting in PURPLE an

immediate order to the four top Intelligence officials of Japan's Washington embassy to fly out 'within the next couple of days.'⁹⁷ Later that day the same embassy – which still had one PURPLE machine undestroyed – was told that after profound deliberation Tokyo was about to transmit a very long message in fourteen parts to them: they were to phrase it properly for presentation to the U.S. government at a time to be notified later – that time, H-hour, of course, would give the game away.⁹⁸ The embassy was told to be 'absolutely sure' not to use a typist.⁹⁹ The sword, it seemed, was about to fall.

CHEQUERS HAD begun to fill that Saturday morning, December 6, with Churchill family and weekend guests. Sarah looked in, then Clementine, coming to stay the night. Perhaps it was conscious stage-setting by Winston that provided that so many of this weekend's guests would be Americans: Roosevelt's special ambassador W. Averell Harriman arrived on Saturday, bringing his daughter Kathleen to spend her birthday here with her close friend Pamela, Randolph Churchill's young wife. The main event would be Sunday dinner, and the P.M. had asked Ambassador John Winant over.¹⁰⁰

We must marvel at the insouciance with which Churchill had left his military and diplomatic staffs to their own devices, given what he had now deduced about events in store. All the puzzle's pieces were fitting into place: the only perplexity must have been that the Intelligence picture now revealed only Japanese movements towards Malaya and Thailand, with no sign of the move toward U.S. possessions that he knew to be imminent; and where were the Japanese aircraft-carriers?



For a while this Saturday he turned his back on these mysteries. He buried himself in the latest report on home opinion prepared by the Intelligence authorities from their surveillance of thousands of letters posted from the U.K. These bore witness to a festering hatred of Nazi Germany – what one writer conceded was 'the primitive instinct of revenge.' 'Surely our people will avenge the atrocities that have been committed in France and Russia,' wrote one Londoner, 'and exterminate the whole race of Germans, otherwise there will never be peace.' 'The quicker they exterminate the whole race,' echoed another letter, written by an Inverness man, 'the better for everyone concerned.'¹⁰¹

A dispatch rider brought to Churchill the 'most secret' translations, achieved only with considerable delay, of several more Japanese cypher telegrams: to his embassies in London and elsewhere, Togo had nine days earlier radioed a list of sixty more 'hidden-code' words which were to be worked into harmless-sounding plain-language messages in a crisis: thus HATTORI would signify the phrase 'relations between Japan and [] are extremely critical;' the word KOYANAGI would fill that gap with Great Britain; MINAMI, with the United States; NANGO, with Britain *and* America, and TEIGI, with the Dutch East Indies; there were also code words for years, months, days and figures.¹⁰² In the same batch there was a message from Togo to his consuls-general in Singapore and elsewhere, transmitted as recently as Wednesday, repeating the other secret words that were to be looked for in Japanese weather reports: 'Duplicates of secret code words (including those for use in broadcasting) are to be kept until the last moment. If anyone has already burnt them he should inform me by telegram and they will be telegraphed again. Togo.'¹⁰³

Among these intercepts read and initialled by Churchill on this Saturday was a secret message radioed by Tokyo to the Japanese ambassador in London a week earlier: this provided fifteen more general code words for use after hostilities broke out.¹⁰⁴ On Tuesday the second, as anticipated, Tokyo had radioed to the same ambassador orders to burn all telegraphic codes secretly at once, and to transmit the word HARUNA to Tokyo when the deed was done; he was also to burn all confidential documents without arousing 'outside suspicion,' while Japanese embassy staff maintained their accustomed inscrutability.¹⁰⁵ Soon after, the London embassy was heard transmitting that word HARUNA to Foreign Minister Togo, so it had burned its codes and secret files.¹⁰⁶

AS HE READ these intercepts, the horizon of Churchill's Saturday afternoon slowly clouded over. Ominous tidings came in over the air waves from the far side of the empire. A Royal Australian Air Force reconnaissance plane from Kota Bahru, patrolling the seas between Malaya and Indo-China, had sighted two sizeable convoys of Japanese merchant ships during Friday afternoon. A signal reporting this came from Admiral Sir Geoffrey Layton, commanding China Station, to Whitehall, arriving there just after one P.M. on Saturday: One of the convoys, of twenty-five ships escorted by six cruisers and ten destroyers, had been sighted at eight degrees North, 106 degrees eight minutes East at 3:16 GMT that morning; the second convoy, of ten

ships escorted by two cruisers and ten destroyers, had been located at seven degrees 40 minutes North, 106 degrees twenty minutes East some two hours later. Both formations were steering due west.¹⁰⁷ The British planes flashed these sightings to Singapore; Layton passed them on to Admiral Hart and via him to the U.S. navy department in Washington; from Singapore the American military attaché Lieutenant-Colonel F. G. Brink radioed them independently to Washington, where the war department received them at four-thirty P.M.¹⁰⁸ There were altogether ‘upwards of fifty ships,’ as Admiral Hart wrote in his diary, ‘no doubt stuffed full of little brown brothers and their equipment, in waters off southern Indo-China.’¹⁰⁹ Were they merely headed around Cambodia Point, to land somewhere on the west coast of Indo-China; or would they steer straight across the gulf to Malaya and Thailand, perhaps twenty-four hours away?

Copies of the signal arrived at the foreign office.¹¹⁰ Cadogan broke into the Saturday morning chiefs of staff meeting, but these officers ‘didn’t seem to know quite where they were,’ as he scoffed in his diary. He tipped off the American and Dutch ambassadors.¹¹¹ Winant telegraphed the state department in Washington.¹¹² The news, half expected though it was but alarming nonetheless, rolled on around the globe. The naval staff’s Captain Ralph Edwards, stopping over at Gibraltar on his way out to join the new Far Eastern fleet, commented: ‘It looks as if they’re going into Thailand.’¹¹³ ‘All may be in the melting pot,’ reflected Cadogan in his diary, packing to leave with Eden for Moscow the next morning, ‘if the monkeys are going for [the] Kra Isthmus.’¹¹⁴

THERE WAS still no proof of any intent to attack the United States. At six-fifteen P.M. the chiefs of staff dictated a three-page appreciation on the Japanese convoys over the scrambler telephone to Chequers. ‘It appears,’ they told the prime minister, ‘that they might be proceeding either to the Kra Isthmus or to Bangkok.’ Clearly, Britain was now facing a crucial decision. ‘From the military point of view,’ the chiefs advised, ‘it would pay us to attack these convoys at sea, but our present political instructions prevent us from doing so. Unless we are absolutely assured that an attack delivered in these circumstances would have the armed support of the United States,’ they added, ‘we ought not to make the first move.’

For a moment, it seemed as if all Churchill’s indecision and vacillation had dissolved. His instinct, unquestionably the right one, was to strike at the Japanese convoys on the high seas. Taking his pen, he wrote in the mar-

gin: 'If it is physically possible, the political issue does not arise. wsc, 6.xii.'¹¹⁵ But even now he did not want to be seen to act before the United States, and Roosevelt was still not eager to take the lead. As in Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*, when Horatius held the Bridge, 'those behind cried "Forward!" / And those before cried "Back!"'

Thus the hours were frittered away. Churchill talked it over with his house-guest Averell Harriman, and the latter fired off a telegram to Harry Hopkins, asking him to tell the president that Winston's policy would be to postpone any British empire action, even if Japan attacked first, and even though that might result in casualties, because the Americans *must* make the first move. When they did, promised Harriman, Churchill would act 'not within the hour but within minutes.'¹¹⁶

After a while, Churchill telephoned the First Sea Lord, but by now all sight of the Japanese convoys had been lost.¹¹⁷ At five-fifteen P.M. Whitehall received this message from C.-in-C. China: 'No further information, and aircraft *not* now in touch.' The search for the convoys was continuing.¹¹⁸ There was even some wishful thinking that they had merely gone round into the west coast of Indo-China. 'This may give us more time,' hoped Cadogan, as he continued packing. He then locked his diary away, as it would be too risky to carry it to Moscow – an important detail, as we shall see.

CHURCHILL KNEW from the *MAGICS* that the Japanese ambassador in Bangkok had been instructed to negotiate with the pro-Japanese government of General Pibul. An intercept reaching Churchill on December 6 showed Tokyo telling their envoy in Bangkok on November 27 that they should 'do nothing now' in their secret negotiations with Pibul (Churchill ringed the words in red ink).¹¹⁹ The ambassador had radioed back to Togo the next day reporting Pibul's caustic comments about British propaganda activity in Thailand and Britain's secret funding of Thai factions. The Thai prime minister, he reported, was planning to broadcast to his people that their policy was one of strict neutrality. He himself, said Pibul, had hoped that the Japanese army would occupy southern French Indo-China; this showed where his sympathies lay.¹²⁰

Churchill stayed up far into the early hours of Sunday morning, telephoning frequently with Eden and Cadogan, and drafting a formal British empire warning to Japan, to be issued simultaneously with Roosevelt's. He adopted the dangerous formula that Thailand was as much 'an important British interest' as Malaya.¹²¹ Copies were sent to the Dominion prime

ministers for comment. He planned that they should warn Japan that they found Tokyo's response to Roosevelt's recent inquiry 'extremely disquieting.'

They feel bound therefore to warn the Japanese government in the most solemn manner that if Japan attempts to establish her influence in Thailand by force or threat of force she will do so at her peril, and His Majesty's governments will at once take all appropriate measures.

The responsibility for hostilities, this legalistic document concluded, would rest with Japan. Churchill had this draft cabled immediately to Washington to obtain President Roosevelt's comments.¹²² After that, he wrote out a telegram to Pibul alerting him to what was bearing down on his neutral shores: 'There is,' dictated Churchill, 'a possibility of imminent Japanese invasion of your country. If you are attacked, defend yourself. The preservation of the full independence and sovereignty of Siam is a British interest and we shall regard an attack on you as an attack upon ourselves.' This went off at one-forty A.M. on December 7.¹²³



At last President Roosevelt bestirred himself.

During the wee small hours of Sunday, two more telegrams had come from Lord Halifax. The first reported that the president had sent for him during the previous afternoon and shown him a query that had arrived from Pibul – asking what Washington would do if Japan began by invading the neighbouring territory of Malaya, just next to the Kra Isthmus; Roosevelt had drawled that he would cross that bridge when they came to it. He told the Englishman that he did not intend even sending the planned 'warning' to Tokyo until Tuesday (December 9) at the earliest. He could step up the pace if the Japanese were to move faster. 'The President does not think they will,' commented Halifax, reporting this to Whitehall, 'but Hull does.'¹²⁴

Roosevelt had also shown him Tokyo's response to his 'inquiry' about the Japanese reinforcements pouring into southern Indo-China – Tokyo had tried to laugh them off. Lord Halifax asked him to agree at least to a pre-emptive British naval strike against the suspect convoys. 'If we saw,' responded Roosevelt, 'Japanese transports steaming west or south west across the Gulf of Thailand we should *obviously attack them* since they must

be going for Thailand or Malaya.'¹²⁵ He revealed that he had ordered maximum publicity about the Japanese convoys and troopships 'in order to prepare [the] public mind for possible developments,' and he now asked that London do the same.¹²⁶ (Churchill at once ordered the British press to conform.¹²⁷)

READING THESE TWO telegrams from Lord Halifax, numbers 5653 and 5654, in his morning box on Sunday, December 7, Churchill was particularly struck by the president's words 'obviously attack them,' and he underlined them. The log-jam was broken. He dictated a message to Ismay just before noon, in which he described Roosevelt's answers as 'very satisfactory.'

'This,' he explained, 'removes all political difficulty for initiating Naval or Air action and I agree with [the] President that we "should obviously attack Japanese transports."' He carefully used the same words. He ordered a signal made to Admiral Tom Phillips, apprising him of the two Washington telegrams – the admiral should now sally forth with *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*, and attack the Japanese wherever he might find them.¹²⁸

Sensing no doubt that he, Winston Churchill, had thus ignited the powder-keg in the Far East, he rather unusually *timed* his initials on this message, 'wsc 7.12. noon.' John Martin dictated it over the scrambler 'phone from Chequers to the war cabinet office ten minutes later.



In England it was now Sunday lunch time, December 7, but the principal guest still had to arrive – Churchill had invited the American ambassador over to Chequers for his *pièce de résistance*, dinner at 9 P.M. The other guests were family – the Duchess of Marlborough (Lady Mary Cadogan), Lord Blandford, and a Miss Seymour.

The P.M., already hollow-eyed from lack of sleep, prowled up and down outside the front door with his stomach muttering its reproaches until John Gilbert Winant's car arrived. 'Gil' Winant had had to come over from the Eden estate, where he had spent the night.

'Do you think there's going to be war with Japan?' Churchill asked, almost before the American ambassador had stepped out. 'Because if they declare war on you,' he exclaimed vehemently, without waiting for a response, 'we shall declare war on them within the hour.'

Winant politely observed that Churchill had always made this plain.

‘If they declare war on us,’ persisted the P.M., ‘will you declare war on them?’

‘Only the Congress has the right to declare war,’ his guest said.

‘We’re late, you know,’ said Churchill, taking him by the arm. ‘You get washed, and we shall go in to lunch together.’¹²⁹

For his guests, it was a quiet afternoon. Winant went off for a walk with Harriman and his comely daughter, while Churchill retired to his rooms, apologising to the ambassador that he had been up most of the night. Around three P.M., a message arrived from London. The chiefs of staff, meeting in London until two-fifteen, had taken fright at Churchill’s intention to sink the Japanese convoys, and urgently recommended that – if Britain did now fire the first shot – some way be found of preventing the Isolationist lobby in the United States from representing it as a trick by Churchill to drag them in.¹³⁰

CHURCHILL DICTATED a draft telegram to Lord Halifax, badgering him to bludgeon Roosevelt into approving Admiral Phillips’ forthcoming sortie in still more explicit terms:

1. From your recent telegrams we understand we can rely on armed support of United States if we become involved in hostilities with Japan in the following circumstances:—

(a) Japanese invasion of Malaya or Netherlands East Indies.

(b) Action on our part in the Kra Isthmus to forestall or repel Japanese landing in that Isthmus.

(c) Action on our part in Kra Isthmus in event of Japanese encroachment on Thailand...

2. We read your Telegram . . . as meaning that in President Roosevelt’s view we should be justified in attacking at sea any Japanese expedition sailing in direction of Thailand or Malaya (and presumably East Indies). We ourselves should desire to have this latitude.¹³¹

Churchill ordered this telegram to Halifax typed, but he held it back from transmission – probably because advance word had reached him that the codebreakers had just begun reading the final Japanese response to Washington.¹³² This rigmarole was being transmitted from Tokyo in fourteen parts. The first part had been intercepted soon after midnight, London time: twelve more parts had followed during the early hours of Sunday.¹³³

It was, in the view of one American government official, a coarse and gratuitously insulting message.¹³⁴ Just after nine A.M. London time, Tokyo had transmitted the fourteenth and final part. More ominously, a terse message followed at 10:37 A.M. (in London time) instructing Ambassador Nomura to submit the rigmarole, if possible to Cordell Hull in person, 'at one P.M. on the seventh, your time.'¹³⁵

This in turn was followed by a message thanking Nomura and Kurusu for their efforts.¹³⁶ A final telegram directed the Washington embassy to destroy its remaining PURPLE machine and secret documents immediately.¹³⁷

The Americans translated all these messages this same day. We do not know what teletypes Bletchley Park sent to Churchill this Sunday afternoon; all that day's rushes (*i.e.*, raw drafts of intercepts) are missing from the public files.

On Monday the eighth he received via this teleprinter link intercepts from Bletchley Park of Japanese PURPLE messages originating in Berlin and Tokyo that same day.* If he did receive advance intercepts of these telegrams – and analysis of these files in their totality allows us to surmise that he *did* – he will have retired upstairs for his siesta in a happier frame of mind, satisfied that, like it or not, President Roosevelt would be in the war by midnight.

Nor did it take much intellect to calculate that when it was 'one P.M.' in Washington it would still be dead of night in the Philippines as well as in all other regions within reach of Japanese forces – except for Hawaii, the home base of the American Pacific Fleet, where it would be dawn. Dawn at Hawaii – one P.M. in Washington – would be seven P.M. here in the heart of the English countryside.



One uncertainty remains. Did any British authorities receive, sufficiently early on this fateful Sunday, the 'WINDS-EXECUTE' message broadcast by Japan to give her ambassadors the hidden warning that war was imminent and against whom?

The answer is that we have found evidence that both Churchill and his foreign office received the message. Retrospectively writing up his diary of this day, December 7, 1941, upon his return from Moscow three weeks

* See *Notes and Sources*, chap. 13, note 3, pages 911-12.

later, Sir Alexander Cadogan actually began the entry for this historic Sunday with the words: ‘A lovely morning, but an ominously strong NW Wind.’†

Tokyo Radio had broadcast its hidden war-alert messages.

Only one intercept is to be found now in the British archives – a ‘hidden-word’ message from Tokyo to several overseas embassies, including that in London, transmitted at eleven-fifty GMT this Sunday morning (it was already evening in Tokyo). The British radio monitors heard it – a harmless-sounding message transmitted *en clair* in which were hidden the prearranged codewords of which Bletchley Park was already aware from its intercept No. 098,127, of a Japanese cypher message transmitted a few days earlier.¹³⁸ This Sunday morning telegram read: ‘*Urgent 92494 KOYANAGI rijiyori seirinotugoo arunituki HATTORI MINAMI kinenbunko seturitu kikino kyokaingaku sikyuu denpoo aritass stop – Togo.*’

The word *stop*, instead of the usual *end*, was to tip-off recipients that this was a code message. This telegram now had a deeply sinister portent:

Relations between JAPAN and [GREAT BRITAIN] and [THE UNITED STATES] are extremely critical. Japanese foreign minister.¹³⁹

This was the first intercept to spell out explicitly that Japan was about to go to war with the United States.

Despite its content, the British said nothing of it (or, for that matter, of the preparatory cypher message, Black Jumbo No. 098,127) to the United States.†

In Washington, the U.S. navy deciphered it independently and circulated to government officials a bowdlerised version, omitting the crucial words ‘and the United States,’ toward midday, and interpreting the last words, ‘are extremely critical,’ as ‘are not in accordance with expectation.’

* Facsimile on following page. The tell-tale adverb *ominously* suggests the hidden burden of this entry, which we found in the hand-written diary in Cadogan’s papers at Churchill College, Cambridge. Professor David Dilks, editing *The Cadogan Diaries* (London, 1971), omitted the sentence. The London Weather Centre’s records show that there was a north-westerly wind that day. Its strength was ‘3 to 4.’ A gentle breeze would not normally stand out in a diarist’s memory, returning from Moscow three weeks later.

† Because this British intercept was retrieved only during the visit to Bletchley Park by Lieutenant-Colonel Clausen, of the U.S. army, in the summer of 1945, after Mr Churchill’s retirement. Clausen took it back to Washington as one of the forty-one ‘Clausen’ exhibits for the Congressional Inquiry.

Sun. Dec. 7. A lovely morning but an ominously strong N.W. wind. After breakfast completed my packing & then walked out into the Green Park with T. & C. Called a dog at the Club & put some petrol in the tank of the car. Left for Euston about 12.30. Special got M about 1.05. Brilliant sun at first and, after lunch with A. Maiky & O. Harry, retired to Johnson at rear of train with A., & tried to sleep. But it became infernally cold - we saw through a window about 1000, and I caught M to my compartment. (Driving during we were told (going from a garden on a platform) that Japan had attacked the U.S., and, later, we had a message to say that we could not ^{possibly} embark at Thurso, owing to weather, and must be prepared to embark at 8.20 at Liverpool.)

Sir Alexander Cadogan papers, Churchill College, Cambridge

Ominously strong The page from the diary of Sir Alexander Cadogan, Permanent Under-Secretary at the British foreign office, recording the day of Pearl Harbor, 1941, but in fact written up three weeks later on his return from Moscow. The first thing he notes is, 'A lovely morning but an ominously strong N.W. wind.'

If Bletchley Park followed their standard practice they sent an advance translation to Churchill as a MOST IMMEDIATE teletype message, via the air ministry teleprinter (followed the next day, Monday the eighth, by a properly typed confirmation delivered by dispatch rider to Whitehall). British files today contain only the latter document – initialled ‘wsc, 8.xii’ when it was already yesterday’s news – but not Sunday’s advance teletype.

Nor was this the only such warning received. An urgent cypher telegram reached the colonial office from the British governor of Hongkong. He reported that the Japanese had been heard broadcasting a message at three-thirty on Saturday afternoon, London time, indicating that war with Britain was ‘inevitable,’ with the possibility of the invasion of Malaya and the Dutch East Indies and the occupation of Thailand.¹⁴⁰

That this was indeed one ‘WINDS–EXECUTE’ message that had been heard – in fact *Nishi no kaze hare* (‘west wind, fine’) – is casually confirmed by the secret typescript history of Bletchley Park: ‘On Sunday, 7th December 1941,’ this informs us, ‘the broadcast messages mentioning “the East and West Winds”* were intercepted by Hongkong.’¹⁴¹

This fact too was kept from the Americans until after the war. Asked to research the matter by persistent U.S. Congressional investigators, Sir John Sterndale Bennett of the F.O. would inform them in December 1945, after several reminders from the Washington end, that ‘the results so far are negative.’ No such message, the F.O. assured the Americans, had been heard ‘*in this country*’ until the day after disaster struck the American fleet in the Pacific.¹⁴² A British researcher, working in 1987, located the only known copy of the actual ‘WINDS–EXECUTE’ signal, filed in an Australian archive; the file was subsequently re-sealed, perhaps for quite proper reasons, at the request of the British government.¹⁴³

CHURCHILL MADE no further attempt to discuss the Far East with Eden. The foreign secretary’s heart and mind were already in Moscow, for which distant capital he had set out with Cadogan from London’s Euston station at one-fifteen p.m. that Sunday. Eden wrote in his diary merely that it was a lovely afternoon – saying nothing about any ‘strong wind;’ about which he, unlike Cadogan, was perhaps being kept in the dark.

* The Bletchley Park monograph’s footnote explains: ‘Known from decrypts to be the warning of war sent to the Japanese diplomatic and consular officers.’

When Churchill joined his guests at Chequers, reappearing downstairs at about eight o'clock on Sunday evening, there was still nothing to report from Washington – or from the Pacific.

He was mystified. Even by eight-thirty, the 'phone had not rung: John Martin, his private secretary, brought in the telegram to Lord Halifax for signature. Unwilling to wait any longer for word of the Japanese attack, the P.M. approved its dispatch. In the event, it never went off.¹⁴⁴

THREE THOUSAND six hundred miles away, half-way between Chequers and Honolulu, the telephone had rung in Britain's Washington embassy fifteen minutes earlier. It was the White House, asking urgently for a line to the British ambassador. 'The president rang me up from the White House,' recorded Halifax, 'to say that the Japanese were bombing Hawai[i] and asked me to pass it on as quickly as I could to London.' Apparently, Roosevelt had played down the effects of the attack. 'Most of the fleet was at sea already,' noted Halifax, 'and none of their newer ships in harbour.'¹⁴⁵

There is no reason to suppose that Lord Halifax would have been prevented from telephoning England immediately. Such were his instructions.¹⁴⁶ By the time that Churchill went in to dinner with his American guests just before nine P.M., he already knew therefore of the bloody events at Pearl Harbor.

DINNER THAT evening was of almost funereal quiet. Ambassadors Winant and Harriman dined alone with him; Clementine had sent her apologies – she was indisposed. To Harriman, Winston seemed depressed. He rested his chin on his hands, sunk in a morose silence. Shortly, glancing at the clock, he asked Sawyers the valet to bring in the radio set. It was time for the Nine O'Clock News.

The fifteen-dollar battery-portable that Hopkins had sent him a few months ago was placed in centre-table, and the P.M. raised the lid to switch it on. The valve-filaments took however a few moments to warm up.¹⁴⁷ They missed the first fifteen seconds.¹⁴⁸ When the familiar voice of Alvar Lidell, the B.B.C.'s newsreader, came through, all that Winston heard was about a tank battle in Libya ('Richard Dimpleby has sent a dispatch on the fighting'), Russian resistance on the Moscow front, and R.A.F. attacks in the west. As the voice from the loudspeaker concluded, 'Tonight's Post-script will be by Vernon Bartlett,' Churchill swallowed his frustration. To have listened longer would have seemed a rudeness, so he closed the lid.

After a while Sawyers sidled in again. The radio news bulletin, he exclaimed, had begun with a brief announcement of Japanese air attacks on American bases in Hawaii. 'We heard it ourselves outside,' the valet insisted. 'The Japanese have attacked the Americans.'

That was more like it. The prime minister sprang to his feet and shouted, 'We shall declare war on Japan!'

As he padded across the hall toward his study, where John Martin was still on duty, Winant flung down his napkin and started after him; he ingenuously remarked to him how extraordinary it was that the B.B.C. had learned of the attack before Churchill or the Intelligence services.

He found the prime minister demanding to be put straight through to the White House. 'Good God,' Winant exclaimed. 'You can't declare war on a radio announcement!'

'What shall I do?'

'I shall call up the president,' said the ambassador, 'and ask him what the facts are.'

'I'll talk with him too.'

The telephone link was established at nine-forty P.M. 'That's fine, Mr President. That's fine,' the P.M. heard Winant say.

The ambassador added that he had a friend with him – 'You'll know who it is as soon as you hear his voice.'

Churchill took the receiver. 'It's quite true,' he heard Roosevelt declaim. 'They've attacked us at Pearl Harbor. We're all in the same boat now.'

He said he would invite Congress to declare war on Japan the next day.

'We shall follow within the hour,' promised Churchill.¹⁴⁹

A FEELING of relief overwhelmed him – he later admitted it. Before the dinner débris were cleared away, word came in from the admiralty of Japanese troops assaulting His Majesty's Far Eastern empire. An hour and a half before the attack on Roosevelt's Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, units of the Japanese Eighteenth Army had swarmed ashore at Sabak beach, at Kota Bharu in Malaya.¹⁵⁰ Troops had also landed at Songkhla and Patani on Thailand's Kra Isthmus.¹⁵¹ Japanese air attacks were being launched on Shanghai and Singapore even as this dinner at Chequers had begun.¹⁵² Other Japanese planes were raiding Manila, capital of the Philippines. Although given eight hours' forewarning, General Douglas B. MacArthur's entire striking force of B-17 bombers was caught on the ground and destroyed; and then it was the turn of little Hongkong. Of course London knew none of this.

Over brandy and cigars Churchill decided to go to Washington at once. A call-back message went to Eden, to 'phone him on reaching Invergordon in the far north of Scotland.

Eden, who had been afflicted by gastro-intestinal troubles as his train headed north from Euston, learned of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor only about midnight.¹⁵³ He reached Invergordon at eight A.M. on Monday the eighth.

Roaring with laughter, Winston broke it to his ailing young protégé that he was off to the White House.

'When?' shrieked the foreign secretary.

'Next Thursday,' said the prime minister.

Eden begged him to wait until his return; Churchill ignored him, as he ignored the later attempts by Cadogan and Lyttelton, who were accompanying Eden, to dissuade him.¹⁵⁴

He felt immortal now. 'Being saturated and satiated with emotion and sensation,' he would dictate for his memoirs in 1950, 'I went to bed and slept the sleep of the saved and thankful.'¹⁵⁵

THE NEXT morning the naval task force that he had only just assembled at Singapore – *Prince of Wales*, wearing the flag of Tom Phillips, and *Repulse* – sailed northwards to intercept the Japanese convoys heading for Malaya. With these great British warships already on the scene, and with the United States at his side, Churchill now felt invincible.

At a staff conference a few days later, a general spoke of the United States in the same hushed tones of cautious diplomacy that they had used before Pearl Harbor.

'Oh!' cried Churchill – and General Brooke, his new C.I.G.S., caught the wicked leer in his eye. 'That's the way we talked to her while we were wooing her. Now that she is in the harem we talk to her quite differently!'¹⁵⁶

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David Irving

CHURCHILL'S WAR

VOLUME II: TRIUMPH IN ADVERSITY





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Part II: **WORLD WAR**



DECEMBER 1941 — AUGUST 1942





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13: *At the White House*

THE TIDE HAD begun to turn before Japan's fearsome plunge into the war. In North Africa, General Auchinleck's forces had raised Rommel's siege of Tobruk; a German retreat was beginning both there and at Moscow, where the pitiless Russian winter had fallen with unequal cruelty upon the opposing armies. At sea too the war of the Atlantic supply line had eased. More ships were arriving, and the first convoys of war goods had reached North Russia without loss. Only the British public, an amorphous, half-blind animal that has not always been proven wrong in its instincts, seemed perplexed by Pearl Harbor – 'rather breathless,' as a secret study found, 'with confused reactions.' Contempt for the Japanese gave way to dismay at their strength, which the 'idiotic press' had underrated. There was however satisfaction that America was now in the war.¹

The prime minister shared that satisfaction. No matter whether Roosevelt declared war on Germany or not, the P.M. knew enough from the Black Jumbos to recognise that Hitler was both honour- and treaty-bound to declare war on Japan's enemies.² (A rush MAGIC received from Bletchley Park the next day, the eighth, confirmed it. The top item in the secret box that evening was a white teleprinter message from the air ministry, an intercept of a 'MOST IMMEDIATE' cypher message sent earlier that day by General Oshima to Tokyo. Having received the radio report that hostilities had broken out between Japan and America, he had at once called on Ribbentrop; the latter said that although he had not yet secured Hitler's sanction, 'the immediate participation in the war by Germany and Italy was a matter of course' in consequence, and in front of Oshima he had at once telephoned the Italian foreign minister Count Ciano.³ Churchill ticked this in red ink).

Churchill had spent the last hours at Chequers that Sunday night rushing out messages to sundry leaders, with ambassadors Harriman and Winant

assisting. He dictated words of encouragement to Chiang Kai-shek, of emotion to Harry Hopkins, of allure to Eamon de Valera: 'Now is your chance,' he cajoled the Irish leader. 'Now or never! A nation once again! I will meet you wherever you wish!'⁴ (Churchill had secretly offered the six counties of Northern Ireland to Eire as a reward for joining his war).

Ambassador Winant, at his request, repeated this very private message to Roosevelt, adding that it was for Washington to decide when Britain should actually declare war on Japan. Winant left Chequers at midnight-thirty.⁵ He cabled to his president: 'The prime minister is calling Parliament to meet at three o'clock this afternoon.' Should the P.M. ask for a declaration of war at that time or simply say that he would ask for a declaration within an hour after the Americans declared war, 'which he has pledged to do'? Drawing attention to the awkward transatlantic difference in time, Winant suggested that the president might want to address the Joint Session of the U.S. Congress prior to a British declaration of war.⁶

Roosevelt too did not care for any appearance of being dragged in by the British: 'I think it best on account of psychology here,' he replied, 'that Britain's declaration of war be withheld until after my speech at 12:30 Washington time.' He added, 'Delighted to know of message to De Valera.'⁷

By two A.M. — it was now Monday, December 8 — Churchill had received word from Tokyo that Japan had formally declared war on both Britain and the United States. He sent word up to Invergordon, directing Eden to call him back as soon as he arrived there, and went to bed.

At that moment in Hawaii, fires were ravaging the naval base and dockyards at Pearl and the hulks of those American battleships still afloat. Nearly three thousand servicemen had died. Unaware of these horrors, Churchill could think only of his joy that the British empire's isolation was at an end. Silly people might cavil at the vacuous Americans, might mock at their distant blather, at their vulgar ostentation and their softness and their wealth. That night, he was conscious of the maternal American blood flowing in his veins.⁸ They had won after all. He cared no longer how many years the war might last. Britain and her peoples would emerge, mauled perhaps and mutilated, but victorious. Light-headed with sensations such as these, he allowed his valet to undress him, and pulled the bed sheets over his head.

His thoughts were upon President Roosevelt as he awoke. How useful it would now be that Eden and Cadogan were in Moscow, at Stalin's table, while he, the prime minister, was in Washington: they could conduct a global three-power conference in cypher to settle all their problems. The most

urgent would be to ensure that Roosevelt, now that he was in the war, applied his country's resources to defeating Germany first.

WASHINGTON, STILL favouring the British government with little frankness, admitted during the night that they had lost two battleships at Hawaii, and that this left the Pacific Fleet with six effective battleships.⁹ Such losses seemed eminently tolerable: such are the fortunes of war. Winston's mind was set on Washington.¹⁰ With fond, fleeting memories of his Atlantic meeting lapping around his memory, he was driven out of the Chequers estate and returned to Downing-street. It had been a most memorable weekend.

The cabinet, meeting at 12:30, accepted his suggestion that he visit Washington forthwith, and he put it to His Majesty, without whose permission he could not leave the kingdom.¹¹ 'The whole plan of Anglo-American defence and attack has to be concerted in the light of reality,' he wrote, justifying the journey. 'We also have to be careful that our share of munitions and other aid which we are receiving from the United States does not suffer more than is, I fear, inevitable.'¹²

That afternoon he addressed the Commons, with his shoulders bowed, and his features wearing the well-practised expression of grim piety. Fitting the mood of the House, he made his speech matter-of-fact, almost dull; it was poorly constructed, and indifferently delivered. He inspired hope only when he reassured the Members: 'Some of the finest ships in the Royal Navy have reached their stations in the Far East at a very convenient moment. Every preparation in our power has been made and I do not doubt that we shall give a good account of ourselves.'¹³

Aboard the battleship that was to bear him to Murmansk, Eden had been taken sick – struck down perhaps more with mortification than by any more conventional virus.

At five o'clock Sir Alexander Cadogan again 'phoned Downing-street from Scotland, to protest about the trip to Washington. Churchill told him that the cabinet had now agreed to it. Cadogan, the permanent head of the F.O., pointed out that both the P.M. and his heir-apparent would thus be out of the country. 'That's all right,' rejoined Churchill. 'That'll work very well. Anthony will be just where I want him, and I can communicate with him in Moscow!'¹⁴

Shortly, a message arrived from Roosevelt, reporting that both Houses of Congress had voted to declare war on Japan. 'Today,' F.D.R. told the P.M., grimly clinging to his earlier metaphor, 'All of us are in the same boat

with you and the people and the empire, and it is a ship which will not and cannot be sunk.'¹⁵

The prime minister broadcast on the B.B.C. at nine P.M. Like the M.P.s earlier that day, the radio listeners were also disappointed. At least one gained the impression that he was 'dead tired and not quite sober.'¹⁶

TRULY THE peoples were in the hands of their popular dictators. While Churchill had been told of the loss of only two battleships at Pearl Harbor, the American public learned of only one. At 10:41 P.M. on December 8, Churchill's delegation in Washington reported to the admiralty however that the U.S. navy's Admiral Stark was privately calling it 'a major disaster' which 'was much more serious than thought yesterday' –the Pacific Fleet was effectively down to only two battleships. Three had in fact been sunk, and three more seriously damaged. Stark, no friend of Britain, now planned to transfer substantial forces to the Pacific.¹⁷ Admiral Ghormley in London disclosed that Stark had ordered the *Yorktown* carrier battle group to prepare to transfer from Norfolk, Virginia, to the Pacific Fleet; and that he had authorised the U.S. commander-in-chief Atlantic to withdraw all capital ships and carriers from Iceland if he desired.¹⁸ This seriously threatened the naval balance of power. Britain now had twelve operational battleships, the United States only eight; against these Japan and Germany could already set nineteen, and the French fleet of *Strasbourg*, *Provence*, *Jean-Bart*, *Richelieu* and *Dunkerque* might one day also come under Axis control.¹⁹

On December 9 Churchill realised, after consulting various sources, that the American battleship losses were far worse than Washington had admitted – that only one, or at best two, of the eight had survived. Half of the U.S. air force in the Pacific had also been destroyed. The Japanese were now lords of that ocean: 'The American public,' Halifax concluded in his secret diary, 'has not tumbled to this yet.'²⁰ Attending Buckingham Palace for his regular Tuesday luncheon with His Majesty, Churchill passed on the doleful truth. 'The prime minister came to lunch,' the king wrote, recording the dreadful news: 'In Pearl Harbor 3 U.S. Battleships were sunk & 3 seriously damaged . . . which means that the U.S.A. has already lost command of the sea in the Pacific.' This created a very alarming situation for his own *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*. Even though unaware of the 'BJs,' the king was incredulous that the U.S. fleet had remained in harbour when Japan was already on a war footing. 'W[inston],' he concluded, 'told me he is anxious to go to Washington to arrange various matters with F.D.R.'²¹

A powerful wanderlust, coupled with a desire to hobnob again at the highest levels, had seized the prime minister. Eden tried again to dissuade him, but failed. 'I still rather wish,' he wired to the P.M., 'that you could postpone a fortnight till my return.'²²

Eden was out of sight however, and out of Churchill's mind. 'Now that we are, as you say, "in the same boat,"' he telegraphed to Roosevelt, 'would it not be wise for us to have another conference?' He proposed to arrive by warship at Baltimore or Annapolis, the closest ports to Washington, bringing Beaverbrook, Pound, Portal, and Dill with him.²³

It is plain from Roosevelt's presidential papers that he did not warm to the idea. For over a year he had swooned in ill-concealed envy of Winston's rising star. The famous cherubic features were on every newspaper's front page. Now that his, Roosevelt's, hour had struck, he did not want this importunate Englishman strutting onto his stage: not yet. He too now tried to persuade Winston to postpone the trip. In fact he asked Lord Halifax to notify the P.M. that for security reasons he did not like the idea of Washington as the location either. He proposed Bermuda instead, and not before January 7.²⁴ Churchill however was determined. They had to meet.

AT TEN THAT evening, December 9, Churchill welcomed a dozen of his admiralty and other colleagues in the underground Cabinet War Rooms to survey the changed position. They discussed how to redress the balance of naval power in the Pacific. The Japanese threat to Australia and New Zealand could no longer be ignored. How best to use Britain's only capital ships in the region, *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*? Churchill suggested they join the remnants of the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Hawaii, a gesture of both symbolic and military significance, and prepare to take offensive action against Japan itself. Alternatively, the admiralty might consider a plan to employ *Prince of Wales*, *Repulse*, and *Centurion* as what he called 'rogue elephants.' Meanwhile Churchill would inform Eden that 'in view of the changed circumstances' Russia would no longer get the ten R.A.F. squadrons on offer.²⁵

He sent the bleak telegram to Eden, now ploughing into the long Arctic night toward North Russia, at once. It told him much of what had happened – that since Roosevelt now had only two battleships left in the Pacific against ten Japanese, he was recalling all battleships from the Atlantic; that 'according to American sources' (evidently Winston's euphemism for the BJs) 'we are going to be heavily attacked in Malaya and throughout [the] Far East;' that he intended to reinforce Malaya with aircraft from the Middle

East where, Auchinleck assured him, the tide had now turned; and that Eden should not now offer the ten R.A.F. squadrons to Stalin. 'Hope you are better,' he continued. 'We are having a jolly time here.'²⁶

AFTER THE Pearl Harbor disaster American signals Intelligence belatedly got off its high horse; in a long talk with Captain Hastings, 'C's' liaison officer in Washington, Admiral Noyes professed himself satisfied with what the British codebreakers were sending him.²⁷ Churchill however suspected that Roosevelt was concealing from him the true scale of the débâcle. Even on the twelfth Admiral Ghormley supplied an account that spoke only of two battleships sunk and 'several' more as well as three light cruisers damaged; since the message also lamented three thousand 'casualties' there were grounds not to believe what Washington was saying. A month later, Admiral Conrad Helfrich, commander-in-chief of the Dutch navy, would express disquiet at the Americans' furtiveness: 'Why not let their fighting allies know their exact losses – which the enemy already know?' If, he said, seven out of eight battleships of the Pacific Fleet and 450 aircraft had in fact been knocked out at Pearl Harbor 'why try to keep it a secret from the British and the Dutch?'²⁸

Seven out of eight? 'Surely this is untrue,' an anguished Churchill demanded of the First Sea Lord. 'What have you been told? I have not pressed for information but I could certainly do so.' Pound replied that the U.S. navy department had agreed to release the real facts, and that the damage was 'considerably more' than Colonel Knox, their secretary of the navy, had given out to the press.²⁹

ADMIRAL TOM Phillips had sailed from Singapore with *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse* and four destroyers on the evening of December 8, intending to maul Japanese invasion convoys off Songkhla or in the Gulf of Thailand. Early on the ninth he was advised that no fighter cover could be provided as the Japanese had destroyed all airfields in northern Malaya. While he had scanty Intelligence data on the Japanese warship movements, he had none on their air forces. The codebreakers at Singapore had identified an aircraft-carrier squadron in the Saigon area, but he pressed on, believing he had the advantage of surprise. After enemy planes sighted his force Phillips turned back briefly toward Singapore; at midnight he received a signal reporting that the Japanese were also landing at the port of Kuantan, 150 miles north of Singapore. Tragically, the signal turned out to be incorrect; although



[Facsimile of a MAGIC intercept]



Churchill had also spoken to the king about Japanese troop landings at Kuantan, there were none.³⁰ Phillips had however already changed course to intercept.

Seven thousand miles away in London, Churchill had retired for the night after the meeting in the underground Cabinet War Rooms.

Awakening the next morning, December 10, he worked on his boxes of papers until interrupted by a 'phone call from Admiral Pound. A signal had come in from the Eastern Fleet an hour earlier, he said, reading 'Most Immediate. H.M.S. *Prince of Wales* and H.M.S. *Repulse* sunk by torpedoes at about 1317,' and giving the position. Japanese shore-based torpedo planes had sunk *Repulse* at 12:33 P.M.; *Prince of Wales*, her steering crippled like *Bismarck's* by one torpedo, had foundered, plunging Admiral Phillips and 760 of his sailors to the deep, forty-seven minutes later. A further signal made plain that it would be impossible to keep this grim news secret for long.³¹

Churchill was dazed by the awful news. Even to himself, he probably never admitted his own rôle in forcing through the plan to send these ships down to Singapore without a balanced supporting fleet. He certainly kept quiet about it later, when writing his memoirs. 'K.B.O.,' he once more apostrophised to his staff: 'Keep buggering on.'



If one item in this increasingly senseless war heralded the end of Britain's Asian empire it was this naval disaster. The fall of Singapore, the loss of Malaya, and the rise of the nationalist sentiment that was to sweep the British out of all their possessions in the Far East over the next decade could not have followed in such swift train but for the loss of these two ships, which Churchill coldly ascribed to 'chance.' A telegram arrived on his desk from King George VI, touring the Welsh war industries. The news had shocked him too: 'For all of us,' he wrote, 'it is a national disaster, & I fear will create consternation in Australia. The lack of details makes the fact harder to bear, coming as it does on top of yesterday's bad news *re* the U.S. battleships [at Hawaii]. I thought I was getting immune to hearing bad news,' the monarch concluded pointedly.³²

Resolving anew to leave these questioning climes for Washington as soon as possible, Churchill hurried over to the House and made a clean breast of the warships' loss. 'No details are yet available,' he added, 'except those

contained in the Japanese official communiqué, which claims that both ships were sunk by air attack.’³³ He told Ambassador Winant that the meeting with the American president Roosevelt was now more urgent than ever. He added enticingly that he felt that certain information which he had should go direct to the president, rather than through embassy channels.* ‘Discouragements,’ Winant informed Roosevelt, ‘seem only to give him new courage and add to his determination.’

In the telegram which he handed to Winant, Churchill again urged Roosevelt to accept his visit now. ‘We do not think there is any serious danger about return journey,’ he pleaded. ‘There is, however great danger in our not having a full discussion on the highest level about the extreme gravity of the naval position, as well as upon all the production and allocation issues involved. . . I feel it would be disastrous to wait for another month before we settled common action.’ In the light of Roosevelt’s prevarications, he had shelved his plan to start from London the next night, December 11, and asked what rendezvous the president finally proposed. ‘I never felt so sure about final victory,’ he concluded, ‘but only concerted action will achieve it.’³⁴

The reply that Roosevelt originally drafted still betrayed acute reluctance; but he yielded, and the text that arrived in London during the night stated he would be ‘delighted’ to have Winston at the White House. ‘Impossible for me to leave country during intensive mobilisation and clarification [of the] naval action in Pacific,’ he apologised. He admitted that for three weeks Britain and Russia would not get the planes allocated to them. ‘My own great reservation is [the] great personal risk to you,’ he continued, still hoping to discourage Churchill’s trip. ‘Believe this should be given most urgent consideration for the empire needs you at the helm and we need you there too.’³⁵ It was not often that F.D.R. expressed concern for the future of Britain’s empire.

At midday on December 10 the chiefs of staff had come over to No. 10 to discuss the bleak naval situation. To General Sir Alan Brooke, the new C.I.G.S., it seemed that the P.M. had stood this latest shock well, though fretting at the delay to his departure.³⁶ ‘He does rise remarkably to big occasions,’ wrote Amery of the prime minister’s performance at that evening’s cabinet.³⁷

* Perhaps a reference to Britain’s progress on atomic bomb research, which Churchill was now anxious to divulge to his new allies. See pages 316 and 455 below.

In part, Churchill's new energy derived from the latest secret Intelligence, which he read that day. The chief operations staff officer of Hitler's *Heeresgruppe Mitte* had just ordered *Panzergruppen* 3 and 4 on the Moscow front to pull back about eight miles. 'The order,' commented Brooke, 'mentions the destruction of the area to be left in enemy hands.' This, together with an ULTRA referring to a withdrawal on the Tula front, indicated 'that the Germans have abandoned their attempt to capture Moscow from the west, or to encircle it from the north or south, before the spring.'³⁸



General Brooke had just found out what his predecessor General Dill had learned at the time of Narvik and Dunkirk – that Winston maintained private channels of communication to his field commanders and circumvented Whitehall with decisions of which Brooke disapproved.

On the tenth, Brooke wrote to General Auchinleck reminding him that, 'very desirable' though such private telegrams might be, they made his position difficult if the sender ignored the 'normal channel of communications.'³⁹ Sir Claude Auchinleck, Commander-in-Chief, Middle East, had remained in close touch with Churchill since *CRUSADER* had begun against Rommel in mid-November. 'Last night Tobruk garrison advanced westward and made good progress,' he had wired Churchill on December 8. And: 'Consider tide turned,' on the ninth. The next day, December 10, Auchinleck signalled more soberly to Brooke: 'Enemy is apparently in full retreat but his remaining tanks are still covering his withdrawal. El Adem is in our hands; South African and Indian troops joined hands with British troops from Tobruk, and I think it is now permissible to claim that [the] siege of Tobruk has been raised.' 'We are pressing our pursuit vigorously,' he radioed to Churchill on the eleventh.⁴⁰ Slowly but certainly, Auchinleck had regained the initiative. Rommel was withdrawing in disorder, but he would shortly succeed in establishing a new defensive position at Gazala, some thirty-five miles to the west of Tobruk.

VICTORY IN Libya would release air and ground forces vital for the Far East. Such was Churchill's calculus. Thanks to the R.A.F.'s all-consuming commitment to the bombing of Germany, and Britain's obligations to the Soviet Union, he had no choice, although the defences of Malaya were in a parlous state. In September he had sent two hundred Hurricanes to Murmansk to

help save Stalin's empire; but a plan to send three ancient Buffalo fighter planes to Hongkong had to be cancelled because it would have 'denuded' Singapore. The air force in Malaya had 122 planes, including a squadron of 85 m.p.h. Wildebeeste torpedo planes; most had now been destroyed. Malaya was defended by only the 8th Australian and the 9th and 11th Indian divisions, each minus one brigade. To his old political friend Alfred Duff Cooper, visiting Singapore, the prime minister sent a telegram on December 9 appointing him resident cabinet minister for Far Eastern Affairs.

A less likely choice as gauleiter of an imperial fortress would be hard to conceive than this gentlemanly esquire who had been a failure as a minister in London, and whom Australia's Robert Menzies had described only recently as being endowed with 'great gifts of indolence.'* The intention was however to relieve the local generals of the burden of political decision. 'With your knowledge of the various public departments and of cabinet procedure,' Churchill had directed him, as though the Japanese enemy set store by such things, 'it should be possible for you to exercise a powerful, immediately concerting influence upon Far Eastern affairs.' Duff Cooper reported a few days later that if Singapore were overrun the loss of the Dutch East Indies would follow; then the separation of Britain's fleet from the Americans'; then the isolation of Australia and New Zealand. Japanese possession of Singapore would ensure her oil and practically all the world's natural rubber supplies. He pleaded urgently for reinforcements.⁴¹

The only available reserve was the 18th Division, now rounding the Cape on its way from Britain to the Middle East. Satisfied that he had enough troops to complete the job in Libya, Churchill now developed a plan to divert this division to Rangoon, Burma, to attack the Japanese in the Kra Isthmus.⁴²

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11, 1941: he had hoped to leave England on this day. His appointment diary was marked, 'P.M. away.' Instead he was at the House, rendering an unhappy, cold narrative on the 'considerable punishment' which Britain must still expect. 'Victory is traditionally elusive,' he admitted, referring to the protracted battle in Libya. 'Accidents happen. Mistakes are made.' 'Still,' he added, 'when all is said and done, on November 18 General Auchinleck set out to destroy the entire armed forces of the Germans and Italians in Cyrenaica, and now, on December 11, I am bound to say that

* Page 14 above.

it seems very probable he will do so.' After reporting on Hitler's misfortunes in Russia, he turned to the Far East. His bald explanation that *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse* had had no escorting aircraft went down badly; he found himself being heckled, and he declared testily and with questionable tact that had he known he would be questioned so narrowly he would have made his statement on the radio. 'The House . . . seemed to hold its judgement in suspense,' he later wrote.⁴³ A Conservative M.P. told a journalist that the backbenchers were on their hind legs now, and that the P.M. knew his position was slipping.⁴⁴

That day Hitler and Mussolini declared war on the United States, ensuring her entry into the European war. The P.M., wrote his secretary John Peck to a former colleague, was once more 'full of bounce.' And to his other secretary, John Martin, Churchill commented: 'The stars in their courses are fighting for us.'⁴⁵

The bounce did not last long. Later that day Brooke came to suggest that Winston take General Sir John Dill to Washington to remain there as head of the British mission. It was an inspired idea, but Churchill nurtured a deep dislike for this general who had thwarted so many of his hairier military enterprises. It took half an hour of wearying argument for Brooke to persuade the P.M. that nobody had a closer insight into the British military mind. Dill would establish a close friendship with George Marshall, Roosevelt's chief of staff, and remained in Washington until his death in 1944.

Before going before the B.B.C. microphone to repeat that day's Commons speech, Churchill evidently took his customary steps to restore his spirits. While Home Intelligence reported afterwards that his broadcast of the eighth had evinced 'considerable disappointment,' ordinary listeners who heard this speech of the eleventh described it as 'a masterly exposition' which did much to restore a sense of proportion.⁴⁶ Some M.P.s however thought the broadcast ill-advised, as Churchill appeared 'very tired.' Apprised delicately of this by his parliamentary Private Secretary, Churchill pointed out that it was the House who forced him to deliver such speeches twice, since they still refused to allow the B.B.C. to record him in the Commons.⁴⁷

Fatigued, and now itching to leave, he presided at ten P.M. that evening over a meeting of the chiefs of staff. It began badly, recorded Brooke, and the chief of air staff nearly provoked 'another brain storm' on Churchill's plan to denude the Middle East for the Far East. 'With some difficulty we

calmed him down,' wrote Brooke afterwards.⁴⁸ Modifying the plan, they persuaded him to transfer Burma to Wavell's area as Commander-in-Chief, India; and to transfer Iraq and Iran from Wavell to Middle East command. The 18th Division should go to Bombay rather than Rangoon: it could then be moved up the Persian Gulf to defend Iraq's oil if the Germans came closer through Turkey. It was symptomatic of Britain's weakness that much of a two-hour debate was devoted to the destination of one division. Churchill was very tired when the meeting ended at midnight-thirty, and complained to Ismay of a 'pain inside.'⁴⁹

Unaware that Churchill was about to leave the country, worried backbenchers demanded a Secret Session of the House of Commons to discuss the crisis. He agreed that it should be set down for a week's time; he would not be there. He would quite rightly write, 'A complete understanding between Britain and the United States outweighed all else.'⁵⁰ Not that he had no backers. Lady Violet Bonham-Carter, a Liberal M.P. and his friend for forty years, told a journalist that with all his faults he was the only man to lead the country. 'His handling of America was brilliant,' she said.⁵¹

With an eye to this uncertain public mood, the P.M. disapproved his ministers' plans to announce tighter food rations in his absence. 'It would savour of panic,' he lectured Clement Attlee. Besides, it seemed unnecessary. 'Our position has immeasurably improved by the full involvement of the United States. . . We are all in it together, and they are eating better than us.'⁵²

After a cabinet at twelve-thirty and lunch with the king an hour later, he dictated a final flourish of messages. He cabled to Roosevelt, that he hoped to rendezvous with him on about the twenty-first ('I think OK,' F.D.R. annotated the telegram unhappily). 'I am enormously relieved,' concluded the P.M., 'at turn world events have taken.'⁵³ Still buoyant, he telegraphed to John Curtin, Australia's awkward prime minister, who had replaced Robert Menzies, that the United States' entry into the war made amends for all, 'and makes the end certain.'⁵⁴ Assuring Jan Smuts in Pretoria of his admiration for the South African troops in Libya he allowed that the Pacific situation was serious: 'We are doing all in our power to restore it.'⁵⁵ He notified Wavell of the coming of the 18th Division, explaining that Auchinleck's achievements in Libya had reduced the risk to the Middle East.⁵⁶

Churchill also sent two cypher messages to Eden, en route to Russia, discussing whether or not Stalin should be encouraged to declare war on Japan (Churchill left it to Eden to decide); and confirming that the Japa-

nese now had 'full battle-fleet command' of the Pacific. 'They can attack with any force overseas at any point,' he told the foreign secretary. He expected them to go for the Philippines, Singapore, and the Burma Road. Roosevelt, he added, had embargoed all war supplies under the shock of this Pacific disaster and the declarations of war by Japan, Germany, and Italy. The P.M. warned Eden not to make fresh promises to Stalin, but to point to the drain of British fighter planes to Russia, which were now sorely lacking in the Far East. 'Am just off,' he concluded.⁵⁷

There remained one sad signal to transmit to the tiny British colony of Hongkong, on the coast of China, which Japanese troops had invaded on the first day. Three battalions defending the hinterland had come under heavy attack and had withdrawn into the island on the eleventh. Churchill now radioed to the stubborn defenders of the 'port and fortress' of Hongkong: 'We are sure that the defence of Hongkong against barbarous and unprovoked attack will add a glorious page to British annals. . . Every day of your resistance brings nearer our certain final victory.'⁵⁸

He left London at ten-thirty P.M. in his special train for Gourock on the Clyde, where H.M.S. *Duke of York* was waiting, sister ship of the ill-fated warrior in which they had crossed to Newfoundland in August. Given the season, crossing by air was out of the question; besides, the Churchill party was not small. He was taking three chiefs of staff (though leaving Brooke in London), and over eighty officers and juniors, including twenty-seven cypher clerks, his personal assistant Commander Tommy Thompson, his secretary Kathleen Hill, his valet, two detectives and, for the first time on such a voyage, his doctor Sir Charles Wilson. The passenger list also included Lord Beaverbrook, Lieutenant-General Sir G. N. Macready, Ambassador Harriman, Leslie Hollis, Colonel Sir Ian Jacob, and Francis Brown. 'It was hard to remember on coming aboard that it was not the *Prince of Wales*,' wrote Jacob this first day, 'and harder still to realise that the great ship which we had so much admired was now at the bottom of the sea.'

The captain had made available a spacious cabin on the bridge; this again turned out to be brighter, and to vibrate less, than the living quarters aft. Professor Lindemann came to see them off. 'Prof.', lisped Churchill, testing him, as they entered his cabin. 'I've drunk a quart of champagne a day for fifty years.' The Prof. calculated on his slide-rule that the volume imbibed would still not fill much of this cabin. Disappointed, Winston inquired: 'I have smoked a dozen cigars a day for forty years. They are about eight inches

long,' Lindemann assessed that these would reach from London to Yarmouth, and that made the prime minister feel better.⁵⁹

Defying naval superstition, they weighed anchor on Friday, at midday. The voyage to the United States would last eight days, a day longer than planned. The going was heavy and the admiralty ordered a wide detour to the south to avoid the enemy submarines known from the Oracle to be lurking ahead. As they came within five or six hundred miles of the Luftwaffe air bases at Brest, the P.M. could not but reflect upon the range at which the Japanese torpedo-bombers had dispatched the two great British warships the week before.⁶⁰ *Duke of York* ran under heavy seas much of the way. The asthmatic Lord Beaverbrook, restless with the fuggy conditions between decks, wheezed that their vessel was a 'submarine masquerading as a battleship.'

At any moment Chance, that same incalculable *quantité* to which Churchill had ascribed the loss of his warships in the Indian Ocean, might curtail this journey too. The *Duke* was so new that her guns had not been calibrated, and many of her crew had never been to sea. On the fourth day out Admiral Pound ordered the escorting destroyers to turn back, as their slow speed was delaying the battleship. She surged on alone, maintaining radio silence, mute but not deaf – able to receive but largely enjoined from reply.

Winston spent most of each day in bed, rising only for lunch and dinner – 'We make a friendly party,' he wrote privately. Then he staggered back to his cabin on the bridge to write, occasionally peering out of the portholes to see the tremendous seas cascading over the *Duke's* heaving bows, and listening to the crash of the waves that Neptune hurled against this usurper's sides. Here the P.M. feasted upon the few telegraphic morsels that arrived – the first word from Eden in Moscow on Stalin's political demands; reproaches from Jan Smuts that 'frankly I have my doubts about the Duff Cooper organisation' in Singapore, followed by a message from Cooper that 'we cannot afford to hold the greater part of Malaya'; all balanced, in Churchill's view, by the glad tidings from General Auchinleck in Cairo, reporting the hounding of Rommel's *Panzergruppe Afrika* across Libya.⁶¹ The P.M. expected the Eighth Army to be well to the west of Benghazi by the end of the year, and the whole force of '100,000 Italians and 50,000 Huns' to be dead or captured by then. This should provide the Americans with the proof that the British soldier could beat the Germans even at unfavourable odds. 'This lends weight to our counsels and requests,' he explained in a letter to Clementine.⁶²

President Roosevelt still showed no enthusiasm over the uninvited visit. Churchill was rather in the position of the importunate lover, bearing down upon his unco-operative partner's abode. He was anxious to ascertain F.D.R.'s outlook on the war, to hear his intentions.⁶³ As he ploughed westwards toward Washington he received 'practically nothing' from the United States radio stations, which he found most odd. He did not, therefore, know what to expect on his arrival. Perhaps he ought to travel up to Ottawa as well? Canada was after all, he recalled, a Dominion of the empire.

As the going got heavier there were broken limbs amongst the sailors. The P.M.'s transatlantic passage was however no rougher than his government had to endure in the Secret Session of the nineteenth. Afterwards Hugh Dalton drew a comparison in his diary between the events in Norway in May 1940 and those in Malaya now. 'The P.M. being away,' he wrote, 'C.R.A. [Attlee] and A.V.A. [Alexander] spoke for the government. . . Reference to the P.M. received hardly a cheer. The Far East has got people down.'⁶⁴ 'The Tories are angry with Winston,' wrote another M.P., 'and are in fact in a bad mood.'⁶⁵ The truth about Pearl Harbor was seeping out; the Japanese were now claiming to have sunk five American battleships and crippled three more. Could that be true? The uncertainty was grotesque. Clementine wrote that day to Winston that people in England were calm, though the Japanese were attacking Hongkong and Singapore, had invaded Borneo, and would be in Burma soon. 'May God keep you and inspire you to make good plans with the president,' she concluded. 'It's a horrible world at present, Europe over-run by the Nazi hogs and the Far East by yellow Japanese lice.'⁶⁶ All these events, Attlee confessed to his prime minister, had 'rather disturbed' the public, press, and M.P.s.⁶⁷

'IT IS PERHAPS a good thing,' mused the dormant artist in Winston Churchill, in a letter dispatched at the end of this voyage to Clementine, 'to stand away from the canvas from time to time and take a full view of the picture.'⁶⁸ For the first few days his powerful mind was numbed and dull, but then the sea journey clarified its horizons and he applied it both to the grand design of the war over the next two years, and to the finer detail.

His letter showed how little he had perceived what was happening to the empire in the Far East. 'It is no use the critics saying, "Why were we not prepared?" when everything we had was already fully engaged,' he grumbled. He suggested: 'The entry of the United States into the war is worth all the losses sustained in the East many times over.'

In the short term, it now emerged, his primary intent was to persuade the Americans to co-operate in Operation GYMNAST, an invasion of North-West Africa, still ruled by Vichy France. He revealed to Jan Smuts that he was crossing the Atlantic to confer with the president, 'to procure from him assistance in a forward policy in French North Africa and in West Africa.' He feared that the Americans would be otherwise too easily preoccupied with Japan.⁶⁹

THREE DAYS out to sea, seeking to clarify his own ideas, he dictated to his stenographer a remarkable paper on 'The Atlantic Front.' This argued that the joint objective for 1942 must be to secure the coast of Africa and the Levant, from Senegal to Turkey. Having dwelt upon Hitler's shocking losses at Moscow and the Allies' need to maintain their promised supplies to Russia, to 'hold our influence over Stalin,' he turned his eye – taking a view more favourable than fortune would subsequently justify – upon General Auchinleck's prospects. 'We may expect the total destruction of the enemy force in Libya . . . before the end of the year.' Britain's impending victories here and in the Middle East would jolt Turkey, who had 'played for safety throughout' with her fifty divisions, into the Allied line.

This memorandum also broached the touchy subject of General de Gaulle, whom he had invited to lunch at No. 10 three days before sailing.⁷⁰ The Allies' relationship with the general and his Free French movement would require review: 'Through no particular fault of his own he has not been of any important help to us. Indeed, his Movement has created new antagonisms in French minds.' Unfortunately, the P.M. admitted, he himself had originally entered into undertakings with the general; but Roosevelt had not, and he asked that they act in concert to extract more 'effective effort' from him. He anticipated that General Franco's Spain would prove useful to their cause, and suggested with unstated cynicism she should be offered an improvement of her frontiers in Morocco at France's expense. Britain, he said, had some 55,000 men ready for GYMNAST, an invasion of French North-West Africa; he invited Roosevelt to add 150,000 American troops to the operation. America should also send troops to relieve the British forces garrisoning Northern Ireland, and station twenty squadrons of bombers in Britain to operate against Germany. 'Our own bomber programme has fallen short of our hopes,' he explained. 'It must be remembered that we place great hopes of affecting German production and German morale by ever more severe and accurate bombing of their cities and har-

bours and that this . . . may produce important effects upon the will to fight of the German people.'

Churchill summed up their main purpose in 1942 as being to control the whole North and West African possessions of France and the North African coast from Tunisia to Egypt; this would reopen the Mediterranean routes to the Middle East and to the Suez Canal. This was a remarkable agenda which, despite the setback still to come in Libya, the coming year would see largely achieved.⁷¹



Still at sea on the following day, December 17, Churchill dictated 'The Pacific Front,' the second of his strategic memoranda. This anticipated that the Japanese would use their new naval superiority to seize the East Indies and Manila, and to advance down the Malayan peninsula to Singapore, which 'island and fortress' he currently expected to 'stand an attack for at least six months.' Japan's sea communications to her expeditionary forces would however be vulnerable once the Allies regained naval supremacy.

Until the new American 16-inch-gun battleships could join their Pacific Fleet, probably in May 1942, the P.M. envisaged 'diversions and enterprises by United States aircraft-carriers escorted by fast cruisers against the exposed cities of Japan [which would] constitute a form of fast interim offensive action.' He concurred, perforce, with the transfer of all American capital ships from the Atlantic to the Pacific. 'We may therefore look,' he concluded, 'to the Autumn of 1942 as the period when we shall have recovered superior naval control of the Pacific.' This would, however, depend on whether the Philippines and Singapore held out.⁷² This was a big if.

The news from the Far East was disheartening. Two days out to sea, Churchill had made a signal to General Ismay in London, warning that the defenders of Malaya must not fritter away the troops needed for Singapore Island, at the southernmost point, nor allow them to be cut off elsewhere in the Malay peninsula. 'Nothing compares in importance with the fortress,' he had dictated, and he asked that the chiefs of staff now consider moving an Australian division from Palestine down to Singapore.⁷³

Events were however overtaking him. The next day the Japanese invaded North Borneo; and the day after that Penang, on Malaya's west coast, where they captured intact numbers of small craft that had been hidden in the rivers. Using these, they would leapfrog southward toward Johore and Sin-

gapore. They showed surprising speed and boasted total air superiority. Imprisoned in his storm-tossed battleship Churchill sent a further signal to Ismay, directing that their forces must retain Johore 'for the purpose of holding Singapore.' He was groping in a gathering gloom however: he did not know now who was his Commander-in-Chief, Far East. Had Pownall arrived? He cursed the distance from these momentous events. 'I had clear convictions,' he would write in his memoirs, 'which I regret it was not in my power to enforce from mid-ocean.'⁷⁴

Sobered by these deliberations, he cast his thoughts forward, in a third strategic memorandum, to 1943. In this, he surmised that the war could be ended only by the defeat of Hitler's armies, or by a revolution in Germany brought about by the combined effects of her military defeats, her economic privations, and the bombing campaign. 'There must be,' he decided, 'a design and theme for bringing the war to a victorious end in a reasonable period.' He envisaged landing British and American armies during the summer of 1943 at several places in western and southern Europe – Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, Italy, and possibly the Balkans. What was revolutionary in this third memorandum was that Churchill recommended landing on open beaches, not in ports, and from specially adapted landing-craft. In his view moreover the incursion of small armoured formations was all that was necessary. 'The uprising of the local population for whom weapons must be brought,' he believed, 'will supply the corpus of the liberating offensive.' Such an offensive would be executed by forty armoured divisions, or some six hundred thousand men, of whom the British would produce 'nearly half'; and it would be followed by one million other men of arms. Meanwhile, they should keep up a punishing bombardment of Germany. If they took these tasks upon themselves now, he concluded, they might hope to win the war at the end of 1943 or during 1944.⁷⁵

Later that morning, December 18, he read this paper out loud to his advisers – Pound, Portal, Dill, and Lord Beaverbrook, explaining that he intended to use it with Roosevelt.⁷⁶ Their publicly stated goal for 1943 must be the invasion of Europe. Romantically, he defined the three phases of the coming war in these terms: closing the ring; liberating the populations; and, the final assault on the German citadel.⁷⁷

AFTER A week of almost unremitting gales – by this time the Japanese had also secured a foothold on Hongkong island – *Duke of York* was approaching Bermuda on December 20, 1941.

While still at sea Churchill received a secret message from Admiral Jean Charles François Darlan, the Vichy French prime minister and naval commander-in-chief. There had been, as noted earlier, furtive contacts between London and Vichy ever since the fall of France. The government's contacts in October 1940 with Professor Louis Rougier, Pétain's emissary, had continued since then through both Rougier and others.⁷⁸ Desmond Morton had written to the prime minister on March 25, 1941, reminding him that Mr Gascoigne, their envoy at Tangier, was one such channel through which the 'Dupuy' series of telegrams were being received, keeping contact with de Gaulle's representatives in North Africa 'and also with Vichy leaders.'⁷⁹

At the end of September 1941 Captain Cedric Holland, the former naval attaché in Paris, now on Lord Gort's staff in Gibraltar, had travelled to Lisbon and met Vichy's naval attaché and Intelligence officer Major Brantès; he had handed to Brantès a message from Churchill to convey to Darlan by diplomatic pouch. On October 1 Darlan dutifully informed Otto Abetz, the German ambassador in Paris, that Captain Holland was proposing a secret meeting.⁸⁰ Darlan sent a reply via Captain Sanson, his chief of naval intelligence; this arrived in London in mid-November through 'C's' channels. Churchill's appointment card shows a meeting on November 15 with Captain Alan Hillgarth, the swashbuckling naval attaché at Madrid (through whom he was bribing Franco's generals to stay out of the war).⁸¹

Marshal Pétain's colonial armies and the war-making potential of Darlan's fleet were never far from Churchill's mind. In his December 16 memorandum on 'The Atlantic Front' he urged that Britain and America jointly persuade Pétain to bring French North Africa into the Grand Alliance. 'Now is the time,' he dictated, 'to offer to Vichy and to French North Africa a blessing or a cursing.' The Allied leaders should promise to restore France as a Great Power 'with her territories undiminished.'^{*} He proposed that he and Roosevelt should secretly invite Pétain to send his fleet from Toulon, Mers el-Kébir, and Bizerta to Allied ports, and thus bring France back into the war.

Perhaps coincidentally, on December 19 a telegram arrived from 'C' reporting that Darlan had asked one of his agents to find out what the British felt about him – 'If [the] war came to an end would they refuse treating

* To which Martin Gilbert (*Winston S. Churchill*, vol. vii, page 10) adds the limitation, 'except for Syria and the frontier zone of Spanish Morocco.' These words are not in the text seen by us, but they may have appeared in a different draft.

with a French Government of which I was a member?’⁸² The foreign office radioed the suggestion that they reply only in general terms; Churchill did not share the F.O.’s corrosive animosity toward the admiral, and amended their proposed reply to include an offer couched in these carefully chosen words:

If the French fleet at Toulon were to sail for North and West African ports and be prepared to resist German attacks, that would be an event of the first order. Whoever commanded or effected such a great stroke of policy and strategy would have made a decisive contribution to the Allied cause which carries with it the restoration of France as one of the leading Powers in Europe. Such a service would entitle the author to an honourable place in the Allied ranks.⁸³

Churchill heard no more from Admiral Darlan for nearly a year.

BEFORE REACHING the New World, the prime minister dictated a fourth memorandum, reverting to the Pacific. This paper drew attention to the need to improvise aircraft-carriers; a carrier, he pointed out, could be improvised in six months, a battleship took ten times as long to build. Remarkably, given his previous commitment to the strategic bombing campaign, he now accepted that the manufacture of carrier-aircraft might exceed even the priority of the bombing offensive until 1943. ‘Meanwhile the German cities and other targets will not disappear,’ he consoled himself, while asking all the same for the assistance of American bomber squadrons, ‘be it only symbolic,’ in operating against ‘German cities and seaports.’ It should be possible, he suggested, to launch a carrier assault on Japan – a wan echo of his pre-Pearl Harbor plotting with the president. ‘The burning of Japanese cities by incendiary bombs,’ he stated, ‘will bring home in a most effective way to the people of Japan the dangers of the course to which they have committed themselves, and nothing is more likely to cramp the reinforcing of their overseas adventures.’ The Americans, he suggested, should request bases in Russia or China to facilitate such long-range air strikes against Japan.⁸⁴

Unsettled by Churchill’s momentary disenchantment with their strategic bombing offensive the chiefs of staff, after meeting on the twentieth, reminded him that before any invasion could take place a predominantly British bomber force must assail ‘the heart of Germany’ for a considerable

time. Moreover, where the prime minister had envisaged such an invasion coming as early as late 1943, they spoke more circumspectly of early 1944. The saturation bombing of Germany throughout 1943 was, they reiterated, more important than staging an invasion that year. On one point they did share Churchill's view – that the defeat of Germany (and Italy) must come first; until then, they accepted, Japan would 'run wild' in the western Pacific.⁸⁵

Thus girt with their various arguments, the British visitors prepared to joust with President Roosevelt and his military staff.

AS THEIR battleship now entered American waters, Winston Churchill wrote to Clementine. A telegram came from Moscow, reporting that at Stalin's birthday banquet they had drunk the P.M.'s health: 'Stalin,' wrote Eden, 'spoke very warmly of you.' Churchill mentioned to Clementine that Eden's visit, like his own, had evidently been kept secret so far. He had however received reports from Eden on the progress of the talks with Stalin and Molotov.⁸⁶ These confirmed the rule that diplomatists seldom return from foreign jaunts without betraying at least a part of their country's interests. At their talks on December 16, 17, and 18, Stalin had demanded that Britain and America recognise the Soviet Union's territorial acquisitions in the three Baltic states, Finland, and Romania, which were mementos of the halcyon days of his 1939 horse-trading with Hitler.⁸⁷

'I reacted violently,' Churchill would write. Already fretful from a week of cramped confinement between heaving decks, he dictated a snappy, sarcastic retort to his young protégé in Moscow. As he notified Attlee in London by telegram on December 20, Stalin's territorial demands ran directly counter to the first three articles of the Atlantic Charter to which he, Stalin, had himself explicitly subscribed. Besides, there could be no question of allowing any such territorial deal, secret or otherwise, without American consent. In his view, frontier problems should be left to a post-war Peace Conference. He scoffed at Eden's 'mere desire' to have a published agreement with Russia, and suggested that the foreign secretary need not be downcast if he had to leave Moscow 'without any flourish or trumpets.' More realistic than Eden, he pointed out to Attlee that the Russians would have to continue fighting for their lives whether they got an agreement or not.⁸⁸

He used equally uncompromising language to Moscow, reminding Eden that to approach Roosevelt with Stalin's territorial proposals would be to court 'lasting trouble.' As for Germany, Churchill, evidently remote from

any works of reference on the geography and history of Prussia, indicated that at the aforementioned Peace Conference Prussia should be first 'defined,' then separated from South Germany. He admonished Eden that to adumbrate such ticklish problems now played right into Hitler's hands.⁸⁹

It deserves some comment that Eden had travelled to Moscow without precise directives; and, for that matter, that he even debated Stalin's demands. Two weeks later, in January 1942, he would invite Churchill to contemplate the even more explosive notion of recognising Russia's June 1941 frontiers – which would grant to her areas of Poland acquired through her dealings with Nazi Germany. Churchill again slapped him down. 'We have never recognised the 1941 frontiers,' he lectured his foreign secretary. 'They were acquired by acts of aggression in shameful collusion with Hitler.' He felt that the Russians might make a good case for restricted frontier rectifications near Leningrad and with Romania; here the populations affected would have to be evacuated and even compensated. 'There can be no question of settling frontiers until the Peace Conference,' he repeated. 'I know President Roosevelt holds this view as strongly as I do.'⁹⁰

HE EXPECTED to make landfall the next day, December 22, 1941. The news that Sunday, December 21, was that British resistance in Hongkong was collapsing. Churchill had known that the island was a forlorn outpost, but he had believed that it could hold out for months.⁹¹ 'Now,' he puzzled to Clementine, 'they seem on the verge of surrender after only a fortnight's struggle.'⁹² In Malaya the empire's troops were now streaming south into the southern tip, toward the fortress of Singapore. It all seemed most lamentable. How he looked forward to dry land – to dining with the president, to dallying with the press, and to speaking by transatlantic telephone to Clementine ('I wish particularly to know the length of your stockings,' he informed her quaintly, 'so I can bring you a few pairs.') He warned her in advance that they must be careful what they said, as the line would not be secret.*

To the chiefs of staff he wrote less fondly, parrying their harsh comments on his papers. The night air bombardment of Germany's 'civilian populations and industries' had, he chided them, fallen short of expectations. Although an invasion might well have to be postponed until 1944, he was against saying so publicly. 'I think there is a good chance,' he explained,

* Quite. See Appendix II.

'of our being able to make four or five simultaneous Anglo-American landings on the Continent in the summer of 1943.' The British people would not, he feared, stand for postponing all offensive action for years while the Japanese were 'running wild' in the East Indies and northern Australia.⁹³

WITH THAT, the dreadful sea crossing was over. At two-fifteen P.M. on Monday the British warship cruised into Chesapeake Bay and anchored in Hampton Roads. The Americans had assembled a special train at Phoebus to be followed by a stately steam trip up the Potomac, but Churchill was anxious not to miss dinner at the White House and he asked for a Navy plane to fly him directly to the capital.⁹⁴ After a fifty-minute flight from Norfolk, Virginia, he arrived at Anacostia Naval Air Station, in the District of Columbia, at six-thirty P.M. President Roosevelt's car was waiting on the raw and blustery December tarmac. They pumped each other's hands with all the fervour of two men united now by shared agonies and rejoicing. The British party were still rocky from the sea trip. 'I'm not sure,' grumped a still-groggy Lord Beaverbrook in an aside to their ambassador, Lord Halifax, 'whether we were seven days or seven *weeks* at sea.'

The P.M. brightened as they drove over a bridge into Washington. Under the ice-clear and starry night sky the capital city was ablaze with electric light, a stunning contrast to the darkened battleship and the drab blackout stifling London. There was food in abundance, with real eggs and marmalade. Everywhere that Churchill's staff, who arrived many hours later by slow train, looked, the people of this rich country seemed to be pudgy, pasty-faced, and double-chinned; the newspapers were even fatter – each issue of *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* filled fifty or sixty pages compared to the four pages of British wartime newspapers.

Warmed by a bath and cocktails, Winston Churchill settled down with his old friends: the president; the frail but benign Harry Hopkins; Beaverbrook; the ambassador Lord Halifax; the secretary and the under-secretary of state; and tucked into his first dinner ever at the White House.⁹⁵

14: *Some Chicken*

THIS THEN WAS the situation as the last week of December 1941 began: Winston Churchill, with two of his chiefs of staff, was in Washington far from the sound of shot and shell; Ismay and the new C.I.G.S., Brooke, were in London; the foreign secretary was in Moscow.

The prime minister, inspired by what Brooke suspiciously called the ‘optimistic personal and private messages’ that he was receiving from General Auchinleck in Cairo, was banking on the final defeat of Rommel within the next few days to enable him to release empire forces to Malaya and the Far East; and he was hoping to persuade the Americans to commit their raw new forces to an operation in French North Africa.

Brooke had serious misgivings, based as much on the unlikeliness of the local Vichy French inviting them in as on the lack of shipping space. ‘The situation,’ he summed up, on hearing the first reports from Washington, ‘is beginning to become difficult.’ In fact he was frightened that things might get out of hand, given the P.M.’s present ‘elated and optimistic mood.’¹

To those in Washington, there seemed grounds for optimism.

Whatever his earlier misgivings, Roosevelt could not have been a more charming host. He installed Churchill on his own floor at the White House just opposite that of Harry Hopkins.

The president’s staff set up the P.M.’s travelling map room next to Hopkins’s suite. Onto the maps of every theatre of war Captain Pim’s officers traced the movements of the opposing armies and warships.

Both Roosevelt, through infirmity, and Churchill, through age, spent much of their day in bed, but they did not discourage working visits to their respective bedrooms.² Over the next three weeks – for Churchill was a most *determined* guest – they took many of their lunches together.

Dinner was a more social occasion, and held in a larger circle. F.D.R. presided over the preliminaries himself – sitting at his desk in the Oval Office with a tray of Gordon's gin, vermouth and ice, and mixing all the cocktails himself. This was one of the untidiest rooms that Colonel Jacob had ever seen, full of what seemed to the untrained eye like junk – half-opened parcels, souvenirs, books, and knick-knacks piled onto tables and chairs or toppled-over onto the floor; the great man's desk was heaped with papers, as was a 'sort of bookcase' next to his chair. 'It would drive an orderly-minded man, or woman, mad,' thought the British army colonel, and he silently decided that it was all 'rather typical' of the general lack of organisation in the American government.

Often their meetings were joined by the presidential Aberdeen terrier Falla; the hairy beast started barking once in the middle of a Churchillian oration. Winston was put out by the yapping, and the dog was put out by the staff.³ Taken all round, however, these cocktail hours were hours suffused with pleasure. Eventually, with his head a-dance with visions of Sir Walter Raleigh laying down his humble cloak before Queen Elizabeth, Churchill would trundle the president in his wheelchair to the elevator to go down to dinner.⁴

Immediately after their first dinner on December 22, F.D.R. invited his English guests into his study. Lord Halifax observed afterwards that there was complete unanimity of view, 'Winston and the president getting on very well indeed together.' With none of the American chiefs of staff yet present, the P.M. at once put forward GYMNAST, his plan for a joint invasion of French North-West Africa. He argued that if Hitler was checkmated now in Russia, he might well try to push his armies down through the Iberian Peninsula to North-West Africa. It was vital to forestall him. Whoever got there first would lay hands on the magnificent new French battleships *Jean-Bart* and *Richelieu* ('a real prize,' observed Churchill in a telegram to his war cabinet the next day).

Aware of the French dislike for the British ever since Mers el-Kébir, Churchill suggested that it would have an 'immense psychological effect' if the United States were associated with this British undertaking. As he continued to press his plans for a joint landing there 'with or without invitation,' Roosevelt showed that he favoured the idea. Buoyed up, just as Brooke had feared, by the latest private signals from Auchinleck, Churchill related the Eighth Army's triumphant progress in Libya, thus impressing and cheering Roosevelt and his colleagues.⁵

BESIDE THEIR formal meetings over the next three weeks, the two leaders talked endlessly off the record with each other.

The President, explained an American usher as he stopped Ian Jacob from entering the cabinet room, never had note-takers at his meetings. Indeed, as Jacob found, he lacked any kind of military or cabinet secretariat, no machinery through which to exercise command. ('We now see how much we owe to Hankey,' reflected the colonel).⁶ Attending one such meeting, Jacob realised that beside their own prime minister Roosevelt, though a most impressive man, was 'a child in military affairs.' His army and navy appeared to be at war with each other, for want of a real enemy. The two leaders mulled over sensitive issues, like their joint opposition to Stalin's frontier demand, in private. They discussed too the possibility of making a 'sacrifice landing' of troops, as they called it, in France, or even opening a full-scale second front in the summer of 1942 if the Soviet Union should appear to be collapsing.⁷ To Churchill's irritation Roosevelt held forth at length upon the situation in British India.⁸ Their private talks also touched upon China; upon Article VII of the draft Lend-Lease agreement, with its troublesome reference to 'empire preferences;' and upon Anglo-American co-operation on atomic energy research.

They also whispered secret things to each other about Bletchley Park, ULTRA, MAGIC, and their codebreaking operations. 'One night,' the P.M. would remind F.D.R. in February, referring to what seems to have been a presidential aftershock of the eruptions that had split the Intelligence community before Pearl Harbor, 'when we talked late you spoke of the importance of our cypher people getting into close contact with yours.' He admitted that his experts had been routinely reading the American cyphers, and warned that the enemy might be doing so too. 'I shall be grateful,' he added, 'if you will handle this matter entirely yourself, and if possible burn this letter when you have read it. The whole subject is secret in a degree which affects the safety of both our countries.'⁹

There would be little of this frankness toward Stalin about codebreaking. Attempts to get the Russians to swap signals Intelligence, beginning with low level materials, proved abortive. In February 1942 the 'Y' Board in London, which handled such decisions, decided that the time might be ripe to approach Moscow about an arrangement to exchange information on Japanese cyphers and raw intercept material. While 'they were still firmly opposed to giving the Russians any inkling of British success on German

ENIGMA,' they offered to the Kremlin GAF low-grade codes to show good faith, and solutions of German police keys.¹⁰ Nothing would come of these offers, perhaps because a communist traitor at Bletchley Park was already telling the Russians all they needed to know.

AS FOR THE Dominions, Churchill had no intention of consulting with their representatives in Washington. At his very first evening meeting with the president on December 22, 1941, he had reluctantly agreed that it was important to 'bring them in,' but he had warned against establishing a permanent body that might 'limit the action or capacity' of the United States, Britain, and Russia, to 'take prompt decisions.'¹¹

He merely assembled the Dominions people at the White House, at noon on the twenty-third, and explained to these doubting gentlemen that things could have been worse: Japan could have struck at the British empire alone, leaving America unmolested. 'On balance,' the report quotes him as stating, 'we could not be dissatisfied with the turn of events.'¹²

A crowded press conference followed at four P.M. The journalists could not see him in the crush, and there were cheers as he obligingly clambered up onto a chair. Somebody asked about Australia's anxiety over events in Singapore (he had by now received several worried messages from John Curtin). 'We are going to do our utmost,' he replied, 'to defend Singapore and its approaches until the situation becomes so favourable to us that the general offensive in the Pacific can be resumed.'

The journalists pressed him: 'Is not Singapore the key to the whole situation out there?'

Decades of Question Time in the House made such queries easy to deflect. 'The key to the whole situation,' he purred, 'is the resolute manner in which the British and American Democracies are going to throw themselves into the conflict.'¹³

THERE WERE two immediate consequences of the news, announced that evening, that he was in Washington. Senator Alben W. Barkley of Kentucky called the White House to inquire if their illustrious guest would like to address a Joint Session of Congress. He would be the first prime minister of any nation to do so. F.D.R. promised to ask; Churchill's answer was a prompt yes. Since the only date available would be the day after Christmas, Barkley began some hectic telephoning around. The second consequence was that fan mail poured in to the White House, and multitudes of gifts. The secret

service screened them all, because this Anglo-American was not universally admired; and every suspect package was destroyed.¹⁴



Fortunately, the inevitable gift packages of cigars survived. Ten years on, when a small-minded Labour Member of Parliament urged a ban on using dollars to import cigars, Churchill would declare, 'I have not for quite a long time imported any cigars from hard-currency areas, but nevertheless, I receive some from time to time.'¹⁵ He was quite picky about which cigars he smoked, and how. 'Not a day passes,' he would tell a new M.P., 'without my friends in Europe sending me cigars and brandy. The cigars are horrible, but the brandy is magnificent.'¹⁶ Like other celebrated statesmen, he claimed not to have inhaled. When his doctor remonstrated with him about smoking, Churchill waved the grim statistics aside. 'They make no difference,' he roared, 'between inhalers and non-inhalers. They make no difference between a cigar and a pipe, that most filthy method of smoking tobacco.'¹⁷

He himself smoked nine-inch Havanas, though not invariably. American journalist Daniel Longwell once brought him a box of Alfred Dunhill's 'Romeo y Julieta No. 1' (which was also a Havana), but Dunhill themselves had a photograph showing him smoking their 'Montecristo,' which was thinner. Neither was a cheap cigar.¹⁸

He would play with a cigar more than smoke it, burning an inch at a time. General Dwight D. Eisenhower, whom we shall shortly meet, gained the impression that the P.M. rather relished his reputation as a heavy smoker while being actually more moderate than rumour indicated.¹⁹

Daniel Longwell felt the same. He noted that the P.M. had a burning candle on his desk: he would puff lightly at his cigar, gesticulate with it until it went out; remember the dead ember ten minutes later, and rekindle it from the flame. In a two-hour period Longwell observed Winston make little progress down the eight-inch shaft. The cigars were however important to him.

When the P.M. supported Cuba's application for embassy status in 1944, Cadogan would privately presume that this was to 'assure his supply of cigars.' (Cigars were certainly not far from Churchill's mind: 'Great offence,' he wrote to Eden, 'will be given if all the others have it [embassy status] and this large, rich, beautiful island, the home of the cigar, is denied.')

AFTER HIS press conference on December 23, Churchill had briefly 'phoned Clementine in England, but the censors were omnipresent and it was not a satisfactory conversation.²¹ His 'family' now was Roosevelt and Hopkins – Hopkins's papers reveal that he lunched eleven times, and dined eleven times, with the two leaders over the next three weeks.²²

During their first private talk Churchill had discussed with Roosevelt his own idea of reviving something like the League of Nations after this war.²³ Roosevelt suggested that such an international organisation would be unwieldy because too many nations would be involved. He would prefer Britain, the United States, the Soviet Union, and China alone to act as what he called 'the policemen of the world.' The other nations, including Germany, Italy, and France, should be disarmed.

'Why France?' asked Churchill, surprised.

'Why not France,' replied the president. If Germany were disarmed, France would not need weaponry either.²⁴

When they held their first plenary session at 4:45 P.M. on the twenty-third, meeting with the British and American chiefs of staff in the cabinet room, Roosevelt told them of their discussions, then, rather to Henry Stimson's surprise, fished out a memorandum which the secretary of war had drawn up some days before and made this the basis for the conference, going over each point and inviting the P.M. to comment. 'Churchill,' dictated Stimson afterwards, 'commented feelingly on the sentence of my summary where I described our first main principle as the preservation of our communications across the North Atlantic with our fortress in the British Isles covering the British fleet.'²⁵ Churchill was impressed at the manner in which Marshall and his staff were planning years ahead.²⁶ 'He desired,' recorded Marshall, 'that we consider the question of landing troops in Norway in 1943.'²⁷ When discussion turned to North-West Africa, F.D.R. agreed with Winston that the Allies must get there before the Germans: 'On the other hand,' noted General Arnold, 'we can't take any action that might cause Vichy to turn the fleet over to the Germans.'²⁸ The president warned that given the length of mass-production pipelines for planes, tanks, and armaments, they should not project any serious operations before 1944.

Churchill summed up their discussion, according to Arnold. He urged the Americans to send one armoured and three infantry divisions to Northern Ireland, to relieve British divisions needed elsewhere. He also felt that the Americans should 'take over' Iceland from the British garrison, as it

would provide a winter training ground. He concluded that it was a great comfort to find so much common ground, and assured Arnold of his pleasure that American bomber squadrons would soon begin operating from British airfields against Germany and Hitler's 'invasion ports' in France.²⁹

THE MORNING OF December 24, 1941 brought news from London of a revolt by forty Members of Parliament, including Emanuel Shinwell, Edward Winterton – who had directed the attack on Churchill in the secret session – and Sir John Wardlaw-Milne.³⁰ Parliamentary observers were comparing the mood to the day Chamberlain fell. There was criticism of Britain's unpreparedness in Malaya. Conservative backbenchers were disgruntled that since the P.M. was also Leader of the Party nobody could stand up to him on their behalf. All in all Churchill was glad to be here in Washington, a hero in his friend's capital, rather than the object of obloquy in his own.

HE WAS AWARE that the true situation was even darker than the House knew, and not only in the Pacific theatre. With dramatic suddenness, Britain had suddenly lost naval supremacy in the Mediterranean, even while he was at sea: on December 18 Italian 'human torpedoes' had crippled the battleships *Queen Elizabeth* and *Valiant* in Alexandria. Almost at once, the cruiser *Neptune* had strayed into a Mediterranean minefield and gone down with the loss of seven hundred men (only one survived); shortly, a U-boat had dispatched His Majesty's cruiser *Galatea*. Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham's entire fleet now numbered only three cruisers and a handful of destroyers.

'We are having shock after shock out here,' wrote Cunningham privately to the First Sea Lord. 'The damage to the battleships at this time is a disaster.' Nobody knew how the intrepid Italian saboteurs had penetrated the boom defences; those captured had claimed the gate was opened for destroyers to come in. 'We have got all of the enemy operators, we think,' reported the admiral, '– six in number – and I am having them segregated; no communication with the outside world by letter or other means. In fact they will just die for six months and I hope give the Italians the impression that they perished in their attempt.' Cunningham hoped to get *Queen Elizabeth* on an even keel shortly, so that from the air she still seemed to be seagoing, but two of her boiler-rooms were wrecked. He protested yet again about the R.A.F.'s failure to deal with the enemy warships. 'I fear,' he concluded, 'that I do not look forward to the next few months with much pleasure.'³¹

Britain's disastrous naval position in the Mediterranean was kept top secret; when Attlee, in his absence, authorised British flag officers in the Dominions to inform the prime ministers 'by word of mouth' of this disaster, Churchill was livid: 'I greatly regret that this vital secret should be spread about the world in this fashion,' he rebuked Attlee in this revealing message from Washington. 'We do not give our most secret information to the Dominions or, indeed, even to the whole of our own cabinet.' He added, 'The matter is all the more serious on account of what happened at Pearl Harbor, which is being kept strictly secret.' Only later did he admit to M.P.s, in secret session, that within a matter of weeks Britain had lost seven great ships – more than a third of all her battleships and battle-cruisers.³² He kept these grim tidings from the Americans too, just as they had concealed the truth about Pearl Harbor. He still intended to dictate policy to them.

Informed that morning that Churchill would like to discuss the Philippines, Henry Stimson hurried over to the White House bringing General Dwight D. Eisenhower, a former commander in the Philippines now attached to the War Plans Division; they came upstairs to find the prime minister pottering around his 'Map Room' wearing his siren suit. 'He was still in dishabille,' wrote Stimson, unfamiliar with this attire, 'wearing a sort of zipper pajama suit and slippers.'³³ They explained to Winston on their maps of the Philippines where the opposing troops were, and the probable outcome if their commander General Douglas MacArthur retreated across Corregidor. After Eisenhower withdrew, Churchill forcefully reiterated to Stimson his views on GYMNAST, his plan for an invasion of North-West Africa. Popping in just as Stimson was leaving, Lord Halifax wondered what he had made of Winston's 'grey romper suit.'³⁴ Lord Beaverbrook came; Winston made his excuses and left, to change into something more formal for luncheon, which F.D.R. took on his writing table.

A blunt telegram had arrived from Pretoria.³⁵ The South African prime minister demanded that the Americans be told that they were honour bound to recover the vast area of the Pacific being overrun by the Japanese, and to defeat the Japanese navy. With a 'Nazi invasion' of Britain imminent 'it would be madness to send more British capital ships to the Far East.' Churchill preferred however to dwell upon the good news arriving from Cairo – Auchinleck was boasting that he had advanced all yesterday and kept up a continuous pressure from air and ground. The Oracle revealed that Rommel was abandoning Benghazi. 'The Army of the Nile,' radioed Auchinleck to Washington, 'sends you hearty greeting for Christmas.'³⁶ Over-confident

of an early victory in Libya, the P.M. began planning for Auchinleck to release squadrons of Hurricane fighter planes and even a regiment of the new American M3 tanks to the Far East.

As dusk fell, the president took Winston out onto the balcony. A tall Christmas tree had been raised in the grounds. Some thirty thousand people milled around in the darkness. The president stood, noticeably gripping the lectern as he spoke into a microphone. Churchill followed with an elegant prepared text: 'I have the honour,' he began, 'to add a pendant to the necklace of Christmas goodwill and kindness with which my illustrious friend the president has encircled the homes and families of the United States by the message of Christmas Eve which he has just delivered.' He himself, he ventured, was far from family, if not from home – for the ties of blood on his mother's side, his many friendships, and their common cause and language made it impossible to feel a stranger. He remarked, in what was perhaps an oblique reference to the atomic bomb which he had now discussed secretly with Roosevelt, that this was a strange Christmas Eve: 'Armed with the most terrible weapons which science can devise the nations advance upon each other. Ill would it be for us this Christmastide if we were not sure that no greed for the lands or wealth of any other people, that no vulgar ambition had led us to the field.' After a happy reference to letting the children have their night of fun and laughter, he bade them, 'In God's Mercy, a Happy Christmas to you all.'³⁷

He had noticed his heart thumping madly as he spoke, and he told Sir Charles Wilson immediately afterwards about these strange palpitations. The doctor found his pulse racing at one hundred and five. 'It has all been very moving,' explained the P.M., rather taken aback.³⁸

IN THE morning Roosevelt took him to the Foundry Church for the Christmas service. Secret service men guarded them with Tommy guns and revolvers. The Methodist hymns did the P.M. good, and he told Wilson that it was the first time his mind had been at rest for a long time.³⁹

For all the external bonhomie, there were noticeable tensions within the presidential household. Richard Casey was angry at being kept out of the deliberations even when Australia's fate was at stake.⁴⁰ Roosevelt mischievously feigned a preference for Lord Beaverbrook over Churchill. As a Canadian, Beaverbrook was closer to the Americans in style and language; Churchill noticed once how F.D.R., wearying of the endless midnight yarning about the Boer War, Britain's food requirements, and other tedious topics,

took Beaverbrook aside to see his stamp collection so as to escape the P.M.'s presence.⁴¹ Churchill stopped speaking to Beaverbrook. The presence of Churchill's friend, the eternally ailing Harry Hopkins, placed a further strain on the household.⁴² Mrs Eleanor Roosevelt could not abide him, with his blanched lips, his taut, parchment-yellow skin, and his slitty eyes. Hopkins turned a baleful glare upon other visitors to Churchill, ensuring that only the right people met him. The Roosevelts had both pleaded with Churchill's old crony Bernard M. Baruch, the New York financier, to come down for the tree-lighting party; after unconvincingly proffering the excuse that he did not want to be 'too conspicuous,' Baruch came for dinner nonetheless, stayed for several days, and had intimate meetings with the P.M. that certainly came to Hopkins's injured ears. 'The two of them were in a room together,' recorded one of Roosevelt's staff, 'when Harry Hopkins came in and seated himself. Bernie's suspicion was that Harry did not want Bernie and Churchill to be free to talk to each other frankly.'⁴³

These fractious jealousies and feuds were dwarfed by Roosevelt's unconcealed antipathy toward his own secretary of state, Cordell Hull.⁴⁴ Emerging from the Oval Office one morning Churchill found Hull sitting alone in the long corridor. 'Do you think,' Hull asked the English visitor, 'there would be any chance of my getting to see him?'

THE AFTERNOON OF Churchill's Christmas Day was soured by angry words over an autocratic action taken by the 'Free French' leader, General de Gaulle, whom Hull regarded as Churchill's protégé. Breaking undertakings which he had given, evidently at their luncheon shortly before the prime minister left for Washington, de Gaulle had ordered his fleet commander Vice-Admiral E. H. D. Muselier to seize two French islands off the coast of Canada, Saint-Pierre and Miquelon. The islands flew the flag of Vichy, a government with which both Ottawa and Washington retained diplomatic relations. There was the devil to pay. Highly displeased, Churchill reprimanded de Gaulle a few days later: 'Your having broken away from agreement about Miquelon and Saint-Pierre raised a storm which might have been serious had I not been on the spot to speak to the President.'⁴⁵

The American files bristle with revelations on this incident. They show that on December 13, two days after lunching with the P.M. in London, de Gaulle had cabled instructions to Admiral Muselier not to bother about getting Canadian or American consent for the raid on the islands. The American minister at Ottawa had warned Muselier against going ahead. On the

seventeenth, de Gaulle had cabled impatiently to his admiral, 'Our negotiations have shown us that we cannot carry out any operation if we wait for permission.' The solution was to act on their own initiative. Still filled with misgivings, Muselier had been reassured by a less than frank telegram from de Gaulle on the eighteenth: 'As requested,' the general had signalled, 'have consulted with British and American governments.' He ordered the admiral to go ahead 'without saying anything to the foreigners.'

As news of the raid reached Washington on Christmas Day, an angry Cordell Hull feared extensive complications with Vichy France and South America. He issued a statement declaring: 'Our preliminary reports show that the action taken by the so-called Free French ships . . . was an arbitrary action contrary to the agreement of all parties concerned.' De Gaulle's raid dominated Hull's mind for days. For all Churchill's dismissive treatment of the episode in his own memoirs – published during de Gaulle's lifetime – it was by no means the end of the story. Churchill tried in vain to persuade Eden to put pressure on de Gaulle, but he 'phoned Hopkins some days later to admit that he had failed – de Gaulle was refusing to restore the status quo. 'The burden of the message,' noted Hopkins, 'was that the whole business would kick up an unbelievable row, for which we could give no good public explanation. In spite of the fact that de Gaulle acted in bad faith, the British don't see how he can be forced out and think that the use of force would be very bad. – HLH.'⁴⁶

AFTER A Christmas morning meeting with Roosevelt, Churchill telegraphed General Auchinleck orders to release four fighter squadrons immediately to the Far East together with one hundred of the American tanks. 'All our success in the West,' he reminded the general, 'would be nullified by the fall of Singapore.'⁴⁷ He also dictated a private message to the now deeply concerned prime minister of Australia, revealing that Roosevelt had agreed, 'should the Philippines fall,' to divert General MacArthur's ground and air reinforcements to Singapore; the president was also anxious to establish substantial American forces in Australia for the war against Japan.

Australia was now a festering thorn in Churchill's flesh. 'Throughout the time of our visit to Washington,' noted Ian Jacob, reflecting Winston's views, 'the Prime Minister received a series of most exasperating telegrams from Mr Curtin, the Prime Minister of Australia. The Australian Government have throughout the war taken a narrow, selfish and at times a craven view of events; in contrast to New Zealand who, though at times naturally

critical of failures, has throughout been a tower of strength.' Churchill however had never really understood the Far East problem, observed Jacob, and had been systematically starving Singapore in favour of the Middle East; he should have taken greater pains to explain things to the Australians, perhaps even feigned taking them into his confidence. 'I am afraid we shall have a lot of bother with Australia as a result.'⁴⁸

Churchill had already written off the Philippines. Meeting the president immediately after the tree-lighting ceremony, he had pressed the need to reinforce Singapore: he had asked for a British force making for Colombo, Ceylon, in an American troop transport, to be diverted to Singapore, and for General MacArthur's reinforcements to go there too.⁴⁹ Judging by his message to John Curtin, he had persuaded F.D.R. on both counts, and one of Churchill's assistants drafted a note to this effect. Shown the note on Christmas Day by generals Marshall, Arnold, and Eisenhower, the furious secretary of war complained to Harry Hopkins, threatening to resign. It was, he added, most improper to discuss such matters while the fighting was still going on, and to discuss it with another nation. Hopkins told Stimson on the 'phone that he had advised the president to be more careful about 'the formality of his discussions' with Churchill. Hopkins recited all this to Roosevelt in Churchill's presence; notwithstanding the written record, and Winston's message to Curtin, they both now piously denied having made any such proposal. At a five-thirty p.m. meeting with his military advisers Roosevelt in a casual aside disassociated himself from the note, saying that it entirely misrepresented their talk. Stimson let the matter drop.⁵⁰



It was a gloomy evening. News reached the White House that Hongkong had fallen, and that in the Philippines the Japanese had now landed at Lingayen Gulf and at two places south of the capital, Manila. General MacArthur had radioed to say that he was outnumbered and would retreat down the Bataan peninsula. The speech that the prime minister was to deliver to the Congress on the morrow hung as usual, vulture-like, over him. He abandoned one draft as unsuitable for the American mentality. Now he had found a verse in the 112th Psalm, a bit of 'God-stuff,' to spruce up the speech. '*He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.*' He carried the Bible in to the study where the president was mixing cocktails, and he liked the quotation too.⁵¹

The White House Christmas dinner was a large Roosevelt family party with forty or fifty seated around the table. F.D.R. carved the turkey.⁵² Lord Beaverbrook and Churchill found themselves facing Henry R. Morgenthau, Jr, secretary of the U.S. treasury. In fact Beaverbrook had gone to see Morgenthau for drinks the night before, had rung the wrong doorbell, and spent some time in a purposeless interview with a complete stranger whom he wrongly took to be the treasury secretary.⁵³ The British press lord was cocky, the real Morgenthau now observed, to the point of impertinence. 'The one thing we shall never forget,' remarked Beaverbrook, seconded by a glowering Churchill: 'When we didn't have a penny to our name [at the end of 1940] you said, "Oh, the British have got lots of money!"' Morgenthau was intrigued by Churchill's speech impediment, and perplexed by his morose manner. 'He would say practically nothing,' described the American to his staff the next day, 'because he just wasn't having a good time.' Reminded that Winston could sometimes scintillate wonderfully, Morgenthau snapped: 'Well, [last night] he wasn't wonderful.' Genevieve Herrick, sitting next to Morgenthau, noticed that while Beaverbrook's wrinkled features were a map of his life, Churchill's were literally pink. 'That,' explained Harry Dexter White, Morgenthau's No. 2, 'is what liquor does to a man.' Three times, Morgenthau observed, the P.M. asked to be excused as soon dinner was over, 'So I can prepare those impromptu remarks for tomorrow.'⁵⁴

After dinner a documentary newsreel was shown.⁵⁵ As scenes of Auchinleck's offensive flickered across the screen Churchill chuckled out loud. 'Oh, that's good,' he exclaimed. 'We have got to show the people that we can win.'

As the reels were changed Churchill rose: 'I must go and do some homework.' His valet Sawyers helped him into his florid silk dressing gown and into bed. Here Lord Halifax shortly found him, surrounded by cigars, whiskeys, and secretaries; Halifax showed him the latest telegrams on the de Gaulle incident. 'Winston,' he wrote in his diary, 'had, I think, a slightly guilty feeling that he had inadvertently encouraged him.' Halifax reassured him that the British record at least gave him a clean bill in the islands affair.⁵⁶

IT WAS a warm but damp twenty-sixth of December 1941. Roosevelt had stayed up until one A.M. discussing war production with Beaverbrook, while Churchill had prepared his oration to the Congress. It would not be easy, given the resentments and suspicions still festering in many an American

breast. Wearing a felt hat and a grey lightweight topcoat, he set out in a limousine with G-men on the running-boards and a motorcycle escort with sirens wailing, toward Capitol Hill.⁵⁷ To his eyes it seemed as though great crowds lined the avenue; and a few people did indeed gape from the sidewalks and cheer.⁵⁸ Puny fifty-calibre machine guns sprouted from the rooftops in case of an enemy air raid, such was the state of jitters that still prevailed here. Three hundred Capitol police swarmed the building's grounds. A thousand people packed into the Senate Chamber and its galleries. The Members of the House of Representatives arrayed themselves around the walls, joined by the youthful House pages. Nobody wanted to miss the historic speech.

At twelve-eighteen Washington's diplomatic corps was ushered in, among them the well-fed Maksim Litvinov, the Soviet ambassador whom Stalin had dismissed as foreign minister in 1939, the better to woo Hitler (Litvinov was a Jew), and Lord Halifax, biting his nails two seats away from him. The cabinet and Supreme Court justices grandly occupied the front row, flanking Roosevelt's occult-worshipping vice-president Henry Wallace. There were some gaps – Cordell Hull was deliberately absent, as was Stimson. Escorted into the chamber by a deputation appointed for this pleasurable task, Churchill noticed his wise old friend Felix Frankfurter, only the second Jewish judge (after Louis Brandeis) to be honoured by promotion to the Supreme Court, seated prominently amongst the others. At 12:31 P.M. he reached the lectern, spread out his typescript notes to a thunderous cheer, and was immediately called upon to speak. 'Churchill hulked to his feet,' wrote veteran newspaperman Frank McNaughton in his private papers, 'grinned, and grinned, and grinned again as the Members of Congress – without regard for Isolation or Intervention, the Wheelers, the Nyes, everyone – stood and applauded him. He shoved on a pair of horn-rimmed, thick spectacles, blinked. There were tears in his eyes.' A glass of water had been provided, but he pushed the unfamiliar liquid aside. He stood there, wrote McNaughton, 'a stubby, granite little man . . . dumpy, heavy-shouldered, massive-jawed, with a solid bald crown flecked with straggles of grey hair.' With his hands first on his hips, then gripping his lapels, he began to speak into the wall of microphones. As the first Churchillian witticisms hit home, a sly smile spread over his face.

The oratory was beautifully moulded to catch the American public's attention.⁵⁹ 'I cannot but help reflecting,' he said in his opening remarks, 'that if my father had been American, and my mother British, instead of the

other way round, I might have got here on my own.' Roosevelt's name was cheered; there were bursts of applause when he spoke of a better situation in 1942, and of taking the initiative in 1943. His Adam's apple yo-yo'd behind the blue polka-dot bow tie, his right arm fisted the air, the heavy gold ring on his third finger glittered in the glare of the eight spotlights – because newsreel cameras had been allowed into the chamber for the first time. 'Lastly,' he proclaimed, 'if you will forgive me for saying it, to me the best tidings of all is that the United States, united as never before, has drawn the sword for freedom, and cast away the scabbard.' At this, he thumped his chunky right arm across his left breast and down to his side, as though tugging mightily at this very sword – then drew it, and flourished it aloft like Excalibur itself, wielding it for all to see: and how a thousand American hearts swelled and burst with pride!

It was just after one p.m. when he finished. He slumped, perspiring freely, into his seat. They leapt to their feet and applauded until their palms were sore. His timing had been perfect: precisely thirty minutes, beginning humbly as Winston Churchill, ending dramatically as Laurence Olivier in *Henry the Fifth*. This was undoubtedly one of his better performances, and the praise was not stinted. 'He is the greatest orator in the world,' noted Harold Ickes, secretary of the interior. 'I doubt if any other Britisher could have stood in that spot and made the profound impression that Churchill made.'⁶⁰

His words had echoed around the world. From Cairo, Randolph Churchill wrote to his father that the delivery was 'wonderfully confident and clear.' Clemmie cabled, 'Your speech was grand and fills me with pride and love.'⁶¹ Budget Director Harold Smith had watched him closely: 'His eyes filled with tears as he mentioned his mother,' he wrote in his diary, 'and again when he was given a tremendous ovation during his speech.' ('I shall always remember,' Churchill had said, 'how each Fourth of July my Mother would always wave an American flag before my eyes.') As he turned to exit stage-left, he paused once and waved to the audience, palm toward his face — the good neighbour's wave. Secret service agents swept him up and brought him to the office of Edwin M. Halsey, secretary of the Senate, where a bottle of Haig was waiting. He poured two fingers of the liquid: he had earned it. 'It is a great weight off my chest,' he admitted to his doctor.

He partook here of a delayed lunch — a plate of turkey, dressing, brown gravy, sweet potatoes, green peas, and cranberry sauce. A dozen Congressmen crowded around the long green-baize table as he tucked in. Several cabinet members joined them. Churchill felt impelled to stand up, the

rounded edge of his black, short jacket sticking stiffly out, and deliver a little speech, genuinely impromptu this time, delighted to be speaking at last to Americans of influence other than the president. 'The American people,' he said, 'will never know how grateful we are for the million rifles sent us after Dunkirk. It meant our life and our salvation.' For an hour, while three thousand Americans waited patiently outside the building, he lunched and flattered these Congressional leaders. 'Mr Ickes,' he remarked to the secretary of the interior, 'you were way ahead of most people on this situation. The speeches that you made were a great encouragement to me.'⁶² He said much the same to Navy Secretary Colonel Knox. Flushed with tears, he said good-bye to these men who had given him the tools to finish the job.

Driving back to the White House for the routine Friday two o'clock cabinet, Vice-President Wallace took the prime minister with him. Roosevelt introduced the P.M. to his colleagues. 'I shall always remember his stocky figure,' wrote one in his diary, 'his pink cheeks and blue eyes. His manner although confident was not arrogant. I am thankful that he is at the head [of] our partner nation.'⁶³

'Well,' drawled Roosevelt, 'you skated on thin ice three different times in your speech, but you didn't break through.'

'My ability to do that comes out of a lifetime in politics,' said Churchill.⁶⁴

THAT SAID, F.D.R., evidently not desiring the P.M.'s further presence at their deliberations, gently admonished him to go and get a nap. Mackenzie King had arrived that afternoon by rail from Ottawa. The Canadian prime minister found Churchill 'beginning to look rather flabby and tired.'⁶⁵ He tackled him immediately about de Gaulle's seizure of the islands. Churchill confessed that at one stage he had agreed to de Gaulle taking this action; but since Roosevelt had opposed it, he had later changed his mind, he said, and he was quite prepared to 'take de Gaulle by the scruff of the neck' and tell him he had gone too far. The general had on more than one occasion behaved in a 'troublesome' way.⁶⁶ To Lord Halifax however Mackenzie King pointed out that the deposed governor of the two disputed islands was pro-Hitler, and that his wife was actually a German; Canadian public opinion moreover backed General de Gaulle's action.

Cordell Hull was particularly distressed by de Gaulle's actions. In fact he was so drained by the episode that at one point he forgot the name of his own hotel.⁶⁷ He reminded Mackenzie King that nothing must upset their

relations with Vichy France, in case the French turned over their powerful fleet to the enemy. Churchill too was ambivalent in his attitude to the Vichy French: while in public he excoriated them, in private he told Mackenzie King that he hoped that Canada would keep Pierre Dupuy as her ambassador to Vichy, as he was the one link that London still had with Marshal Pétain.⁶⁸



Churchill now startled the Canadian statesman with an offer to address the Canadian Parliament. Taken aback, Mackenzie King pointed out that it was in recess; he offered an audience of two thousand elsewhere instead. Parliament, Churchill insisted, would be 'more dignified.'⁶⁹

Trying to open a window in his overheated bedroom that night, the P.M. was alarmed by a dull pain over his heart and pains shooting down his left arm. Examining him the next morning Sir Charles Wilson diagnosed a mild attack of angina; he preferred however not to confront him with this evidence of a coronary insufficiency. 'There is nothing serious,' he reassured his friend.⁷⁰

THAT DAY, December 26, 1941, Roosevelt had for the first time raised the prickly topic of overall strategic command in the Far East, calling a rambling conference with Churchill and what Stimson called 'the usual string of the British secretaries.' Marshall and Roosevelt had their own ideas on this matter. Meanwhile, in Sir John Dill's cautious review of Winston's dream of sending an expedition to North-West Africa, a familiar problem had emerged, the bottleneck in shipping tonnage. Unwilling to accept the bald statistics, Churchill reminded them that in the Great War the United States had shipped two million men to France – what had become of the ships used then? One solution, he volunteered, might be to transport ten thousand troops aboard a fast battleship. He was anxious to get American troops into Iceland and Northern Ireland, the latter as a boost to British morale. 'We now find ourselves,' he commented, 'in the not unusual position of wishing to do three separate things, and not quite having the resources to carry them out.'⁷¹

The Far East problem remained. From Australia, John Curtin had cabled Roosevelt directly, criticising the 'utterly inadequate' reinforcements sent by Churchill to Malaya, particularly in aircraft, and appealing for an

American commander to be appointed in the Pacific.⁷² That was a very sour apple to bite into. A Melbourne newspaper published an article by Curtin stating: 'Without any inhibitions of any kind, I make it quite clear that Australia looks to America, free from any pangs as to our traditional links with the United Kingdom.'⁷³ Around the world, Churchill's enemies quoted those words with glee. On December 30, Curtin sent him a telegram loaded with invective about Britain's hapless naval policies in the Indian Ocean, and the apparent unwillingness of the United States to co-ordinate their naval policies with the British in the region. 'To sum up therefore,' wrote Curtin with a bluntness characteristic of his people, '[the] present position is that we intend to base an unbalanced fleet in the Indian Ocean during the next two months which will be inferior to the Japanese Fleet and during the period of formation we intend to use important portions of it *e.g.*, carriers . . . in waters under Japanese naval and possibly air control.'⁷⁴

Reporting to Clement Attlee and the cabinet, Churchill said he was deeply shocked by Curtin's 'insulting speech' and vexed by his 'hectoring telegrams.' He warned: 'We must not allow the Australian Government to impede the good relations we have made with U.S. It may be that I shall have to make a broadcast to the Australian people.' Writing to an Australian minister he conjured up memories of 'the far worse shocks of the Dardanelles,' which Australia had faced: 'I cannot help express my wonder and sorrow at some of the things that are said.' This and the debate in Washington on the Pacific command structure revealed once again how little Churchill understood or cared for his King's Dominions. He told his private staff that he inclined to an agreement whereby Britain and the United States recognised Germany as the 'main enemy,' while leaving Washington to direct the war in the Pacific, and London the war in the Atlantic and Europe.⁷⁵ Opinions differed on the details. To General Marshall, wrote Ian Jacob, unity of command was a parrot-cry dating back to his experiences on General Pershing's staff in the Great War. Marshall and Arnold both felt that the man on the spot must have authority to take decisions. Churchill was uneasy, but Hopkins said to him: 'Don't be in a hurry to turn down the proposal the president is going to make to you before you know who is the man we have in mind.'

THAT MAN was General Sir Archibald Wavell, the commander whom Churchill had summarily dismissed from Cairo six months before and banished to India. Churchill was half-flattered that the American preference was for a British general, but he still preferred MacArthur, arguing that the Ameri-

cans, Australians, and Dutch would more readily accept an American; in all likelihood, given the disasters looming in the Far East, the British wanted all blame to attach to an American, and *vice versa*. As for a unified command, the prime minister was not convinced that this arrangement was either workable or desirable: but he had to bow to the American view.⁷⁶

The next morning, the twenty-seventh, Churchill found his chiefs of staff and Beaverbrook in general agreement on the principle. 'The president and Marshall have suggested Wavell,' Lord Halifax privately recorded, 'which appealed very much to Winston. The rest of us thought it rather dangerous, as we should get the blame for all the troubles which are inevitably coming. Winston didn't think so, and stuck to his point. . . The best point he made, arguing against us all, was that if we made the Pacific too exclusively an American show it would carry the danger of making them too Pacific-minded.' This was an argument of undeniable merit.⁷⁷

At two-thirty p.m. Churchill called a meeting of defence ministers at the White House. Here Mackenzie King mentioned that Lord Halifax had just told him that the Americans had learned from 'a usually reliable source in Berne' that Hitler had dismissed his army commander-in-chief, Field Marshal Walther von Brauchitsch, because of his opposition to the Führer's plan to flood Britain with poison gas.* Churchill, hearing this for the first time, declared, 'If that is the case, we have great supplies of gas in Britain and will give the Germans such a flooding of it they will be destroyed. We shall use incendiaries to set their houses on fire, and while they are putting out the fires use the gas.' He said he would immediately get word off to Britain to have gas masks brought out to hand.⁷⁸

Churchill had to reassure Richard Casey, the Australian representative, that Singapore would not be lost; moreover the Americans, he promised, would send troops to Australia if needed. He admitted quite frankly that 'he never believed that the Japanese would attack the United States or Britain,' a belief he had based, he added, on the relative outputs of iron and steel in their countries.⁷⁹ At ten p.m. Churchill called a meeting of his chiefs of staff, also at the White House, which did not end until midnight. 'Winston's methods,' wrote Halifax, 'as I have long known, are exhausting for anybody who doesn't happen to work that way; discursive discussions, jumping like a water bird from stone to stone where the current takes you. I am sure the faults that people find with him arise entirely from overwhelmingly self-

* This was untrue. Hitler had prohibited any German first use of poison gas.

centredness, which with all his gifts of imagination make him quite impervious to other people's feelings.'



Before retiring, the prime minister reported to his cabinet in London the American desire to see Wavell appointed 'Supreme Commander' in the Far East. 'My talks with [the] President,' he added, '[are] increasingly intimate.'⁸⁰ In fact there were signs that he was outstaying his welcome in Washington. In the morning, he called Bernard Baruch to his room – 'while he was dressing,' as Ickes recorded, without making further comment than that 'Bernie . . . has known him intimately since the last war.' 'They tell me,' the P.M. ventured, 'that I have done a good job here.' 'You have done a one hundred per cent job,' Baruch affirmed. 'But now you ought to get the hell out of here.'⁸¹

With a measure of relief the president learned that his British guest had 'accepted an invitation' to address the Canadian Parliament. He told his staff at 11:45 A.M. that the P.M. had also agreed in principle to Marshall's plan for unity of command in the Far East. He was about to send a radio-telegram to his cabinet in London, Roosevelt continued, reporting 'that the general thought was that the Far Eastern theatre would include Malaya, Burma, the Philippine Islands, Australia, and supply lines north of Australia.' He added that Churchill had agreed 'after a struggle' to the British and Dutch naval forces coming under an American admiral. ('This,' observed Stimson with satisfaction, 'had never been done before to the British navy and they kicked like bay steers.') The British General Wavell, Roosevelt added, would take over this new A.B.D.A. (American-British-Dutch-Australian) Command.⁸²

Before Sunday lunch that day, December 28, the prime minister informed Lord Halifax and the chiefs of staff of his morning's talks with the president.⁸³ He dictated a further telegram to Attlee, recommending that they accept the 'broadminded and selfless' American proposal for unity of command under Wavell, who should receive orders from a joint body responsible to the P.M. and Roosevelt.

IMMEDIATELY after lunch he left the White House from a private entrance, with carloads of G-men following. Symptoms of his own mortality seized him as he drove with his doctor and the Canadian prime minister to the

railroad station – or was he just playing to the gallery, childishly soliciting sympathy? He opened the car's window, saying he felt short of breath. 'It is a great comfort to have you with me,' he said – for the second time in four days – to Sir Charles.

Churchill remarked at once to Mackenzie King that he had succeeded beyond all expectations in solving the problem of command – that F.D.R. himself had suggested giving supreme command in the Pacific to Wavell, who was familiar with conditions in the Far East. He had left the command in the Atlantic untouched, as he did not want things to shape up with the Americans looking after the Pacific and the British the Atlantic.

The Americans had assembled a special train for him, with press cars in front and F.D.R.'s own cars in the rear, including a diner and observation car.⁸⁴ As the train set off at 2:15 P.M. Churchill joined Mackenzie King in his car. The Canadian suggested that he make a few remarks in his speech in French. Churchill needed no second bidding. When, over dinner, he tried to persuade Mackenzie King to introduce conscription in Canada, he ran however into stubborn opposition; for his host it was a matter of principle, one which he feared would split the Dominion.⁸⁵

As the train hauled into Ottawa at ten-thirty the next morning, December 29, 1941, the Canadian capital was splendidly blanketed in snow.⁸⁶ The Englishman thoroughly enjoyed the crowds; he struck poses with his cigar, he lifted his hat aloft on the end of his cane, and he made the V-sign with two fingers 'like a ten-year-old' as Mackenzie King wrote.

He had a hot bath run for him at Government House. Several times he adjured Wilson to take his pulse. 'You're all right,' retorted the doctor, wise to these devices. 'Forget your damned heart.'⁸⁷ Outside, the climate was crisp and sunny; indoors, the static electricity crackled between fingertips and doorknobs.⁸⁸ London was never like this.

Addressing Canada's cabinet war committee Churchill confessed that 'he literally danced when he learned that Japan had attacked America.' He doubted that the Japanese could take Singapore – the fortress could hold out for six or eight months, he felt. In further remarks he prophesied that the Japanese would perhaps approach one side of India, and Hitler on the other. He was prepared to see the United States withdraw all her ships from the Atlantic to the Pacific; but 1943 would be the year of liberation, rescuing the countries the Nazis had overrun. He revealed to this select audience that the people had not been told the full story of Pearl Harbor – the American losses were much worse than they had been told. When Mac-

kenzie King gently raised the issue of Canada's lack of influence on strategic planning, Churchill spoke with feeling about the abrupt way that Casey, of Australia, had spoken to him only yesterday in Washington.⁸⁹

Over lunch with Mackenzie King and his cabinet there was little drinking. (Canada's abstemious, God-fearing prime minister had years earlier found Churchill quaffing hotel champagne at eleven A.M. and never forgot it). Churchill was, as even his doctor could see, largely uninterested in this upright Canadian statesman, while the hard-drinking Roosevelt had cast a spell on him.

Not that he was uninterested in the soldiers that Canada could provide: referring to the need that Britain would have for more manpower 'if much slaughter came,' he afterwards pressed Mackenzie King again to allow conscription, or to form a national government as he had in Britain. (The opposition parties in Canada favoured conscription.)⁹⁰ He dined quietly with Mackenzie King at his old-fashioned official residence, Laurier House. The Canadian prime minister had not altered the house since his revered mother had died; a light burned perpetually before her photographs.

The next day, Tuesday the thirtieth, Winston delivered his speech to the Canadian Parliament. Truly large crowds greeted him all along the route and on the Parliament hill. As they walked together down the Hall of Fame, he whispered to Mackenzie King, 'What I am going to say will be all right.' 'And it was,' concurred Mackenzie King.

THE FLOWERY and stilted oratory was often meaningless in itself, but viewed even now, from afar, it seems as magnificent as a mighty oak in the full blaze of an autumn sun. Contrasting that great man Roosevelt – loud cheers – with the infamous villains in Berlin, Tokyo, and Rome, Churchill announced: 'There will be no halting or half measures, there will be no compromise or parley.'

These gangs of bandits have sought to darken the light of the world, have sought to stand between the common peoples of all the lands in their march forward into their inheritance. They shall themselves be cast into the pit of death and shame, and only when the earth has been cleansed and purged of their crimes and of their villainies will we turn from the task which they have forced upon us, a task which we are reluctant to undertake but which we shall now most faithfully and continuously discharge.

With Vichy France and the islands affair still rankling, he offered his own version of the fall of France – how Paul Reynaud’s government had suggested a solemn compact not to make a separate peace, how they had broken it in June 1940 and had even declined to take their government to North Africa to fight on.

‘But their generals misled them,’ scoffed Churchill. ‘When I warned them that Britain would fight on alone, whatever they did, their generals told their prime minister and his divided cabinet: “In three weeks England will have her neck wrung like a chicken.”’

‘Some chicken!’ hooted Churchill. And, as the laughter turned to cheers, ‘Some neck!’

It was a strong speech, as Halifax, listening to the broadcast observed; and ‘much better than the one he made at Washington.’ (Opinions on this differed: Mackenzie King personally thought it not as good: the delivery had showed evidence of fatigue, but this Canadian statesman took meticulous pains to avoid giving offence to anybody).

Churchill spoke of the gallant Dutch, who were still fighting at Britain’s side: ‘But the men of Bordeaux, the men of Vichy, they would do nothing like this. They lay prostrate at the foot of the conqueror: they fawned upon him.’ ‘Their only guarantee,’ he triumphed, ‘is Hitler’s good faith which, as everyone knows, biteth like the adder and stingeth like the asp.’ For one moment he lapsed into Churchillian French – the ploy suggested to him by Mackenzie King – drawing prolonged applause.⁹¹

An official group photograph was taken afterwards; as he left the Speaker’s apartment, Churchill regretted out loud that the Opposition Members had been left out, and he again pleaded with Mackenzie King to form a national government.

The Canadian replied that when he had discussed this with Richard Hanson, the Opposition leader had pointed out that he had been elected to oppose Mackenzie King. In the Speaker’s apartments afterwards, Churchill found Mr Karsh, Ottawa’s society photographer, waiting for him. Karsh plucked the cigar from his eminent subject’s jaw; the resulting defiant scowl produced what was arguably one of the best portraits of Britain’s wartime prime minister.⁹²

They repaired to Laurier House for dinner. ‘After dinner,’ Mackenzie King dictated in his diary, ‘to show how frisky he was, Churchill would not come up in the elevator but ran upstairs fairly fast to the first floor.’ ‘He found after that,’ he added, ‘it was as well to go easy.’⁹³

IN FAR-AWAY Malaya, the Japanese troops were now bearing down on the British empire's fortress at Singapore. The defenders had few weapons and no modern aircraft. 'If Malay Peninsula has been starved for the sake of Libya and Russia,' Churchill defiantly cabled to Mr Attlee, rather speciously combining Singapore with the latter, happier theatres of war, 'no one is more responsible than I, and I would do exactly the same again.'⁹⁴

At eleven A.M. the next day, December 31, answering newspapermen's questions before departing Ottawa by train, he expressed continued confidence that Singapore could hold out. A journalist asked if he had received any peace feelers from the Axis powers. 'We have had none at all,' the prime minister said, adding: 'But then I really think they must be hard pressed for materials of all kinds, and would not want to waste the paper and ink.'⁹⁵

They left Ottawa at three P.M.⁹⁶ Through steamed-up windows rimed with layers of frost he could see the white-iced Canadian countryside float by. Sometimes the locomotive's steam-whistle howled, there was a brief Doppler of clanging bells, and he glimpsed knots of people standing at crossing gates, waving as the train rattled past. He wondered how they knew he was aboard. On one slow incline he fancied he saw an old Canadian of seventy or more, white-haired, ramrod erect, searching each window as it crawled past him until their eyes met; the stranger doffed his hat to the empire's first minister.

As midnight approached, and with it the New Year, the train was hammering the railroad tracks of New England. The American reporters invited him into their dining car. A well-oiled cheer greeted him. Some of the reporters were in bathrobes and slippers, he himself in his siren suit. Jackie Martin, picture editor of the *Chicago Sun*, was momentarily awed. 'It was the Teddy bear suit,' she wrote to a friend a few days later, 'the ruddy cheeks, the white hair, and the slightly bowed head. His hand was reaching for the glass. . . We cheered lustily for it was midnight. It was 1942.'⁹⁷

'To the New Year!' announced Churchill. 'Here's to a year of struggle and peril, and a long step forward.'

He puffed at his cigar, linked arms with Sir Charles Portal, Tommy Thompson, a British reporter and some Americans to sing *Auld Lang Syne*; then raised a pink and chubby hand for silence. 'May we all come through safe,' he cried, 'and with honour!'

He flipped them a V-sign and vanished to his stateroom.

15: *The Completest Intimacy*

CHURCHILL'S PROPOSAL to allow President Roosevelt to establish a seat of supreme command in Washington aroused consternation among his colleagues in London. The cabinet felt that the prime minister had swallowed Roosevelt's scheme with too much enthusiasm. General Sir Alan Brooke, the C.I.G.S., candidly described the whole scheme as 'wild and half-baked,' and noted that it catered for only one area of action, the Western Pacific, and only one enemy, Japan.¹ 'The whole thing is incredibly sketchy,' wrote one minister.² Brooke recorded that the cabinet was 'forced to accept P.M.'s new scheme owing to the fact that it was almost a "fait accompli." He could not fathom why, with America's forces as yet unprepared, Britain should abdicate central control to Washington. He shortly found more flaws: Churchill's draft charter placed Burma under Wavell's command, but not China, Australia, or New Zealand. It seemed a most unsatisfactory structure.

Churchill was instinctively relying on less tangible values. He was forging a relationship with the president, involving a special closeness and even an intimacy – an intimacy which he would put on display on the first day of this New Year, 1942.

AT MIDDAY ON January 1, 1942 Churchill's train puffed back into Washington.³ He repaired to the White House for an immediate hot bath, and sent for his shorthand writer, Patrick Kinna, while still going about his afternoon ablutions. This was nothing new. John Martin and other private secretaries had been subjected to the same male-bonding ordeal, but not, so far, a foreign head of state. After a while, the president was announced. The P.M. stepped from the bath into a towel held by his valet, but he casually allowed this to drop while pacing the room and continuing his dictation.

He affected not to hear the knock at the door. Roosevelt was wheeled in. Churchill is said to have exclaimed, 'You see, Mr President, I have nothing to conceal from you.'

This bathroom incident became the talk of many tongues in Washington. At the state department, Adolph Berle reported it in his diary.⁴ From the British embassy, Lord Halifax communicated it to Eden in these words: 'Winston . . . has got onto the most intimate terms with the president, who visits him in his bedroom at any hour and, as Winston says, is the only head of State whom he, Winston, has ever received in the nude!'⁵ Newspaper columnist Arthur Krock noted the little episode for his own files.⁶ Churchill himself was still boasting of it ten years later.⁷

Roosevelt was holding a document. He said that he had noticed Churchill fumble once during his broadcast speech, trying first the phrase 'Allied nations,' and then 'Associated nations.' F.D.R. said he had mulled this over. 'How about "United Nations"?' he asked. Churchill reached for the towel. 'I think you've got the answer,' he said. Roosevelt wrote the heading onto the document. 'Joint declaration by the United Nations,' and that is how it would go into history. At the back of his mind was the process – not entirely dissimilar – whereby the United States had been named in 1776.⁸

The great American took his guests out that afternoon to a service at the church in Alexandria where George Washington had been a sidesman, then on to Mount Vernon for Winston to lay a wreath at Washington's tomb. ('I think there will be photographers there,' the prime minister told Lord Halifax, eager that no moment of summit intimacy should go unrecorded). 'Winston,' wrote the ambassador, 'gave the president for his general betterment a short lecture on India, which he did quite well.'⁹

Over after-dinner drinks the Joint Declaration on the United Nations was finalised by Churchill, Roosevelt, Litvinov, and the Chinese ambassador.¹⁰ Once more the ghost of de Gaulle dogged the ceremony: Hull stayed away, still sulking. 'His antagonism to the Free French,' observed Hopkins, 'is very deep-seated and he still believes there is some way we can get on with Vichy.'¹¹ There were other problems. The Dutch government found that Washington was announcing that agreement had been reached on commands in the Far East with their concurrence, 'when that concurrence had not in fact been obtained.' Litvinov objected to two words, '*or authorities*,' being inserted in the final paragraph, after the words, 'The foregoing declaration will be adhered to by other nations . . .' Churchill heatedly exclaimed that Litvinov was not much of an ambassador if he didn't have the power to

authorise such trifling additions. 'We are in a war,' he said. 'And there is no time for long-winded negotiations.' Litvinov still demurred and the words were dropped.¹² A few days later he made to Hopkins the malevolent prophecy that Winston would 'not be very useful after the war was over.'

The phrase 'United Nations' did however prove useful. Churchill used it immediately, in a message to Cordell Hull agreeing to put pressure on de Gaulle if he refused to withdraw from the islands. A handful of Canadians, he wrote, would remain 'to make sure that the important radio station shall not be used contrary to the interests of the United Nations.' He proposed issuing a joint statement, he said, that the general had taken his action 'in the face of the declared orders of the British government.'¹³

There were conferences on war supplies on January 2 and 3, 1942, but Churchill was happy to leave these negotiations to Lord Beaverbrook. The Canadian persuaded the president to set inflated American war production targets for 1942: the arms manufacturing expert William S. Knudsen was planning to turn out thirty thousand tanks in 1942 – Beaverbrook persuaded Roosevelt to aim at forty-five. Instead of 12,750 aeroplanes, the United States would plan to produce forty-five thousand in 1942, and even more splendid targets were set for 1943. Informing London of these figures, the prime minister praised Beaverbrook as 'magnificent.'¹⁴

'WE LIVE here as a big family,' he cabled on January 3, 'in the greatest intimacy and informality.'¹⁵

Before he left Washington Roosevelt called a conference on future operations at five-thirty P.M. on Sunday January 4 in his upstairs study. Henry Stimson raised the prospect of packing American forces into Northern Ireland to release the three British divisions there. Churchill spoke of the 'tremendous importance' of beginning this movement, MAGNET, at once. When discussion turned to GYMNAST, the prime minister's own plan for an expedition to French North-West Africa, there was little American enthusiasm. Stimson listed the 'cardinal objections and problems,' as he saw them. For ninety minutes they examined ways of accelerating the inevitably slow rate of landing troops in North Africa. 'Churchill observed,' the record stated, 'that if we could complete the movement in one month, the opposition (from the Germans) would undoubtedly be small, but that if it takes four months we would probably be blasted out.' The Americans still disliked the whole idea. Stimson commented on the lack of Intelligence data about the region. Roosevelt was no more encouraging. The operation hinged

on getting the Vichy French to invite the Allies in. 'And that,' remarked the president, 'is in the lap of the gods.'¹⁶

The time factor in all this could not be ignored either. Roosevelt had been sobered by news that the Japanese were about to take Manila, capital of the Philippines. In Libya final victory seemed to have eluded Auchinleck after all. The P.M. seemed so reluctant to return to London that President Roosevelt hinted that the Englishman might like to accept the invitation which Edward R. Stettinius, his Lend–Lease administrator, had extended to him to vacation at his secluded beach bungalow in Florida. Sir Charles Wilson endorsed the idea. Thus, taking only the already overworked General Marshall with him – a final 'thoughtlessness' which 'troubled and distressed' Stimson¹⁷ – Churchill's party flew to Morrison Field at West Palm Beach early on the fifth, flying the eight hundred miles south in an army plane, and settled into Stettinius' villa at Pompano Beach.¹⁸

Since it would not do, at this taut pass in Britain's imperial fortunes, for photographs to appear of the P.M. gambolling in the Floridian sunshine, the secret service guarded him closely, and the locals were told that a Mr Loeb, a wealthy invalid, was convalescing at the house. Churchill ordered a D-notice issued to the British press forbidding any mention.¹⁹ He plunged into the sea as naked as the day he was born; he was severely rolled over by rough waves, whereupon he picked himself up and shook his fist at the sea. 'It sounded like Canute,' remarked Halifax in his diary, hearing of this from Roosevelt afterwards.²⁰ For once Churchill forgot even to talk about his heart. 'It was an opportunity,' wrote his private secretary in a letter home, 'for him to clear his mind of various things, but we . . . were of course connected with Washington by telephone; and a courier once, and sometimes twice, a day brought down a pouch to us by aeroplane.'

While reclining in the mellow southern sunlight, as he recalled in his memoirs, Churchill maintained a ceaseless barrage of memoranda. One was about the famine threatening neutral Spain. He invited F.D.R. to 'consider giving a few rationed carrots to the Dons to help stave off trouble at Gibraltar.' The British empire base there was vital to Mediterranean operations.²¹ 'Every day we have the use of the harbour there is a gain,' he explained, 'especially in view of some other ideas we have discussed' – a reference to GYMNAST.²² In a further telegram to Attlee he addressed the concerns about India, to which we shall shortly return.²³ It was here, at Pompano Beach, that he received the secret news that Italian 'human torpedoes' had crippled the battleships *Queen Elizabeth* and *Valiant* at Alexandria.²⁴

He ordered planes sent out from England to reinforce the Mediterranean, even if this meant a 'relaxation' of the bombing offensive against Germany over which question marks still hung. (Alarmed that the enemy might use these 'human torpedoes' against Scapa Flow, he cross-examined Admiral Pound about the patrols there.²⁵)

IN LIBYA the fighting had died down, with Auchinleck denied complete victory over Rommel. In fact the cost of CRUSADER had been cruel. The British had lost 1,200 officers and sixteen thousand men. Nor it seemed had Churchill defeated Britain's critics on Capitol Hill. When Roosevelt now addressed the Congress it was noticed that the mentions of Churchill, and about how well they got on together, evinced not a flicker of applause. There was only token approval of his decision to send American troops to Ireland, and silence again when he asked Congress to appropriate fifty-six billion dollars for the war in the coming year. 'Britain is not popular even yet,' wrote Mackenzie King, 'despite all the heroic resistance she has given.' He deduced that the legislators regarded Churchill as having unduly influenced their president.²⁶ General 'Vinegar Joe' Stilwell, of the U.S. war department, felt the same: 'The Limies have our boys hypnotized,' he recorded on the same day; and two days later. 'We now concentrate on GYMNAST. Everybody sure it's a crazy gamble. Sucked in by British (our air materials still going to England. Our own units strained to zero). The whole goddamned thing is cock-eyed. We should clear the Pacific *first* and then face East.'²⁷

Anthony Eden had meanwhile returned from Moscow to London, having evidently achieved terms of scarcely less intimacy with Stalin than those of Churchill with Roosevelt.²⁸ He told his cabinet colleagues of a dinner party with Stalin at which General S. K. Timoshenko had arrived drunk but turned sober, while General K. E. Voroshilov had arrived sober and was carried out in a stupor at four A.M. 'What does your Winston Churchill do when his field-marshals get as drunk as this?' Stalin had bellowed as Voroshilov collapsed across his knees. A cabinet minister who had seen Churchill approach this condition rather more often than his generals recorded Eden's description with merriment in his diary.

Himself intoxicated by the allures of this new Peter the Great, the British foreign secretary commended to the P.M. all Stalin's claims to the Baltic states Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and asked him to put them before the president. To Churchill, who had drafted the Atlantic Charter barely four months before, such an act was unthinkable. 'If that were done,' his doctor

heard him say, 'it would dishonour our cause.'²⁹ He flashed these truculent words across the Atlantic to his young protégé:

We have never recognised the 1941 frontiers of Russia, except *de facto*. They were acquired by acts of aggression in shameful collusion with Hitler. The transfer of the peoples of the Baltic States to Soviet Russia against their will would be contrary to all the principles for which we are fighting this war...

The same applied to the territories of Romania and Finland on which Stalin had designs. Churchill envisaged instead a complex but democratic process of post-war plebiscites, population transfers, and compensation. 'In any case,' he ruled, 'there can be no questions of settling frontiers until the Peace Conference.' He showed how little he cared for possible Soviet consternation at this stubborn attitude: 'It must be observed,' he reminded Eden, 'that they entered the war only when attacked by Germany, having previously shown themselves utterly indifferent to our fate.' He added, 'No one can foresee how the balance of power will lie or where the winning armies will stand at the end of the war. It seems probable however that the United States and the British empire, far from being exhausted, will be the most powerfully armed economic bloc the world has ever seen, and that the Soviet Union will need our aid for reconstruction far more than we shall need theirs.' 'There must be no mistake,' he thundered in this blunt telegram to London, 'about the opinion of any British government of which I am head.'³⁰ When he 'phoned Lord Halifax later that evening, January 8, the ambassador remarked upon the acerbity of this reply. 'Winston,' he wrote in his diary, 'said he had been greatly surprised with Anthony.'³¹

RESTING IN Florida, Churchill dictated yet another overview of Britain's strategic position. It said little that was new. Since it was for the president's eyes only, it exaggerated as usual the likelihood of a German invasion of Britain in 1942, as 'the only supreme means of escape and victory open to Hitler.' He expressed concern however that General 'von Rommel' as he referred to him, might put up a stubborn resistance in Cyrenaica even now. Hoping to regain the initiative, he defined Britain's task as being to engage Germany in the air whenever possible, since the Allies could replace war-planes faster than Hitler. 'Every German aircraft or pilot put out of action in 1942,' he reasoned, 'is worth two of them in 1943.'

Forewarned by his Oracle, he predicted that Hitler would strike out toward the Soviet oil sources at Baku in the spring. All in all, defeating Germany must definitely come before Japan.³²

Probably while still in Florida he was obliged to review the ugly possibility that Hitler, in violation of the Geneva Agreement of 1925, might unleash not only poison gas, but germ warfare. On the day before Pearl Harbor, Lord Hankey had written to him explaining that the late Neville Chamberlain had authorised him, a few days after Hitler invaded Poland, to commission germ warfare experiments, though strictly from a defensive standpoint. Scientists at the chemical warfare establishment at Porton Down in Wiltshire had begun tests with anthrax in 1940. Both the British and the Americans had developed a second toxin, *botulinum* – of which the merest dot, a two-hundredth of a milligram, would kill a half-pound guinea pig; the scientists at Porton had suggested using it as a poisonous tip for small-arms ammunition. There was a third toxin, code-named ‘L,’ but it required large manufacturing plants. Most probably the Germans would use anthrax, to which there was no known antidote.

Before leaving London for Washington, Churchill had turned the problem over to the chiefs of staff.³³ According to Lord Hankey’s report, Britain could retaliate by scattering across Germany two million cattlecakes steeped in anthrax, and he recommended stockpiling this quantity now. General Ismay insisted however that the defence committee, their political masters, review the grim proposal.³⁴ Sir Archibald Sinclair referred unhappily to earlier such dilutions of their bombing effort, for example to phosphorus wafers designed to ignite Germany’s crops; but the defence committee gave the order at the beginning of 1942 to manufacture two tons of anthrax pellets, under the code name *VEGETARIAN*, provided that there was no possibility that the weapon would ‘recoil upon ourselves or our Allies.’

This was what Churchill was now told; and there, thank God, the matter rested until 1944.³⁵

HE HAD hoped to renew his acquaintance with Wendell Willkie, whom F.D.R. had defeated in the presidential election, before leaving, despite a perceptible reluctance on the president’s part to let him meet any opposition leaders. Since protocol required that all the P.M.’s calls be routed through the distant White House, John Martin, ’phoning from Florida to set up the call, asked the switchboard in Washington to put the call through. The operator connected the call, but not to Willkie. For a few moments of black comedy

the P.M. imagined that he was speaking to the president's opponent, a gentleman with whom Roosevelt was not on fair terms. 'I mustn't tell you on an open line how we shall be travelling,' Martin heard his master say coquettishly. 'But we shall be coming by puff-puff.' Then Churchill flirted more outrageously. 'Can you not join the train at some point and travel with me for a few hours?'

'Whom do you think you are speaking to?' the voice at the Washington end drawled. 'To Mr Wendell Willkie, am I not?' said Churchill. President Roosevelt – for it was he – sternly wished him an enjoyable stay in Florida.³⁶

Churchill had to forego the tryst with Willkie. Aghast at his own *faux pas* he wrote to Harry Hopkins asking for absolution. 'I rely on you,' he wrote, 'to let me know if this action . . . is in any way considered inappropriate.'

FOR MR CHURCHILL'S party, two Pullman cars had been attached to the rear of the regular east coast overnight train to Washington. It was eleven in the morning when he reached the capital.³⁷ His spirits began to sink; with each mile that he now drew closer to London, the war's already lowering horizon darkened. Japanese forces were flooding into Johore in Malaya; they had invaded the Dutch East Indies too. In North Africa, Rommel was not beaten after all. He had eluded the empire forces ponderously pounding after him, and had withdrawn his Panzer army, as it now was, to a new defensive line, thus thwarting General Auchinleck's hopes of evicting the Axis from Libya altogether. 'I am sure you and your armies did all in human powers,' Churchill gloomily consoled the general, 'but we must face facts as they are' – words which implied that he, like General Brooke, was beginning to doubt Auchinleck's appreciations of the enemy's losses.³⁸

A messenger brought round a letter from Lord Halifax. 'You have had the principal share,' the ambassador assured him, 'in the recovery of American morale. . . I don't think you have ever done a better fortnight's work in value!' After this subtle flattery, he amplified what he had said to the P.M. on the 'phone three days before, about the need to placate Stalin. 'You truly say that it is much more easy to deal with the selfish than with the lunatics and the altruists, but it is just because of this that I feel uneasy as to what may be the result of meeting his question [on the Baltic states] by . . . a negative reply.'³⁹

Bearing this advice in mind, Churchill cabled to Stalin: 'I am emphasizing in my talks here the extreme importance of making punctual deliveries to Russia of the promised quotas.'⁴⁰ When he learned however that

Beaverbrook had approved cuts of American aid to Britain in order to meet these quotas, his anger boiled over and in front of Roosevelt he vented it upon his friend. Lord Beaverbrook went off to his hotel room, and wrote out yet another letter of resignation to the prime minister.⁴¹

A further embittered telegram arrived from Australia. 'It is naturally disturbing,' John Curtin complained, 'to learn that the Japanese have been able to overrun so easily the whole of Malaya except Johore. . . It is observed that the 8th Australian Division is to be given the task of fighting the decisive battle.' With the needless Australian losses in the spring Balkan campaign of 1941 uppermost in his people's minds, Curtin urged Churchill to leave nothing undone this time. 'I am particularly concerned,' his message continued, 'in regard to air strength, as a repetition of the Greece and Crete campaign would evoke a violent public reaction.'⁴²

The Balkan fiasco was a sore point for Churchill, and he dictated a glacial reply. 'I do not see,' this read, 'how anyone could expect Malaya to be defended once the Japanese obtained command of the sea and whilst we are fighting for our lives against Germany and Italy.' While he was optimistic about Singapore's defences, he rejected Curtin's other reproaches. 'I do not accept any censure about Crete and Greece.' After admitting the empire's mounting losses in warships and men, he reported that there was ominous news from Auchinleck. 'A heavy battle around Agheila seems to be impending.'⁴³

Later that night the president revived the – for Churchill – increasingly tedious matter of General de Gaulle's seizure of the islands. This was, he felt, an urgent issue, in view of their need to persuade the Vichy French to invite the Allies to invade French North Africa. Large numbers of French officers were making overtures to the Americans, he said: 'Admiral Darlan [the Vichy French prime minister and fleet commander] had asked if he would be accepted into a conference.' The Americans had replied, 'Not under the present circumstances,' but if Darlan brought the French fleet over to the Allies, the situation would of course change.

'United States relations with Vichy have strengthened since [the] German–American war,' Churchill had to advise Eden in a telegram. 'He does not wish to break sharply with Vichy.' After setting out his own proposals for evicting Admiral Muselier's forces from the two islands, he instructed the foreign secretary: 'You should tell de Gaulle that this is our settled policy, and that he must bow to it. He has put himself entirely in the wrong by his breach of faith. If he is to retain any measure of our recognition he

must send orders to Muselier which the latter will obey.' Should the admiral disobey, added the prime minister, Washington was in a mood to use force – 'i.e., the battleship *Arkansas* which the president mentioned, or starvation without stint' – and he himself would not intervene to save de Gaulle from the consequences. 'We shall soon be flitting,' he concluded this hitherto unpublished telegram, 'and I must settle this before I go.'⁴⁴

He supplied a copy of this to Harry Hopkins, and a copy of London's unhelpful response: 'Public opinion here,' cabled Attlee, who was also Leader of the Labour Party, 'would not understand why . . . de Gaulle was not allowed to occupy French territory which welcomed him. People will not appreciate going easy with Vichy.'⁴⁵ Eden told Churchill, 'Cabinet . . . doubt whether it will be possible to obtain his consent and co-operation, and they would feel greatest reluctance to join in coercing him.' How sorely the P.M. now regretted ever having created General de Gaulle.⁴⁶ It was an augury of even uglier difficulties that were to arise with the general at the end of the year.

There remained important negotiations about a 'Combined Chiefs of Staff,' a new body, to be based in Washington, linking the British and American chiefs of staff. Speaking privately with Roosevelt, General Marshall, still unsympathetic to the British, objected to Churchill's proposals for this body. 'The British,' observed Henry Stimson, 'are evidently taking advantage of the president's well-known shortcomings in ordinary administrative methods.'⁴⁷

Privately, Roosevelt promised to send fifty thousand American troops to defend Australia and the South Pacific islands covering its approach.⁴⁸ Libya however was an unexpected setback. 'It looks,' Churchill conceded, meeting Roosevelt and the new Combined Chiefs of Staff on the twelfth, 'as if Rommel might get away.'⁴⁹ He attempted to downplay the significance of this setback. It would, he suggested, give them more time to prepare for GYMNAST. Roosevelt was optimistic too. At a dinner hosted by Churchill at the British embassy that evening, Colonel Knox, secretary of the navy, showed that he too wanted to see GYMNAST prepared immediately; and General Bill Donovan, Roosevelt's 'Co-ordinator of Information' pitched in with them.⁵⁰

Overshadowing all such amphibious operations was their shortage of troop-carrying ships. One evening Marshall asked the prime minister about the two great ocean liners *Queen Mary* and *Queen Elizabeth*, which were to be used as fast troopships. They had life-rafts for only eight thousand men,

but each could carry sixteen thousand American troops. Churchill told the general, 'You must judge for yourself.'⁵¹

On Lend–Lease too, the Americans drew a blank. Once or twice during these final days they had hoped to debate Article VII of the master lend–lease agreement and their insistence on the prohibition of the 'discriminatory' trade practices which were at the core of imperial preference.⁵² Churchill airily sidestepped all such discussions.

On January 13, wagging a cigar and wearing his siren suit, he stepped into Hopkins's room and found Hopkins, himself clad in pyjamas and dressing gown, conferring with Budget Director Harold Smith and Justice James Byrnes. Churchill smoothly steered the talk away from Article VII and the funding of the war, to the art of oratory.

'Byrnes,' recorded Smith in his diary, 'commented to the prime minister upon the skilful manner in which, in both his speech to the Congress and to the Parliament in Canada the prime minister in short, sarcastic words referred to Mussolini.' Churchill acknowledged that he had developed his references to the Duce into an art. 'Sarcasm,' he said, 'to be effective, has to be short.'⁵³



That day, January 13, 1942, a pessimistic dispatch came from Lord Moyne, the Colonial Secretary, on the weakness of the defences of Singapore. Churchill was shocked. 'Why,' he challenged his colleagues in London, in an anguished telegram, 'did not Duff Cooper report the lack of preparations and provision of gas-masks, steel hats, etc., for civil population? These elements of deficiency must have been known to him, before war broke out.'⁵⁴ Later still, a message came from General Wavell, now installed in the Dutch East Indies. 'Battle for Singapore will be [a] close run thing,' this said, 'and we shall need luck in getting in convoys safely...'⁵⁵ The troopship *Mount Vernon* had now docked at Singapore and was unloading nine thousand troops, fifty anti-tank guns and fifty Hurricane fighters – but the latter were still in wooden crates, and would take weeks to assemble.⁵⁶

In the map room, following on the charts the Japanese advance down the peninsula, Churchill fretted. 'What are the defences and obstructions on the landward side?' he signalled to Wavell, and he demanded confirmation that the defenders could 'dominate with Fortress cannon' any Japanese attempt to bring up siege batteries.⁵⁷

The problem lay with the quality of his commanders. Many were Churchill's personal friends. He had balked at the cabinet's recent demand to remove the Commander-in-Chief, Far East, Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham from the New Year's Honours List (he was down for a baronetcy) and he stoutly defended the officer against Australia's fury. Meeting him in Singapore twelve months earlier, Robert Menzies had been shocked at what he found: Brooke-Popham liked to meet visitors coming off the Clipper wearing a pith helmet and with the tail of his khaki bush shirt hanging out. His shoulders were stooped, his sandy hair and moustache wispy and indeterminate. Before sending him out, Menzies learned, Churchill had lunched Brooke-Popham and sent him on his way with these words: 'Hold out to the last, my boy. God bless you. If your grandfather had not broken his neck playing polo at Poona, he would be proud of you this day.'⁵⁸ As recently as October 1, Brooke-Popham had assured the cabinet that a campaign here, in the south, was 'the last thing Japan wants at this juncture:' in his view the Japanese were winding up for a strike against the Soviet Union.

THEY HAD reached January 14, 1942, the last day of their visit to Washington. Perhaps following some remarks passed by the president, Churchill dictated a reminder to him that he had promised to confirm publicly that, despite the recent Bases Agreement, there was to be 'no question' of any transfer of the British West Indies to the United States.⁵⁹ Two years later Roosevelt still chuckled mischievously when he recalled Churchill's anxiety. 'I'm a mixture of Scots and Dutch ancestry,' he quipped, 'and if there is one thing I won't do is buy a headache.' He had learned what these colonies cost the British taxpayer. 'The United States has no desire whatsoever,' he continued, 'to take over these islands. All we want is a small piece of property on each one for bases.'⁶⁰ This, he insisted, was his last territorial demand.

At a farewell White House conference he gabbled through to his colleagues a series of proposals.⁶¹ In addition to the Combined Chiefs of Staff, he proposed to set up Anglo-American boards to allocate raw materials, shipping space, and munitions. 'It was very difficult to appraise them,' grouched Henry Stimson in his diary, 'when they were shot at me in this way.'⁶² The conference rambled across many topics. George Marshall evidently revealed his latent hostility to the British for the first time because General Stilwell, over at the war department, heard almost at once that 'Geo.' had 'ticked off' [displeased] the prime minister 'and got away with it.'⁶³ Marshall warned that the scrambler system for transatlantic telephone

calls assured privacy, but not secrecy. Sir Charles Portal spoke of a British invention ‘which would insure secret radio telephonic transmission.’*

They reverted to GYMNAST. Roosevelt hoped they could launch this as early as May 1942; they idly considered what to do if Hitler got there first. ‘In this case,’ said Churchill, ‘we should make a slash with whatever forces were available and, if necessary, operate on the guerrilla basis.’

Roosevelt ordered Scotch and soda all round.⁶⁴ They drank to the ‘hope of mutual co-operation.’ ‘The time had now come,’ wrote Churchill later, ‘when I must leave the hospitable and exhilarating atmosphere of the White House and of the American nation, erect and infuriate against tyrants and aggressors. It was to no sunlit prospect that I must return.’⁶⁵

The president and Hopkins drove with him through downtown Washington to Sixth-street, where a special train waited on the sidings. They boarded a Pullman car named after explorer Roald Amundsen, and parted.

On the way back to the White House, the president remarked that he was very pleased with the meetings. ‘There was no question,’ noted Hopkins, ‘but that he grew genuinely to like Churchill.’⁶⁶ He was also relieved to see the British go. Later he remarked to Lord Halifax that the prime minister and Beaverbrook were apt to get under each other’s skin, which could be tedious for others. Winston lived on his nerves, observed Halifax; to which Roosevelt replied that he, the president, could and did get away from the war to nature, or to his books, whenever he could.⁶⁷ Hopkins remarked that to have Winston over more than twice a year would be very exhausting – he himself had never got to bed before two or three A.M., as Winston, after finishing with the president, had always gone into his room ‘for one more drink.’ Once, barely four hours later, the door had opened and a barefoot Winston had padded in saying, ‘Have you done anything about what we were discussing last night?’⁶⁸



The British party took off from the naval base at Norfolk, Virginia, in the early hours of January 15 aboard a seaplane, one of the British Overseas Airways Corporation’s new Boeing Clippers. J. C. Kelly-Rogers, the company’s senior flying-boat captain, was at the controls. Stopping at Bermuda, Churchill addressed their parliament, the oldest in the empire.⁶⁹ He pleaded

* See Appendix II.

with the islanders to give all their aid to the establishment of the American bases 'about which,' he later reminisced, 'they were in some distress.'

A battleship was waiting at Bermuda for his party. They all had vivid memories of the stormy outward crossing, however, and Churchill, pleading urgent business in the Mother of Parliaments, persuaded Captain Kelly-Rogers to fly him and a fortunate few onward to Plymouth, England.

The decision provoked some discreet jostling for the other seats. Sir Charles Wilson insisted that a doctor must be aboard. Less successfully Commander 'Tommy' Thompson – no sea-dog, he – persuaded a BOAC steward to change places with him, only to be thwarted by the captain. Pound and Portal dwelt on the risks of air travel, until Churchill invited them to accompany him. Eventually much baggage had to be left behind.

The Clipper traversed the three thousand three hundred miles to Plymouth at nine thousand feet, cruising at a stately two hundred miles per hour.⁷⁰ Churchill, still 'fording the might Arpes river' in his mind,⁷¹ ever the adventurer, subsequently thrilled readers with his account of how the boat only barely got airborne at Bermuda – 'I must confess that I felt rather frightened' – and came within five minutes of the enemy flak batteries at Brest. R.A.F. Fighter Command, he further claimed, reported the B.O.A.C. Clipper 'as a hostile bomber squadron' and scrambled six Hurricane fighters to shoot it down. 'However they failed in their mission.'

This embroidery upon a valiant flight, while attracting the awe of subsequent biographers, finds no sustenance in the archives.⁷²



'Trust me to the bitter end!'

President Roosevelt's farewell words rang in Churchill's ears as his special train left Plymouth for London.⁷³ The *Daily Express* that morning had front-paged a news story about a feature in *Life* exposing the military weakness of Singapore; it was a damning indictment of the empire's civil servants in Malaya. 'There seems to be plenty of snarling,' the P.M. remarked wearily to Sir Charles Wilson.⁷⁴

His ministers – Brooke called them 'a queer crowd . . . in black slouch sombreros and astrakhan collars' – elbowed each other for the best positions on the platform as the train drew in to Paddington.⁷⁵ He was indeed, assessed one critical observer, a great man to have established such dominion over his colleagues, 'even if they are a poor lot.'⁷⁶

The photos showed the prime minister in good form. 'He may need it for the debate on Tuesday,' wrote one newspaperman, studying the prints.⁷⁷

Churchill related his American experiences to his six p.m. cabinet. He told them of the White House's proposals to pool resources and to agree upon Hitler as 'our major enemy.' 'An Olympian calm,' he reported, 'had obtained at the White House. It was perhaps rather isolated,' he continued, adopting a tone more critical of transatlantic methods. 'The president had no adequate link between his will and executive action.' Thus Roosevelt's meetings with Stimson and Knox had been too informal. On the other hand Harry Hopkins's instincts were 'fundamentally sound,' he believed, and the Americans were 'not above learning from us – provided that we did not set out to teach them.'⁷⁸ The United States had clearly struck a most sympathetic chord in this product of Anglo-American breeding. 'Curiously enough,' observed one shrewd cabinet minister in his diary, 'he never said a word about Canada.'⁷⁹ He did seem however to have attained the 'completest intimacy' with Roosevelt.

Some of the more prickly issues had been left in abeyance. Imperial preference was one. During Churchill's absence, Beaverbrook and Amery had held out against any form of compromise, and most of their cabinet colleagues opposed any weakening of imperial preference in return for Lend-Lease. Amery warned of the terrible sense of betrayal that would run through the empire, if the reward for its sacrifices in this war was to be the disbanding of its very economic basis.⁸⁰ Anthony Eden however, backed by Lord Halifax in Washington, inclined to the American view.⁸¹ Churchill equally feared to upset the Americans. He hoped the problem would go away, comforting the cabinet on his return from Washington in January with the remark that it was all 'just a fad of Cordell Hull's' and it could be left until after the war.⁸²

THE POLITICAL crisis at home could not be so easily disregarded. Chill tidings of distant disasters were gusting down Fleet-street; the editors knew by now that Singapore's water supply came from the mainland, so it could not hold out for long. On January 18 the Japanese announced that they had captured the empire's last airfield and were fifty miles from the fortress. The House was in uproar. Harold Macmillan sensed that its Members were as 'disturbed' as at the time of Norway.⁸³ The Conservative Chief Whip, James Stuart, hinted at changes in the government, including even the discharge of Churchill's son-in-law Duncan Sandys and Lord Cherwell, as the

Prof. was now styled. Late that evening Downing-street announced that the prime minister would not be speaking in the debate on Tuesday the twentieth after all, but perhaps a week later – and perhaps not even then.⁸⁴

He would have to address both the House and the nation. He had cabled plaintively from Washington a week earlier about this 'burden of my having to deliver the speech again on the 9 o'clock broadcast.'⁸⁵ He hoped, since he loathed broadcasting, to have the speech to the House recorded and broadcast. Emboldened by his absence the cabinet rejected his plea. When he raised it again in person on the nineteenth, and called for a show of hands, he found he had persuaded them after all.⁸⁶ (The House, jealous of its privileges, still refused to allow the broadcast).

ON MONDAY morning, January 19, the real Far East nightmare began, with General Wavell's response to Churchill's inquiry about Singapore's defences.⁸⁷ The Japanese were now claiming to be less than twenty-five miles from the fortress; Churchill now learned that Singapore had no defences whatsoever in the rear, against a crossing of the Johore Straits.

Bad enough that the Japanese had made such rapid progress through Johore, although he had been assured that it would be waterlogged for months; it now emerged that Singapore's guns were all directed out to sea. Angry metaphors danced in his head – exhausted troops retreating upon an 'almost naked island,' a battleship without a bottom. 'I cannot understand how it was that I did not know this,' he wrote years later.

Wavell's telegram, which was dated three days earlier, staggered him. In a towering rage he thrust it into 'Pug' Ismay's hands. The general could scarcely believe his eyes. 'You were with the Committee of Imperial Defence for several years,' challenged the P.M. 'Why did you not warn me?'⁸⁸ Ismay had taken for granted that the local command would provide for landward defences. The local commander, Lieutenant-General Arthur Percival, had done nothing.

Sending for a secretary, the prime minister dictated a crisp memorandum, directed as much at the unreasoning glare of History as at the chiefs of staff to whom it was formally addressed: 'What is the use,' this asked, 'of having an island for a fortress if it is not to be made into a citadel?' It was elementary, he wrote, to construct even in peacetime a defence line of searchlights and crossfire combined with barbed-wire entanglements and the swamps, and to enable the fortress guns to dominate the land approaches in Johore. Britain had spent twenty years building this fortress, and these

measures had occurred to nobody – least of all of course to himself: ‘How is it that not one of you pointed this out to me?’ He demanded the names of those who had promised that the terrain north of Johore would be waterlogged, an opinion ‘so violently falsified by events.’

This neglect had now put Singapore ‘at the mercy of 10,000 men breaking across the Straits in small boats.’⁸⁹

He set out a sombre ten-point plan to salvage the situation – proposals for minefields, artillery, and defensive works on which ‘the entire male population’ was to labour, and for a resolute defence of the island point by point, with the city itself ‘defended to the death.’

In no mood for mercy now, he dictated: ‘The Commander, Staffs, and principal Officers are expected to perish at their posts.’

LUNCHING AT Buckingham Palace he evidently said nothing about the staggering news from Singapore, but reassured his monarch that he was confident of ultimate victory. The United States were longing to ‘get to grips’ with the enemy. That was his trump card. Their two nations, he said, were now ‘married’ after months of ‘walking out.’⁹⁰

By six P.M. he had learned that the Navy had failed to send even a corvette to prevent the Japanese from leap-frogging southwards down the Malay peninsula’s west coast in the unarmed boats and barges which they had rounded up. At a rambling and unhappy three-hour cabinet he ‘blew up,’ as Leo Amery wrote. ‘Whatever else happens,’ Churchill said, ‘Singapore must be fought to the last and everything then destroyed.’⁹¹ He had obviously written off Malaya.⁹²

The prime minister was at no loss to find proper scapegoats. ‘I had been for eleven years out of office,’ he wrote to John Curtin, replying to Australia’s reproaches that Singapore was not ‘impregnable’ after all, ‘and [I] had given ceaseless warnings for six years before the war began.’ As though this mattered now, he blamed their weakness on years of Labour Party misrule. ‘The blame . . . rests with all those who, in or out of office, failed to discern the true Nazi menace and to crush it while it was weak.’ He urged the Australian leader not to be dismayed or stoop to recrimination. ‘I cannot offer any guarantees for the future,’ he dictated, ‘and I am sure great ordeals lie before us, but I feel hopeful, as never before, that we shall emerge safely and also gloriously from the dark valley.’⁹³ On occasions like these, his telegrams became orations before unseen audiences, with imaginary applause comforting his ears.

Fortunately General Wavell, as Supreme Commander, now came jointly under the orders of Washington and London, which gave Churchill an excuse for avoiding sending 'instructions,' while he could, as he notified Wavell that night, still proffer suggestions or ask questions. And so, in an echo of similar orders issued by other great dictators in this now global war, he colourfully directed Wavell to defend 'every inch,' to destroy 'every scrap of material,' and to surrender only after protracted fighting 'among the ruins of Singapore city.'⁹⁴

SNUFFLING AND pink-faced with a common cold on January 20, 1942, he made his first brief appearance in Parliament since Washington.⁹⁵ The Members gave him an unenthusiastic response. No one rose to his feet. He proposed they postpone any debate on the Far East for a week, and indicated that he might then ask for a vote of confidence. This ploy did not go down well.⁹⁶ The House roasted him. His request for their permission to record his speech aroused such ill feeling that his Labour colleagues obliged him to abandon the project; this was in fact the first parliamentary setback since becoming prime minister.

Once again however the backbench criticism seemed to be less of Churchill than of his colleagues. His Parliamentary Private Secretary Harvie-Watt warned him that the Party's 1922 Committee was demanding ministerial changes. Over lunch Eden urged him to rejuvenate his cabinet, dispensing with Kingsley Wood, Margesson, Arthur Greenwood, and Amery, and bringing in the left-wing, ascetic Sir Stafford Cripps. In a revealing reply, Churchill remarked that he would be reluctant to let Kingsley Wood go – 'I'd rather have a cabinet of obedient mugwumps,' he said, 'than awkward freaks!'

The Far East overshadowed everything. Churchill feared that by throwing all their reinforcements and aircraft into a losing battle in Malaya, they might forfeit the strategically vital Burma Road too. This was certainly the view that Sir Reginald Dorman-Smith, the Governor of Burma, expressed in a message sent round to him that morning.⁹⁷ On January 21 he read a further telegram from Wavell, painting an even gloomier picture about Singapore. 'I doubt,' signalled Wavell, 'whether island can be held for long once Johore is lost.' He confirmed that its guns could fire only seawards. He himself flew to Singapore. 'If all goes well,' he stated, after reporting on plans to bring in troops from Johore, 'hope prolonged defence possible.'⁹⁸

Facing tough decisions, Churchill asked the chiefs of staff whether, if Singapore were doomed, they should not 'at once blow the docks and bat-

teries and workshops to pieces' and abandon the ruins to the Japanese, falling back upon Burma. 'This question,' he wrote, 'should be squarely faced now and put bluntly to General Wavell.'⁹⁹ At six P.M. he told them in person that he saw no point in sending reinforcements if there was no reasonable chance of holding the fortress.¹⁰⁰ At a subsequent defence committee, held after dinner in the underground Cabinet War Rooms, he repeated that Wavell, as Supreme Commander, would have to ponder whether Burma was not now more important.¹⁰¹ But there was the rub: Since only the Combined Chiefs of Staff, in Washington, could now issue orders to Wavell, the P.M. had to state the issue to him as a question.

He was feeling hung-over and miserable. In a play for sympathy, he appeared in the bunker wearing a green and crimson, gold-embroidered dressing gown, as one minister described: 'He only wanted a turban to make it complete!' The contrast between this Göring-esque costume and the sombre suits and uniforms of the others highlighted the difference between his florid oratory and their sober, precise statements. Australia's representative Sir Earle Page droned in an almost inaudible, nasal, monotonous twang; Churchill was beginning to dislike the Australians, with all the Irish and criminal impurities in their blood. Toward midnight a rude telegram came from John Curtin, challenging his proposal to allow Australia only junior representation on the Far East councils in London and Washington. Churchill tossed the telegram aside, observed Leo Amery, and stalked out declaring: 'Let them do what they like.' 'Winston,' summarised Amery, 'has no sympathy for the empire idea anyway, or understanding of it, and wants to run this war alone and through the president.'¹⁰² Joining Churchill for drinks afterwards, Beaverbrook, Eden, and the First Lord urged patience toward Australia. 'Winston,' wrote Eden that night, 'was tired and depressed, for him. His cold is heavy on him.' Churchill remarked with fatalism that 'the bulk of the Tories hated him.' He would be delighted to yield to another prime minister, he said.¹⁰³

The Australians, the House, Malaya – all these things together were more than any mortal could reasonably endure.

SECONDED BY Eden and Major Morton, Churchill now squared up to the Free French problem. At five P.M. on January 22 he met de Gaulle and René Pleven, and heatedly explained to them that since President Roosevelt so disposed he could not allow the disputed islands to be transferred to Free French control. 'We cannot,' he said, 'allow anything whatsoever to com-

promise our relations with the United States.' He proposed free elections, and the demilitarisation of the islands. He stipulated that they would remain French but he avoided defining which France he was referring to. De Gaulle's chagrin was huge. When the general alluded to their 1940 agreement, Churchill turned to ice: he had signed that, he said, in the belief that de Gaulle would be able to rally the French against the enemy. This had not, he said, been the case.¹⁰⁴ Bill Donovan, the American Intelligence chief, learned of the meeting. 'De Gaulle,' he wrote, 'has had a stormy interview with Churchill . . . His position is still unsettled.'¹⁰⁵ That was an understatement. His vanity gravely *blessé*, the Free French general sent a largely fictitious account of the meeting to his Fleet Commander, Admiral Muselier.

Citing de Gaulle's 'lies and inadmissible methods' and his unbridled 'thirst for power' as the reasons, Muselier would resign on March 3. De Gaulle placed him under close arrest for 'mutiny,' and a wave of resignations from the Free French navy followed.

THE COMING debate preyed on Churchill. He reacted disagreeably to each new scandal reported from Malaya. 'This really is not good enough,' he wrote sharply to Admiral Pound; for the Japanese to gain command of the west coast of Malaya despite not having one ship in the region was 'one of the most astonishing lapses recorded in Naval history.'¹⁰⁶ He found the new A.B.D.A. command set-up highly inconvenient, but told his cabinet, 'It is no good appointing a Supreme Commander if you spend your time teaching him to Supreme Command.' That said, he succumbed to temptation and sent off several telegrams to Wavell.¹⁰⁷ That Friday, January 23, he sent Beaverbrook over to Fleet-street to soften up the editors. Beaverbrook told them of how Churchill had dominated everyone at Washington, and of how he himself had persuaded Roosevelt to pitch higher production targets. Churchill had sent everything possible to the Far East, Beaverbrook loyally declared. ('Apparently some time after Pearl Harbor,' noted Cecil King.¹⁰⁸)

Setting out across the snowy roads to Chequers, Churchill took with him only his wife and a private secretary, as he wanted to work up his opening speech for Tuesday's debate. He slaved at it until four A.M. that night, then again until 3:20 on Saturday night and until 3:40 A.M. the night after that.¹⁰⁹ Sir Charles Wilson, Nurse Campbell, and the masseuse Miss Roper stood by. On Saturday he lunched with Captain William Tennant of His Majesty's late battle-cruiser *Repulse*. The disaster in the Far East beset all his waking hours.

Earle Page had meanwhile transmitted to his government in Australia word of the defence committee's deliberations on Singapore. It seems that Churchill had not realised that Page was among his listeners.¹¹⁰ On Saturday, January 24, he received a blistering message from Canberra. 'After all the assurances we have been given,' charged Curtin, 'the evacuation of Singapore would be regarded here and elsewhere as an inexcusable betrayal.' Had not Churchill himself always regarded this island – although barely the size of the Isle of Wight – as a 'central fortress' in the empire? Australia had kept her share of 'the bargain,' he said; he now called upon Churchill to do the same.¹¹¹ There was no more talk of abandoning Singapore after that.

CHURCHILL'S UNEASY relationship with Lord Beaverbrook, Minister of Supply, was coming to an end. Plagued equally by asthma and ambition, impulsive and unpredictable, and unbridled in his own pursuit of power, the press lord had squirmed under the constraints of cabinet office. His newspapers were noisily championing Australia's cause and publishing the most unhelpful reports on Singapore. Churchill found that he could no longer work with him; but he feared he could not work without him either. Clementine pleaded with her husband to rid himself of Beaverbrook's baleful influence, at least while down at Chequers. In Whitehall he was disliked. Inquiring into the inferior tanks produced by Beaverbrook's methods, Lord Hankey was horrified by the hatred which Beaverbrook inspired, and he warned Sir John Anderson that he would have to be 'got rid of.'¹¹² Bevin could not stand him. General Brooke recorded, after the minister 'phoned him about the two-pounder guns in the Middle East, '[I] do not trust him a yard.'¹¹³ Such was Beaverbrook's unhappy reputation at the start of 1942.

What else could Churchill do however? Although he balked at including the more left-wing ministers in his cabinet, he could no longer ignore Sir Stafford Cripps, who had returned from Moscow; he invited him down to Chequers for Sunday luncheon, and asked whether he would accept the ministry of supply.¹¹⁴ Clementine glowed, but only momentarily as Lord Beaverbrook came down later that same day and she erupted in fury. It was, after all, her first weekend with her husband since Washington. The P.M. left her in no doubt that a nagging wife was not what he needed right now. She penned a contrite reply. 'I am ashamed,' this began, 'that by my violent attitude I should just now have added to your agonising anxieties.' She begged him to leave 'Lord B' out of any reconstruction: 'It is true that if you do he may (& will) work against you – at first covertly & then openly.' Was this

not preferable to 'intrigue and treachery' from within, she asked. 'Now that you have (as I understand) invited Sir Stafford, why not put your money on him?' She believed that Beaverbrook's temper was a product of his jealousy of Cripps – a personality so superior in intellect. 'Try ridding yourself of this microbe . . . in your blood,' she wrote, betraying unconcealed animus toward the Canadian. 'Exorcise this bottle-imp & see if the air is not clearer & purer – you will miss his drive & genius, but in Cripps you may have new accessions of strength.'¹¹⁵ It was wise and loving counsel.

The next day Beaverbrook cannily recommended Cripps to accept the prime minister's offer – but warned him that Churchill intended to exclude the ministry from his war cabinet. That did the trick. Cripps turned the offer down, writing to the P.M. that he would prefer to undertake special missions, 'as for instance with regard to the Indian question.'¹¹⁶

BEFORE THE weekend was over, deeply unwelcome news arrived from Cairo. Rommel was advancing eastward from Agheila. Auchinleck's report on the twenty-third showed solid confidence but at three P.M. the next day he conceded: 'Once again Rommel has made a bold stroke.' Churchill learned independently that the Eighth Army was preparing to abandon Benghazi and Derna. On Sunday the twenty-fifth he challenged Auchinleck to come clean. 'Have you really had a heavy defeat? . . . It seems to me this is a serious crisis.' It looked like not only the final failure of *CRUSADER* but a temporary end to plans for *ACROBAT*, the occupation of Tripoli, too.

He was dismayed. He knew of no explanation, except the mechanical shortcomings of the British cruiser tanks – about which Lord Hankey had been warning him. A few days later he reassured Auchinleck that he had complete confidence in him – a message that rather conveyed the opposite sense – but was most anxious to hear from him about the 'defeat of our armour by inferior enemy numbers,' adding: 'This cuts very deep.' Referring to the latest *ULTRAS*, he chided the general: 'You have no doubt seen the most secret stuff about Rommel's presumed intentions, namely: clearing up the triangle, Benghazi–Msus–Mechili and then withdrawing to [a] waiting line about Agheila. This seems to reinforce the importance of our holding on.' Auchinleck responded with a wan admission that Rommel had succeeded 'beyond his expectations and mine.' By February, Rommel would have forced the British back three hundred miles to Gazala and Tobruk.¹¹⁷

Churchill buried himself in drafting the speech he intended to deliver to Parliament. That Sunday night, January 25, a message arrived from Roosevelt

– it is not in either the British or American public archives – and a ‘telephone job’ followed between the two leaders, agreeing that he might announce the Washington agreements about pooling shipping, munitions, and raw materials. Churchill returned to London on Monday afternoon, pleading with his staff to find some morsels of comfort for his speech.¹¹⁸ He reviewed the script on Tuesday morning, lying in bed in his silken dragon dressing gown. Pushing aside the breakfast tray he sent for the C.I.G.S. ‘The few hairs,’ wrote Brooke, ‘were ruffled on his bald head. A large cigar stuck sideways out of his face. The bed was littered with papers and dispatches.’ Winston asked his views on a sentence about the withdrawal of Australian troops from Syria, but ignored Brooke’s request that he omit it, along with a passage about Britain’s continued supply of tanks to Russia.¹¹⁹

Among the incoming papers was General Oshima’s latest report from Berlin to Tokyo, decoded by Bletchley Park.¹²⁰ Ribbentrop had told the ambassador on the fourteenth that despite temperatures often 40 degrees Celsius below zero, the German army had safely reached the winter line. Hitler was already preparing for a major spring offensive. Asked about the situation in Britain, Ribbentrop had responded that he had seen press rumours of Churchill’s resignation, and he believed that Parliament was becoming thoroughly dissatisfied. Oshima inquired whether this might not be a good time to invade England? Ribbentrop claimed that ‘preparations were in full swing,’ but it was impossible to say when it would go ahead. Churchill inked a red line beside this paragraph for Anthony Eden to see.

IN JUNE 1940, privately rebuking Duff Cooper for deriding the Italian army on entering the war,* Churchill had written: ‘It is a well-known rule of war policy to praise the courage of your opponent which enhances your own victory when gained. The Japanese Field Service Regulations specifically enjoin this, and the German War Communiqués follow the practice now.’¹²¹

He followed that policy now, and even his critics had to admire the speech he delivered on January 27 to the House. He defiantly declared that the fateful decisions – like sending the empire’s materiel to Libya and Russia instead of to the Far East – had been his, and he refused to appoint scapegoats (though specifically referring to Duff Cooper by name).¹²² He had remarkable words of praise for Rommel, saying: ‘I cannot tell you what the

* Duff Cooper had also predicted that Mussolini would ‘increase the number of ruins for which Italy has long been famous.’

position at the present moment is on the western front in Cyrenaica. We have a very daring and skilful opponent against us, and, may I say across the havoc of war, a great general.' He spoke for nearly two hours, 'a pretty convincing statement,' wrote one Member of Parliament, while another noted that one could actually feel the wind of opposition dropping sentence by sentence. Coming to Singapore, the prime minister declared, 'It will be fought to the last inch.'

By the time that he had finished, all that remained was a 'certain uneasiness.' 'He thrusts both hands deep into his trouser pockets,' wrote Harold Nicolson, 'and turns his tummy now to the right, now to the left, in evident enjoyment of his mastery of the position.' A *Daily Mirror* journalist remarked that 'the P.M. had the critics in the hollow of his hand.' Witnesses saw him trickle two well-timed tears onto the Dispatch Box as he confessed that he was no longer the man he had been in 1940. The next day Randolph Churchill also rose in his father's defence. That evening the P.M. blurted out to Fred Bellenger, with fresh tears in his eyes, 'He's a fine boy – a grand boy.'

Winding up the debate on the twenty-ninth he spoke with studied charity toward his critics and complimented them on their speeches.¹²³ Reaching his peroration, his tone changed. He became less genial, recorded Nicolson: "I have finished," he says, "I have done," and he makes a downward gesture with his palms open as if receiving the stigmata.'

I offer no apologies, I offer no excuses, I make no promises. In no way have I mitigated the sense of danger and impending misfortunes . . . which still hang over us. But at the same time I avow my confidence, never stronger than at this moment, that we shall bring this conflict to an end in a manner agreeable to the interests of our country, and to the future of the world.

The vote was a total victory for Churchill: 464 to one, a brutal show of parliamentary mastery. 'A most extraordinary reaction' had set in, as Lord Beaverbrook explained to Hopkins.¹²⁴ The Members had delivered a warning to the prime minister – they saw no point in humiliating him.

Winston Churchill rose to his feet amidst cheers and swept out of the building, arm in arm with his wife. He had triumphed, where Chamberlain had stumbled. He heeded not the ticker tape chewing out of the glass-cased machine in the hall: Rommel's desert-grimed soldiers had re-entered Benghazi: the Japanese were now only eighteen miles from Singapore.

16: *Poor Winston*

DOMESTIC INTELLIGENCE reports showed that Churchill's Parliamentary speech of January 27, 1942 had reinforced the public's confidence in ultimate victory. The overwhelming vote, 'Behind the prime minister to a man,' had given genuine pleasure.¹ He knew however that the honeymoon would not last long. President Roosevelt was demanding his pound of flesh for Lend-Lease. The R.A.F.'s bomber effort against Germany had stalled. The squadrons were formally under his orders to 'conserve' strength. Churchill faced defeat in Benghazi, humiliation in Singapore, tantrums from de Gaulle, and, more secretly, worries about his heart.² For days he lay low; he ducked the defence committee session on January 30, 1942 altogether, recorded by Brooke as 'one of the dark days of the war.'³ Clementine wrote to Harry Hopkins that Winston was 'rather flattened out' after 'telling the House of Commons what's what.'⁴

One factor about which he could not speak sustained him. He and Roosevelt, meeting in private, had now taken the necessary steps to begin building an atomic bomb with which to devastate Berlin – that was the explicit purpose. Would the Nazis get this weapon first? It was the German chemists Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassmann who had discovered nuclear fission in December 1937. Alerted by a *New York Times* report that Hitler's physicists were working feverishly on a uranium bomb, the British had begun their own tests. Theory confirmed that a neutron chain reaction could lead to a violent explosion, and in May 1939 a British committee chaired by the scientist Sir Henry Tizard had investigated further. In the spring of 1940 the government had set up the MAUD Committee under Sir George Thomson to investigate the war use of atomic energy. Lord Cherwell had kept Churchill abreast of this investigation. It seemed that the project would be feasible, but prohibitively costly. Although, as the MAUD committee pointed out, 'by

having [the plant] here we should keep full control of what may well prove a major weapon,' it had to recommend in June 1940 that it should be located in Canada or even the United States.⁵ In the United States research had meanwhile begun in mid-1940 under the 'S-1 committee' of the National Defense Research Committee (the NDRC). The experiments carried out by this body suggested that the project would indeed be feasible; in April and July 1941 the NDRC sent two representatives to attend the British meetings and review the British work.

On July 15, 1941 the MAUD committee reported favourably to Whitehall; there were, it seems, no moral compunctions. The physicist Sir Charles Darwin (grandson of the famous evolutionist) inquired of Lord Hankey on August 2 whether, if an atomic bomb was manufactured, governments would ever sanction its use? Nobody seems to have replied.

The ministry of aircraft production sent the report to Lord Hankey on August 27 as chairman of the cabinet's Scientific Advisory Committee. It recommended both a long term 'atomic power' project and a bomb. Calculations indicated that just ten kilograms of uranium-235 might unleash the same destructive energy as 1,800 tons of TNT (the eminent physicist Professor P. M. S. Blackett dissented). Summarising this report to Churchill on August 27, Lord Cherwell suggested that atomic bombs might be produced 'within, say, two years.'

One plane might then carry 'a somewhat elaborate bomb' weighing about one ton equivalent to about two thousand tons of TNT. Cherwell considered the odds to be good. 'It would be unforgivable,' he wrote, 'if we let the Germans develop a process ahead of us by means of which they could defeat us in war or reverse the verdict after they had been defeated.'⁶

Churchill was not inspired by the thought. 'Although personally I am quite content with the existing explosives' he minuted the chiefs of staff, 'I feel we must not stand in the path of improvement.' He approved Lord Cherwell's suggestion, and invited Sir John Anderson, Lord President of the Council and a fine administrator, to be the cabinet minister responsible.⁷ Lord Hankey also recommended on September 24 that Britain go ahead. While biological warfare hid behind the codename VEGETARIAN, the new weapon was named even more innocuously TUBE ALLOYS. In November the prime minister set up a 'Directorate of Tube Alloys.'

Roosevelt, who had got wind of all this, had written to Churchill on October 11, 1941 proposing a joint effort.⁸ In November he sent the American professors George B. Pegram and Harold C. Urey over to Britain; on

Churchill's instructions they were allowed access to all the British laboratories. In December he assured the president of Britain's readiness to collaborate in this matter. What followed in February 1942, and again in June 1942, was truly Britain's most unsordid act as, on Churchill's instructions, her scientists conveyed their atomic project secrets westward across the Atlantic, receiving but little in return.

If he had hoped for reciprocity in other areas, the P.M. was confounded. Roosevelt pressed the acceptance of the American draft of Article VII on Lend-Lease more vigorously than before.



After the impressive parliamentary vote Churchill felt immortal. He hectoring his cabinet into subservience. 'He flew at Amery,' observed Sir Alexander Cadogan after one such meeting, on February 2, 1942. Leo Amery had courteously inquired, 'Is that the view of the cabinet?' Nobody had spoken up except Churchill, who said simply: 'Yes.'⁹ 'The meeting,' recorded Brooke, 'then became a complete parrot-house!'¹⁰

The cabinet had been arguing once again about Article VII and imperial preference. Under pressure from Morgenthau and Hull, Roosevelt refused to let this issue slumber until the war was over. 'I was glad,' recorded Amery, 'to find the Labour Members . . . resentful of what they felt to be an American attempt at blackmail.' That word, blackmail, appears to have been spoken because to Cadogan too the American draft looked like 'impertinent blackmail.' Eden was, once more, outspoken for appeasement: 'The one person,' wrote Amery, 'who clamoured passionately for surrender was Anthony, convinced that if we did not give way we should have worse terms in future.' When Amery asked repeatedly how the terms could possibly be worse he drew no answer.¹¹

Three days later a telegram came from Roosevelt, insisting that any delay in agreeing to Article VII would harm their interests.¹² This got him nowhere. Inviting the U.S. ambassador Winant to Chequers on February 7 (for the first time since Pearl Harbor), Churchill expressed the view, as Winant reported, that while he himself did not believe that the principle of imperial preference served any useful purpose, and he was ready to begin discussions immediately, though outside the scope of the Lend-Lease agreement, on preferences, tariffs, and other post-war questions of economic policy, 'three-quarters of his cabinet' were opposed to Article VII.¹³

Roosevelt cabled him on the eleventh, putting in writing an unctuous assurance that 'it is the furthest thing from my mind . . . to ask you to trade the principle of imperial preference as a consideration for Lend—Lease.'¹⁴ Considering that they had drawn its sting, the British signed the Mutual Aid Agreement, with its ominous Article VII, on the twenty-third. Its language now was nebulous. Two years later Churchill would boast to the House that he first extracted from the president the recognition that Britain was no more committed to the abolition of imperial preference than the American government was committed to the abolition of its high protective tariffs.¹⁵ Be that as it may, within a few years the empire would have gone.

THAT WEEKEND 'C' showed him General Oshima's latest despatch from Berlin to Tokyo. Surveying Hitler's campaign in Russia so far, the Japanese ambassador recalled that Germany had originally estimated that it would take two to three months to destroy the Soviet field army, occupy the industrial regions east of the Urals, and pull out her main combat troops before winter set in. 'This confidence,' recalled Oshima, 'was clearly reflected in Hitler's statement to me on July 14 that the Soviet campaign would be over by September.' Soviet resources and powers of resistance had proven 'unexpectedly great' however. The German army had lost much heavy equipment in the retreats. 'The impression obtained from a number of talks I have had with Hitler is that in view of the setback to last year's operations, he has made full preparations for the coming Spring and he is absolutely determined to try and destroy the Soviet Army with one great blow.' In General Oshima's considered view, Hitler's coming offensive through the Caucasus and into the Middle East would ultimately succeed.

Into the Middle East? Churchill instructed his secret service chief to ensure that a copy of this MAGIC was laid before President Roosevelt.¹⁶



We must now turn briefly to the naval war. For many months – ever since May 1941 – Hitler's battle-cruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* had lurked in harbour at Brest on the Atlantic coast of France; during those months R.A.F. Bomber Command directed forty per cent of its bombing effort at them. By late January 1942 it was plain that Hitler had plans to reduce the risk to those ships. The admiralty expected them to sail at any time; but would Hitler take them home to Germany, or perhaps even fight

them through the Straits of Gibraltar to an Italian port in the Mediterranean?¹⁷

In fact Hitler had decided to transfer them, via German ports, to Norwegian waters, to oppose any British invasion aspirations there. His admirals had advised that the two warships and *Prinz Eugen* must run the gauntlet of Britain's formidable defences dominating the English Channel, even though this would mean forcing the narrow Straits of Dover in broad daylight, at high noon. A more dramatic operation could scarcely be conceived.

There could therefore be no talk of the British being caught unawares by subsequent events. On February 3 Admiral Pound told the chiefs of staff that the Luftwaffe had now concentrated enemy fighters along the Channel coast, which was a hint that Hitler was planning such a move.¹⁸ That day the admiralty notified 'all concerned' in a HUSH MOST SECRET message at 12:52 P.M. that the 'most probable course of action' of the Brest squadron would be 'to break eastward up the Channel and so to their home ports.'¹⁹

On February 5 Germany's Admiral Commanding Battleships, Vice-Admiral Otto Ciliax, hoisted his flag in *Scharnhorst*. British Intelligence read this as indicating 'an impending departure.' Vice-Admiral Bertie H. Ramsay, commanding Dover, put his destroyer force on notice and brought half a dozen torpedo-carrying Swordfish aircraft forward to Manston airfield in Kent. Shortly, enemy minesweepers were detected clearing a route toward the Bight of Heligoland. The British minelayer *Welshman* laid four new minefields across the enemy's probable route, and the admiralty asked Bomber Command to sow mines in five specified areas along the same precise channels; in all, ninety-eight magnetic mines would be laid over the next six days, and Sir Archibald Sinclair made a pusillanimous protest about the admiralty operating his bombers without reference to him.²⁰

Everything possible having been done, Ramsay settled back to wait for the show to begin.

CHURCHILL'S HORIZON was cluttered with broader affairs. The Atlantic Charter, with its pious avowal in Article Three of 'the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live,' had raised dangerous aspirations in India and Burma.²¹ Speaking to the House on September 9, 1941 he had dashed these hopes, declaring in Orwellian fashion to the Members that this applied only to European nations under Nazi rule, and not to 'the development of constitutional government in India, Burma, or other parts of the empire.' There was much bitterness in India over this.

During the prime minister's visit to Washington Roosevelt had lectured him that the British could not hope to rule three hundred million Indians indefinitely. Unduly sensitive on India, Churchill had made a sharp reply and he boasted afterwards that Roosevelt did not ventilate the matter again.²² That had merely shelved the problem however; it had not solved it.

The American people had been largely reared to regard the British empire as an unwholesome anachronism; fifty-six per cent of all Americans believed that Britain was oppressing her colonial populations. Churchill may not have regarded this as an educated opinion, however, since Roosevelt occasionally received letters suggesting he refer the India problem to his Office of Indian Affairs, an unhelpful confusion between his few surviving native Americans and the peoples of the Asian subcontinent. Felix Frankfurter felt that Churchill ought to impress upon the American public the civilising influence of the imperial process, 'and not rouse the embers of old prejudices and misunderstandings by using a shorthand phrase uncongenial to Americans' – *i.e.*, 'British empire.'²³ Not one to mince his language, Churchill's attitude to empire was inspired as much by racial instincts as by economic imperatives. Why did the prime minister have to talk about 'White troops,' lamented Lord Halifax in a letter to Eden, when 'the British Army in India' would have done just as well?²⁴

There was little that distinguished Churchill from his critics over India – he too was committed to granting her eventual independence – but he saw no urgency. With the unrest between Moslem and Hindu stimulated by the Japanese military successes, the worsening crisis in India was serious enough to occupy the war cabinet for several hours on February 5. Leo Amery, Secretary for India, introduced his own proposals, which envisaged Indian participation in these cabinet meetings on the same footing as the Australian. Churchill was in fine debating fettle and sent for Cadogan, who was sitting outside, to witness the performance. The P.M. earned laughter with his comment that an Indian would certainly 'add colour' to their proceedings. On Amery's proposals he 'hummed and hawed,' and he indulged in merciless ragging of his Labour colleagues. 'His whole manner throughout was most puckish,' wrote Amery, mystified, 'with many winks at myself.'

Churchill had prepared his own scheme for India, which he only produced to them after two hours. Broadly speaking, this would expand the Defence Council in India to a body of one hundred elected Members representing the provincial assemblies and princes; after the war, this body would frame the new Indian Constitution. Indeed, he proposed that he

himself should set out for India to consult her leaders – an idea that Cadogan found ‘imaginative and bold.’²⁵ Amery too was taken with the idea. Churchill invited him to Chequers on the seventh to discuss it. The idea had come to him in Washington, in the light of his reception in the U.S. Congress.²⁶

Churchill’s idea was to promise India Dominion status, with the right to secede from the empire if she so wished after the war. Warned of the risk to his reputation if the scheme fell through, Churchill indicated that at least his offer would be on record. By the time he lunched at Chequers that Saturday, Amery had cooled toward the idea, fearing its broader implications. He arrived at the country mansion at midday to find the P.M. still in bed. He looked undeniably older, and confessed that he was now ‘not quite so sure’ that his doctor would allow this new bold adventure. Clementine and his private staff were also concerned. Churchill warmed to the suggestions that Amery had brought with him, about appointing an Indian representative to the cabinet. Over lunch the prime minister pulled his leg mercilessly over his abstemiousness and desire for exercise, and helped himself to several brandies to illustrate to the doctor, another guest, how much better was his own way of life.²⁷

He did not let go of the excursion to India easily. On Monday the ninth he wistfully discussed it with Eden and spoke of throwing in meetings with generals Chiang Kai-shek, of China, and Auchinleck as well. Charles Wilson admonished him that his heart needed respite. The P.M. confessed to Eden that he had recently tried to dance a few steps but had become short of breath. Given that he washed down a large lunch with a beer, three ports, and three brandies this was not surprising. ‘W. did not look well,’ recorded Eden, ‘and yet did himself as well as ever at luncheon. I told him he should lighten his load and suggested an assistant minister of defence who could do the essentials of co-ordination. Winston said that Ismay did that.’²⁸

TO HIS FEAR over his ‘pump,’ as he called his heart, was now added fury about the Far East.

The Japanese were suddenly five miles deep inside Singapore Island: while the feckless General Percival had massed his defenders at the eastern end, the Japanese had crossed the Strait at the western. At his five P.M. cabinet, Churchill let fly about his generals: ‘What will happen if the Germans get a footing here?’ he thundered. ‘Our army is the mockery of the world!’ In front of the whole cabinet he snapped at General Brooke, ‘Have you not got a single general who can win battles?’ Brooke admitted that

Percival probably commanded over one hundred thousand troops, greatly outnumbering the Japanese forces.²⁹

That evening the prime minister set about drafting a Nelsonian telegram to General Wavell, lecturing him on the duty of every man to perish at his post. Toward eleven P.M. he sent for Brooke to assist him. The signal went out at one-thirty A.M.: 'There must at this stage be no thought of saving the troops or sparing the population,' it read. 'The battle must be fought to the bitter end at all costs.' This, he said, was the 18th Division's chance to make its name in history: 'Commanders and senior officers should die with their troops.' With the Russians and Americans fighting so magnificently, he said, 'the whole reputation of our country and our race is involved.'³⁰

He abandoned the idea of flying to India: it would look bad to be out of London when Singapore fell.



Lord Beaverbrook had been among the weekend guests. 'Nothing [he] does,' observed the doctor, Wilson, 'and he is pretty erratic at times, can shake the P.M.'s faith in his genius.'³¹ Something intangible still tied the two men together, although both had difficulty explaining what it was. As a sop to this asthmatic Canadian's ambitions, Churchill had just appointed him minister of war production and invited him down to Chequers on the sixth with the minister of labour to discuss war production.

Ernest Bevin was one of the press lord's most implacable enemies; no man had spoken to him more roughly than Max had. When Beaverbrook now insisted on having control of both labour and merchant shipbuilding, Bevin refused to budge on the former, and A. V. Alexander refused to give up the latter. All this taxed Churchill's patience to the utmost. 'I was altogether too tough,' conceded Beaverbrook a few days later, recalling the bickering of that weekend. 'The discussion became acrimonious.'³²

The prime minister sent Sir Edward Bridges to him with the final draft of a White Paper on Monday, February 10: 'I have lavished my time and strength during the last week,' he wrote, 'in trying to make arrangements which are satisfactory to you and to the public interest and to allay the anxieties of the departments with whom you will be brought into contact. I can do no more.'³³ Bridges told Beaverbrook that the P.M. would allow no change in the wording, and that 'all resignations would be received by 11:00 o'clock' the next morning. Beaverbrook saw Churchill and snapped that he

could have his resignation there and then. 'If we part now,' said Churchill, 'we part for ever.' Beaverbrook wheezed, 'So be it,' and swept out. Churchill sent Bridges after him to urge him not to do anything until next day, and Beaverbrook grudgingly climbed down.

Powered by a deeper instinct for political survival, Beaverbrook continued to criticise Churchill's wider policies. After leaving Chequers on Saturday, he had written an attack on the P.M.'s bombing policy. It was clear from Intelligence reports, he wrote, that the raids had caused only minor damage to German industry.³⁴

On the same date he also inveighed against critics of Stalin's request for recognition of Russia's 1941 frontiers. He blandly described the Baltic states as 'the Ireland of Russia,' knowing the value that Winston had attached of yore to the naval bases in Ireland; and he supported Stalin's claims on Finland and Romania as well.

The result was a row in cabinet on the tenth. Churchill refused to allow him to circulate a paper asking for a decision on the Russian frontiers in line with the P.M.'s own pledge to recognise them, uttered in his famous broadcast of June 22, 1941. Beaverbrook cynically announced that in that case his newspapers would spearhead a campaign in Stalin's favour. Clement Attlee said that he would resign if the Baltic States *were* handed over to Stalin; Beaverbrook retorted that he would resign if they were not. Probably he had already decided that the prime minister was doomed. He determined to give up the new ministry awarded him by Churchill, and go over to the attack.³⁵ Clementine left Winston in no doubt of her implacable hatred of Beaverbrook.

'This has been a pretty wretched week,' Eden remarked in his private notes, 'with [a] growing sense of confusion in the management of our affairs. . . It is impossible to understand what P.M. & Roosevelt arranged as to Pacific Council, nor do either seem to know. . . R's announcement today of two Pacific Councils is in flat contradiction to what Winston told us & the Dutch, who are excusably becoming increasingly exasperated.' What was required, at the very least, concluded Eden, was an independent minister of defence. 'It will be a stubborn fight to get Winston to agree.'³⁶

The prime minister chaired the first Pacific War Council at six P.M. on the tenth.³⁷ The Chinese requested permission to sit in. Churchill considered them a *quantité négligeable*; 'phoning Harry Hopkins that night to tell him of the meeting, he assured him that Roosevelt would always have the primary responsibility for dealing with China.³⁸

He interviewed Cripps at 5:15 P.M. the next day, February 11, but that austere gentleman once more turned down the ministry of supply.³⁹ Cripps continued to agitate subtly in public, and even asked for broadcast time. Churchill shortly decided to hive off to Cripps his own function as Leader of the House (a cabinet post, hitherto performed in fact by Attlee); he would also give him Attlee's office of Lord Privy Seal.⁴⁰ He would compensate Attlee with the Dominions Office and the title of 'deputy prime minister.'

His mood was too despondent to do more than begin the reshuffle: having dealt with Cripps, as he thought, Churchill reverted to the war.

THE LOUDER the Labour Party's clamour grew for the stubborn 'old man' to go, the more obstinate he became. Visiting him on the eleventh, Violet Bonham Carter found him querulous about this criticism, and melancholy about the refusal of Cripps to accept the ministry he had offered him. Singapore was at the root of his gloom: 'In 1915,' he complained to her, 'our men fought on even when they had only one shell left and were under a fierce barrage. Now they cannot resist dive bombers!' The latter criticism, it might be said, sat poorly coming from the Hero of Dytchley. 'We have so many men in Singapore,' he mused. 'They should have done better.'⁴¹

He had sound reasons for despondency. Hitler's submarines had sunk a quarter of a million tons of merchant shipping off America's east coast in two months.⁴² The prospect of launching amphibious operations anywhere receded even further. He now had authentic reports of Japanese atrocities in Hongkong – ghastly mass executions, and multiple rapes of White nurses; he was undecided whether to publish the stories or not.⁴³ He discussed them, and India, with his ministers just before midnight in the Cabinet War Rooms: then reverted to Singapore. He had received General Wavell's latest signal, transmitted from Bandoeng, Java, after his flying visit to the doomed island: 'Battle for Singapore is not going well,' summarised Wavell.⁴⁴



Thus they came to February 12, 1942 – 'the blackest day, yet, of the war,' as Cadogan called it. In London, attention was fixed upon Singapore's last throes, but military calamity was much closer to home.

As misfortune would have it, by that day the codebreakers had been unable to solve the German navy's daily ENIGMA settings for three straight days.⁴⁵ At eleven-thirty that morning, the admiralty suddenly reported that

Scharnhorst and *Gneisenau*, accompanied by the cruiser *Prinz Eugen* and swarms of fighter aircraft and destroyers, were already charging eastward up the English Channel. Despite all the advance notice given by the codebreakers, Admiral Ramsay had been taken unawares. He had expected the enemy to scuttle past during the hours of darkness, and by this noon-time hour he considered the prospect of any breakthrough that day unlikely. At 10:45 A.M. an off-duty radar station carrying out routine maintenance had reported, during a test sweep, an unidentified plot some twenty-seven miles south west of Cap Gris-Nez – the narrowest point of the Channel. A hubbub of radar-jamming interference began, and at 11:25 the admiralty had 'phoned Ramsay with the astonishing news that the German battle-cruisers had been sighted. He had at once thrown all his forces into action – five destroyers, eight motor torpedo-boats, two motor gunboats and every available aircraft. A brave but hopelessly unequal brawl ensued. Every motor torpedo-boat fired off its torpedoes at the big ships, but the boats were ruthlessly beaten off by the German fighter cover, E-boats, and destroyers. At midday Hitler's warships passed within full view of the famous White Cliffs of Dover, an act of breathtaking effrontery.

Only one of the R.A.F. fighter squadrons turned up at the rendezvous to cover the half-dozen Swordfish biplanes. They pressed home their aerial torpedo attack in face of a terrifying gun barrage; few closed within proper range, all were shot down. Then Bomber Command went in, hurling in its squadrons escorted by hundreds of fighter planes. In all, 243 bombers, thirty-three Coastal Command aircraft, eighteen Hurricane bombers and 380 fighters of Fighter Command joined battle; fifteen bombers, three Coastal Command aircraft, and seventeen fighters were shot down in the affray.⁴⁶ Still hounded and harried by these pursuers, the enemy warships escaped into the North Sea, leaving behind only the flotsam and wreckage of these truly valiant British warriors. Admiral Ramsay's operators watched the radar plots fading steadily away to the east. There remained one hope: it seemed that Hitler's naval squadron was heading straight toward the minefields that the bomber squadrons had laid on the previous nights.⁴⁷

KEEP BUGGERING ON! From the cabinet room, Churchill sent for Miss Layton, his secretary. She entered at three P.M. to find him striding up and down. 'He dictated four telegrams like a whirlwind,' she wrote a few days later, 'and then 'phoned this and 'phoned that.' Shortly he slumped into silence, then recalled her for another telegram, which he dictated fists a-clench

with compressed energy. 'There's a bloody great battle going on out there,' he said. 'Do you think we might get them?' she ventured. 'Don't know,' he replied. 'We winged 'em but they aren't dead yet.'⁴⁸

The defence committee met at five P.M. that day. The prime minister had asked Lord Beaverbrook to chair the meeting. The Channel battle was still raging, and there were ninety minutes of daylight left, but Beaverbrook found A. V. Alexander, the First Lord, with Rear-Admiral A. L. Lyster, Chief of Naval Air Services, and the deputy chief of air staff all jawing away at this meeting. Their lackadaisical air made a lasting impression on him. He told his compatriot Garfield Weston, 'The meeting lasted three hours but in all that time not one of the three went to the telephone to find out if the battleships had been hit!' He would have fired the lot. He called round on Winston later. As they whiled away the rest of the evening over a bottle, Beaverbrook's determination wilted. The unfavourable images of the day hardened his scepticism about the war. He decided to have no part of it.⁴⁹

That evening, Cadogan learned over at the F.O. that the British had been unable to 'knock any paint off' the warships. 'We see nothing but failure and inefficiency everywhere,' he lamented, 'and the Japs are murdering our men and raping our women in Hongkong.' By the next day the Nazi warships were in safe havens in North Germany. 'Poor Winston must be in a state,' wrote Cadogan.⁵⁰ 'Poor Winston!' echoed Eden's secretary in his diary.⁵¹ Beaverbrook sent a note to Winston to the effect that only a government reshuffle could forestall public calamity. 'The war is going very badly for us,' he told a friend, then corrected himself: 'Badly for Churchill.'⁵²

The admiralty's Captain Lambe, who had stayed on in Washington for a while, remarked to the ambassador that Churchill had been wrong to talk of the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* 'escaping' from Brest – he should have spoken of their retreat to Kiel. Strategically speaking, there was also much to be said for that point of view. Lord Halifax speculated that if Winston were to float this idea now the public would smell a rat. There was much to be said for that too.⁵³ In the Midlands there was now a rapidly spreading feeling that Churchill himself was the Jonah.⁵⁴

THE DARKNESS of defeat was descending on Singapore. On Friday the thirteenth a telegram from the governor spoke of 'disintegration;' the Australians, he said, were fighting only half-heartedly: a British naval liaison officer later reported the streets were full of debauched soldiers, deserters from their units, NCOs among them, breaking into hotels and shouting,

‘They won’t be long now.’ A great weariness etched into Churchill’s soul. He invited only his closest ‘family,’ which included the Prof. and Bracken, to Chequers. His imagination needed little stimulus to see a million people jammed into a three-mile radius, their water running low, their dead lying unburied in the narrow streets, while fires raged and explosions rocked around them. On Saturday morning he had word from Wavell that General Percival had reported his troops incapable of counterattack.⁵⁵ For once, Churchill allowed Brooke to approve his reply. It instructed Wavell: ‘You are of course sole judge of the moment when no further result can be gained at Singapore.’⁵⁶ The moment came all too swiftly. That Sunday Wavell gave Percival discretion to cease resistance. At eight-thirty P.M., lunch time at Chequers, the ordeal was over. Characteristically, Churchill picked up a ‘phone to speak with Beaverbrook. He needed a real friend to console him.

At nine P.M. he broadcast from Chequers words that were heard around the empire and in the United States. This was his first time before a microphone since August 1941. To those who knew him well, like John Colville, now in South Africa, the voice betrayed the pressures under which the P.M. was living; the former private secretary detected ‘a new note of appeal, lacking the usual confidence of support.’⁵⁷ Against their recent setbacks he set the overriding fact that the United States was now in the war, allowing himself this boast: ‘That is what I have dreamed of, aimed at, and worked for.’ He denied he had failed the Far East by diverting aid to Russia.

How then in this posture, gripped and held and battered upon as we were, could we have provided for the safety of the Far East against such an avalanche of fire and steel as has been hurled upon us by Japan?

He made a colourful appeal for unity, saying that whoever was guilty of weakening that unity, ‘It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the sea.’ He wasted not a word upon the events in the English Channel, but concluded: ‘I speak to you all under the shadow of a heavy and far-reaching military defeat. It is a British and imperial defeat. Singapore has fallen.’ After flinging in some florid words about Race and Nation, the Very Jaws of Death, and the Whole Future of Mankind, he ended: ‘. . . We shall not fail now. Let us move forward steadfastly together into the storm and through the storm.’

The morning newspapers gave his broadcast a frigid reception. Neither the M.P.s nor the country were in a mood to be fobbed off with ‘fine

phrases.'⁵⁸ They were angrier at the escape of the German warships than at the fall of Singapore.⁵⁹ After two and a half years of Churchill, so voices were saying, their forces were still incapable of defeating anybody but the Italians. 'He never was a military strategist,' was one complaint. 'He will not delegate authority,' was another. The plea for unity went down poorly: 'Unity,' people said, 'depends on having the right men in the right places.' Public rumour placed Sir Stafford Cripps in No. 10 Downing-street quite soon – 'people,' the pollsters found, 'are beginning to think of alternatives to Churchill.'⁶⁰

Inviting Eden to lunch that Monday, February 16, he greeted him with the stage direction: 'I am in a truculent mood.' Sensing his own hour coming, Eden urged him to make changes – Greenwood must go: he had the reputation of being an alcoholic; and Cripps, who Eden was sure was no self-seeker, should be brought in. Churchill refused even to consider standing down as minister of defence, explaining that he himself was 'soaked' in it. Later that day, Attlee told Winston that no changes were needed at all: he probably feared the introduction of the left-wing ideologue, Stafford Cripps. 'Anthony,' the P.M. corrected him, 'thinks changes are necessary.'⁶¹

CHEERFUL NEWS reached him from his Oracle. The secret intercepts suggested that, far from escaping unscathed, the German battle-cruisers had run across several mines and suffered serious damage; they could cause no further mischief for six months.⁶² He instantly dictated a message to Roosevelt about this.⁶³ General Brooke accordingly found him in a much better spirit at that evening's cabinet.⁶⁴

They conducted an initial post-mortem into the signals from Bandoeng and Singapore; as Attlee had written to the P.M. that afternoon, these confirmed that the training and fighting passion of the empire's troops had been wanting.⁶⁵ Churchill picturesquely suggested to his colleagues that their troops had forgotten how to march – it was a familiar complaint of his; and that they were over-wedded to mechanisation. He vaguely lamented the White man's general loss of prestige. Talk at the subsequent defence committee rambled on until after midnight: with the latest landings in Sumatra, it appeared that Java too was now all but lost to the Japanese. The Dutch might well ask their Allies to slog it out there however, rather than abandon their precious colony. The P.M. said it was clearly more vital to reinforce Burma and Ceylon, and it would be difficult to refuse the Australian government's request for the return of their three divisions. He

telegraphed to the Governor of Burma warning that the weight of attack would assuredly now fall upon him.⁶⁶

Visiting him on February 17, the U.S. ambassador John Winant could see that he was tired. The petty criticism, Winant privately notified his president, was draining Winston's time and energy. 'A cheery word from you and Harry always lightens his load.'⁶⁷

The House was in intractable form. He made a short-tempered, petulant statement that midday about Singapore and promised to set up an inquiry into the German warships' escape; he could not reveal the news of the mine-damage without compromising the *ULTRA* secret. He deflected calls for a debate on Singapore with skilful parliamentary tactics and his customary verbiage, saying: 'It would ill become the dignity of the government or the House . . . if we were drawn into agitated or excited recriminations at a time when all our minds are oppressed with a sense of tragedy and with the sorrow of so lamentable a misfortune.' He slunk back to Downing-street, where Brooke discovered him crestfallen and dejected.⁶⁸

THERE WAS a tide of exasperation running across the whole country. The king sent his secretary out over the weekend to inquire, and mentioned to Churchill over their weekly luncheon that 'people' felt that the burden of being minister of defence as well might be too much for him. Churchill did not take kindly to popular criticism. He compared his troubles with 'hunting the tiger with angry wasps about him.' He refused to relinquish the other office. 'If I am to lead this country,' he insisted, 'I must know everything.' He indicated a reluctant willingness to reconstruct his government – but made it clear that any heads that rolled would not include his own.⁶⁹

Bracken brought to him a letter from Lord Beaverbrook, recommending a war cabinet of only three names, all to be free of departmental duties, beside the P.M.: quixotically, he recommended his arch enemy Bevin, whom he called 'the strongest man in the present cabinet,' Eden ('the most popular'), and Attlee (whom he loathed); he barely mentioned his real rival for power – 'the desire of the public for Cripps is a fleeting passion.'⁷⁰

WITH ALL the sinister timing with which the vultures appear, circling above a wounded animal, the Zionists seized once more upon a dark hour in Britain's fortunes to further their own ambitions. Chaim Weizmann had been about to depart for the United States, that Thursday February 12, but inspired by the grim news he wrote to the prime minister yet again to demand

that Britain allow the arming of twenty thousand Jews from Palestine, who were willing to fight, he said, if 'their homeland' should become endangered by the Nazi advance. Twelve thousand Jews had already enlisted in Britain's armies, but they needed the stimulation of a national identity, the Zionist leader argued: 'Give the Jews their national name, emblems, and military organisation,' he demanded, 'and enjoin on the [British mandate] authorities in Palestine a more sympathetic approach to our people.'⁷¹

This was however quite impossible, as Eden later explained to Gil Winant: 'As long as the decision against the formation of a Jewish Army stands, so long must Jewish companies in Palestine and elsewhere continue to be regarded as an integral part of the British Army.' Otherwise the Palestinian Arabs might demand an emblem too, and Britain would have two 'national' forces with which to contend. To Winant, Eden talked of the need for 'appeasing Jewish sentiment' as though again facing an unreasoning dictator.⁷²

Grave though his own preoccupations were, Churchill did receive Weizmann, but only briefly. Although a confessed Zionist, he could not openly avow his beliefs: at least for the duration of this war, the empire's bread was buttered on the Arab side. He placated Weizmann during their brief talk with the assurance that he had 'a plan, which of course can be carried into effect only when the war is over. . . We shall help you.' Weizmann later told Bernard Baruch that Winston had confided this plan to him: 'We shall help you,' repeated Churchill. 'Keep this confidential, but you might talk it over with Roosevelt when you get to America. There's nothing he and I cannot do if we set our minds to it.'⁷³ Satisfied for the moment, Weizmann left it at that.

HOW RAPIDLY the weeks had skimmed by. Churchill was dazed by how the scales had continued to tilt unfavourably even after Pearl Harbor. The Pacific War Council of February 17, joined by the two sad-faced Dutchmen still hoping to save Java, passed in a blur of impressions – the swift-footed Japanese in Churchill's angry words who 'moved quicker and ate less than our men,' the baffling inactivity of American submarines in the region, the surliness of the Australians, the intransigent Indian princes and politicians – absent from these councils, but posing a dilemma none the less for that.⁷⁴

He submerged himself in reshuffling his government, skilfully juggling new names with old. His aide, Captain Richard Pim, found him the next morning in the map room. Churchill hinted at resignation, and was pleased at Pim's response – 'But, my God, Sir, you can't do that!'⁷⁵

Some of the changes were effortlessly made. Churchill decided to drop Lord Moyne as Colonial Secretary, as well as Labour's Arthur Greenwood, whose effectiveness had been reduced, Winant reported, by 'over-indulgence in strong drink.'⁷⁶ He also recommended to the king that in the event of his death Eden or Anderson should succeed him. Imparting this news to Eden that morning, February 18, he dangled the additional post of Leader of the House before him: or should it go to Cripps? Eden wanted it as a stepping-stone to power; but he found no tactful way of pressing his claim. He said he would think it over.⁷⁷ Churchill asked, 'When can I see you again?' He added: 'I must have my sleep after lunch.' But he was robbed of his nap, because Cripps now buttonholed him for two hours to say that yes, he had decided to accept the job unless of course Anthony wanted it.

'That is what I should like most,' said Cripps, and he repeated these words fervently to Eden.

Beaverbrook did not want Cripps at all. Seeing Eden at five, he again strongly urged that the cabinet be reduced to four – namely Churchill, Cripps, Attlee, and Eden; and that Eden be Leader of the House. Returning to the prime minister at five-thirty, Eden told him of this.⁷⁸ Speaking to the junior ministers at six-thirty P.M. Churchill again remarked that he had been inclined to resign. But, wrote Lord Reith, Minister of Works, 'there was no one else with shoulders broad enough to bear the burden.'⁷⁹

Retiring for drinks with Beaverbrook afterwards in the Annexe, Churchill showed him his ideas for a new, smaller war cabinet. One list had five names, the other seven including Bevin and Beaverbrook, as Minister of Production. 'Take the five,' Beaverbrook recommended. 'And leave me out. I want to retire. Anthony should lead the House, not Cripps. And Attlee should not be deputy prime minister.' He regarded Attlee as colourless and lacking drive. 'We want tougher fellows at a time like this. Fighting men.' He had however walked into an ambush. Churchill led him into the adjacent room where Attlee, Eden, Bracken, and the Chief Whip had been waiting. Beaverbrook stoutly repeated his criticisms of Attlee. The two squawked at each other like fighting cocks until the prime minister silenced Beaverbrook. Beaverbrook stated flatly that he would not join a government with Attlee as deputy P.M., and stalked out. Churchill amended his list, with Oliver Lyttelton replacing Beaverbrook as minister of war production.

Churchill invited him back the next morning, and showed him the new list. Beaverbrook was hurt. 'Against my bad manners,' he wrote a few days later, 'I thought the prime minister should set my capacity to get the ships.'

The prime minister now offered him a post in Washington; since Beaverbrook declined that, he offered him the office of Lord Privy Seal. Again his friend declined. The P.M. then suggested he announce Beaverbrook's retirement on account of ill-health. 'I agreed,' wrote Beaverbrook.⁸⁰

Lunching with Eden at Claridge's on the nineteenth Churchill told him that he had decided upon a seven-man cabinet and would accept Beaverbrook's offer of resignation.⁸¹

THUS THE troublesome Canadian hobgoblin left Churchill's government, vowing never to return. Winston was melancholy at this parting. 'He needn't have gone,' he said over lunch next day with the Crippses and the editor of the *Manchester Guardian*. 'He could have had any one of three or four offices. . . He was good for me!. . . He put courage and pep into me.'⁸²

Over dinner with Lord Beaverbrook a few days later the P.M. again mentioned that job in Washington. 'I did not want you to leave the government,' he pleaded. Beaverbrook growled, 'Let us leave things as they are.' As they went their ways, Churchill told him: 'We shall gain in tranquillity but we shall lose in activity.'⁸³ It was a fine appreciation, matched by the generous language of Beaverbrook's letter of farewell. This spoke warmly of having spent in Churchill's government 'twenty-one months of high adventure, the like of which has never been known,' and confirmed:

You took a great chance in putting me in. . . It was little enough I gave you, compared with what you gave me. I owe my reputation to you. . . I send this letter of gratitude & devotion to the leader of the nation, the saviour of our people & the symbol of resistance in the free world. Yours affectionately, MAX.⁸⁴

'I was often bad-tempered, irascible, and at times rude,' conceded Beaverbrook, writing a contrite memoir on these events. 'I yielded on big issues and magnified small ones into insuperable obstacles.'

CHURCHILL WOULD not have altered one word of that. Under mounting Labour Party pressure, meanwhile, the recasting of the government continued.⁸⁵ With the situation in Burma critical, Churchill had sent for General Brooke after lunch on February 19, 1942 and readily agreed to his suggestion that they send out a better general to take command – Sir Harold Alexander. Churchill showed the C.I.G.S. his new cabinet list. ('The great-

est blessing of all,' rejoiced Brooke privately, 'is to be rid of Beaverbrook!'⁸⁶) No, the Beaver was not liked; and even less when word of Churchill's plan to exile him to Washington reached the British colony there – Dill spoke to Halifax of resigning.⁸⁷ Churchill released the new government list, embargoed, to the press that evening, February 19. (When Eden came to see him the next morning, still pleading his own cause, Churchill agreed however to hold it for a few days, and to consult him before releasing it).⁸⁸

Shown the new cabinet list, the American ambassador was relieved at Beaverbrook's departure – he had 'so harried' the P.M. since the visit to Washington.⁸⁹ Winant had brought over to No. 10 Downing-street a 'cheery word' of support which he had elicited from the president. 'I realise how the fall of Singapore has affected you and the British people,' wrote F.D.R. 'It gives the well-known back-seat drivers a field day but no matter how serious our setbacks have been . . . we must constantly look forward to the next moves that need to be made to hit the enemy. I hope you will be of good heart in these trying weeks because I am very sure that you have the great confidence of the masses of the British people.'⁹⁰ In his forthcoming broadcast he proposed to excoriate the people who treated 'the Channel episode' as a defeat. Late that night, Churchill responded. 'The pressure here has never been dangerous,' he assured the president. He claimed to have used it, in fact, to effect 'wholesome changes and accessions,' although he did admit to grieving still over Beaverbrook. He confessed that he did not like these days of stress: 'I have found it difficult to keep my eye on the ball.' Promising to 'teleprint' more to F.D.R. over the weekend, he reminded him not to 'dwell upon' the damage that the warships had sustained.⁹¹

The word 'teleprint' was a clue that he was again going to use his private line. On February 18 the admiralty had already signalled to its representatives in Washington and Moscow a full narrative on the escape of the German battle-cruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*, though Admiral Pound was not able to disclose any ULTRA aspects.⁹² Churchill now knew that his magnetic mines had done some serious injury to the warships. As they had ploughed across the deadly minefields, both battle-cruisers had triggered explosion after explosion. The codebreakers sent to him a summary of the intercepted signals, and these spelled out the hidden drama of February 12:

3:30 P.M. *Scharnhorst* hit a mine . . .

4:06 P.M. From Admiral Commanding Battleships. Most Immediate. *Scharnhorst* as leading ship hit a mine . . . abreast of A and B turrets. Com-

partments 1 to 12 undamaged. Slight inflow of water into No. 2 boiler room. Rudders, propellers, and engines apparently in order. We have no report concerning the forward spaces. Admiral Commanding Battleships is on board Z 29. 3rd Torpedo-boat flotilla is with *Scharnhorst*.

10:45 P.M. From *Gneisenau*. Most Immediate. Mined . . . At 02:00 shall be at Buoy A. Intended to proceed Elbe. Request orders.

10:47 P.M. . . . Most immediate. . . . *Scharnhorst* mined again.

Jubilant, Churchill asked the First Sea Lord whether this should not be laid before the president, adding: 'I am inclined to send it with a covering note by my secret and direct line' – possibly the most telling proof of this hitherto undisclosed secret channel between the war leaders.

Admiral Pound discouraged the idea. Releasing even the word 'mined' might compromise the ULTRA secret. Sir John Godfrey, his director of naval Intelligence, cabled to the navy department in Washington the rather less specific report, 'It is now known from our most secret source that both German battle-cruisers received underwater damage on their passage from Brest to German North Sea ports.' It was hoped to publicise this later.⁹³



A second good-natured letter arrived from Roosevelt, playfully revealing that Winston's sins had found him out.⁹⁴ The secret that he had discovered was an embarrassing hangover from Churchill's wilderness years, the early 1930s, the aching epoch when Churchill, out of office, had eked out his literary earnings by selling his paintings, like another Great Contemporary.

Other men of action and adventure had also been painters – Captain Bligh of the *Bounty* for one – but few statesmen apart from Hitler and Churchill. The latter had sought solace at the easel after leaving the admiralty in 1915, and under Lady Lavery's tutoring he had become an accomplished painter. His likeness of her husband Sir John Lavery, painting Churchill, was exhibited at the Royal Society of Portrait Painters four years later, but since then he had displayed none of his works – at least, not under his real name.⁹⁵

In the early Thirties he had agreed, evidently at the bidding of French painter Charles Montag, to stage a one-man show at the Galérie Druet in Paris. He signed the Impressionist-style canvases, according to art historian Professor Bodkin, as 'Charles Maurin' (spelt that way). The Paris gallery

had sold half a dozen of them at an agreeable price, according to Bodkin, who otherwise drew a discreet veil across the subject.⁹⁶

Neither the ease of the sale nor Bodkin's discretion are surprising. The real Charles Maurin, born at Puy in 1856, was a minor master of the Post Impressionist school who had died in the Alpes-Maritimes, France, in 1914.⁹⁷ Winston Churchill's harmless artistic conceit had escaped detection – until now, when Roosevelt had dictated this straight-faced letter, clucking his tongue at his new friend's profitable subterfuge.

How had Roosevelt cottoned on to this? On the day in December 1941 when the Washington newspapers had announced Churchill's arrival, a local art expert, Mr Edward Bruce, had sent a droll 'invitation' round to the White House, addressed to 'Charles Marin [*sic*] care of the president.' (In a covering letter Bruce had explained, tongue-in-cheek: 'We have always had a very high regard in the Section [of Fine Arts] for an English painter named Charles Marin who we understand is otherwise known as Winston Churchill.') 'My dear Marin,' the actual invitation ('we serve coffee!') read in part:

I just heard you were staying in Washington and as you are on our list of the artists we would like to entertain at the Section of Fine Arts, I hope very much you will drop in and have lunch with us.

'I think,' the letter concluded innocently, 'I could get one or two of our better artists to drop in because I know they would like to meet you.'⁹⁸

By the time that this letter had filtered through the humourless White House mail room, Churchill had returned to London and Roosevelt too had gone away. It was shown to the president upon his return. Intrigued, he asked his secretary to make 'phone inquiries of the British embassy. He himself signed an internal memo directing that Lord Halifax be asked in confidence 'whether Winston Churchill's painter name is Charles Marin.'⁹⁹ Prudently using the telephone, the embassy responded weeks later that the correct name was 'Morin,' according to the White House memo.¹⁰⁰ Roosevelt sent the whole dossier over to London in February 1942, the day before the German warships made their Channel dash. 'Dear Winston,' he reproached him on February 11, 'these people who go around under assumed names render themselves open to all kinds of indignity and suspicion.' He added this piece of mischief: 'The British Embassy was asked for verification and I suppose the matter has been to Scotland Yard and back again.' He concluded: 'Some day I want to see a painting by this alias fellow – and

some day I hope you will get enough time to resume the painting and that I will be able to return to making ship models and collecting stamps!'¹⁰¹

The auction room prices for a Churchill, averaging from five- to twenty-four thousand pounds, would eventually far outclass those for a Charles Maurin. Churchill's 1924 French landscape, 'Mimizan,' would sell for £48,000 fifty-three years later in 1977; a Maurin attracted only £800 in 1972.

THE PRIME MINISTER adored painting. He completed ten or fifteen paintings a year. He had always favoured landscapes bathed in the Mediterranean sunshine – paintings in which Man scarcely figured. He told Sir John Rothenstein, director of the Tate Gallery, 'If it weren't for painting, I couldn't live; I couldn't bear the strain of things.' It recharged his batteries, he said.

Brendan Bracken would write to a later president that Winston had returned from the South of France in fine fettle – 'He has finished the second volume of his book,' exclaimed Bracken, 'and is well on the way to completing half the third. In less than five weeks he painted more than ten pictures. What a man!'¹⁰² By the time Churchill laid down his brush in 1958 it had passed across five hundred canvasses. Experts spoke of them in the muted tones reserved for the efforts of the eminent. It was odd, the art critic of the *Manchester Guardian* once pointed out, for a man so British to have leaned to the French Impressionists. Perhaps he too knew something about 'Maurin.' *The Times* was condescending: it agreed that his 'Winter Sunshine' would 'certainly attract attention by its original vision combined with sound craftsmanship.' The Tate Gallery acquired one Churchill study, 'Loup River, Alpes-Maritimes.' Upon his election as an honorary R.A. he was entitled to show six canvasses at the Royal Academy each year.

His views on other people's art were uncompromising. Rothenstein has quoted one remark about a much-publicised religious work at the Tate, probably by Stanley Spencer: 'If this is The Resurrection,' growled Churchill, 'give me Eternal Rest.'

17: *Churchill Up and Churchill Down*

LORD BEAVERBROOK had once written a book with a photo captioned, 'Churchill up and Churchill down.' When all was well, Winston was steady; when it was not, he was not. All was not now well. Public opinion in England had been more affronted by the Channel episode than by the loss of Singapore; it revived the spectre of seaborne invasion. Accordingly, he wilted; his heart began to play up again. Now sixty-seven, he was an ageing statesman in an unimpressive Parliament which was perforce elderly too. Its Members' average age was sixty. Only Eden, wrote Cecil King, stood out by his looks, grace, and charm. The Commons now met in the old House of Lords, which added to the faint air of unreality. Meanwhile southern England congealed in the grip of a long, bleak winter which would last until the early spring of 1942.

Beaverbrook later told Halifax that when Churchill had returned to London from Washington in January he had been slow to realise how strong the criticism against the government was. He had thought that by refusing to make changes he could handle the criticism. He soon found that he couldn't get away with that, and between February 19 and 27 he was forced to reconstruct his war cabinet, bringing in Cripps.

It was a further lurch to the left; Churchill had escaped defeat, but only by the skin of his teeth.

Ambassador Averell Harriman was disconcerted by the time and energy which the prime minister had had to expend in mastering the political crisis. Winston's hold on the public imagination had loosened. The opposition to the prime minister came now, the American reported to Hopkins early in March, both from the House and Fleet-street (the newspaper world), while the star of Sir Stafford Cripps was rising with each triumph of the Soviet armies in battle.¹

Wise men predicted that he could not last many more months.² Germany and Italy evidently believed that time was on their side. On March 8 Churchill could read what Ribbentrop was secretly saying about the establishment of a new Nazi world order. 'Germany,' Hitler's foreign minister had remarked, 'also was not in favour of anything like the Versailles Conference,' but he himself had 'not yet thought out' what method would be better. They could devise the best method of dealing with the defeated Allies amongst themselves, he added, 'as there was still plenty of time yet.'³

The Japanese ambassador further reported that Ribbentrop had said that Hitler's headquarters was now planning a spring offensive in Russia, with emphasis on reinforcing the southern front and cutting the Allied supply lines to the Soviet Union. 'Following her Caucasus campaign,' Ribbentrop had added, Germany would advance into the Middle East.⁴

WITH THE replacement of six more ministers and nine under-secretaries on Sunday February 22 the reconstruction of Churchill's administration was complete, though he left many bruised feelings. As Cripps later said, Churchill fought for days against excluding the few men he did dismiss. Cripps refused to join until the sycophantic and inadequate Captain David Margesson and Colonel J. T. C. Moore-Brabazon, secretary of state for war and minister of aircraft production respectively, were removed.⁵

Although Eden favoured Lyttelton for Margesson's post at the war office, Churchill eventually agreed to replace him with the blunt Whitehall insider Sir Percy James ('P.J.') Grigg.

What made it an unusual choice was that Grigg had previously been Margesson's permanent under-secretary at the war office; promoting a civil servant to be the political chief of his own ministry seemed to set an undesirable precedent. On the twentieth, Churchill sent James Stuart, the Conservative Party's Chief Whip (*i.e.*, 'enforcer'), to drop a hint to Margesson, saying: 'I am afraid the changes may possibly affect you.' Margesson said that no hints would be necessary.

Even so, he was taken aback. Asked to recommend a successor from outside the parliamentary machine he himself had suggested Grigg, meaning to be purposefully unhelpful; Churchill however knew Grigg already – he had been his private secretary in the Twenties – and he leapt at the idea.⁶ On Saturday Churchill sent a letter round to Margesson asking him to resign (he found it difficult to look people in the eye when sacking them). Simultaneously he invited Grigg down to Chequers.⁷ 'That is the last time I

recommend anyone for anything,' lamented Margesson to Grigg upon his return.⁸

Firmly swinging his axe again, Churchill asked Lord Hankey to resign as Paymaster General while retaining his special committee on oil. Aggrieved by this action, Hankey was minded to give up the lot – he had for some time been feeling the 'utter incompetence' with which Winston was running the war, he told others.⁹ Even after resigning as asked, Hankey kept the bit between the teeth. He warned Churchill in private letters about the danger to *Ramilles* and *Royal Sovereign* in their present station off Ceylon, and attacked the government publicly in the House of Lords, demanding an inquiry into the disaster at Singapore.

Duff Cooper had just returned from Singapore. He told Churchill and Brendan Bracken he was looking for a job.

Perhaps unwisely, Bracken grouched that anybody could have his now thankless job as minister of information. Churchill snapped: 'You ungrateful puppy. You may have learnt nothing; but I have learnt a lesson.' Referring to Duff Cooper's earlier tenure of the information ministry, he snarled at Bracken: 'I choose a distinguished man of letters, a brave man, a master of English culture, and put him into the Ministry of Information, and though I could never understand it, the public felt him a failure. I then choose you from the gutter against all advice. Everybody says I am wrong, and yet for some reason that I equally fail to understand, everybody now says you have been successful. I have learnt my lesson: never again to put a thoroughbred to draw a dung cart!'¹⁰

IN THE MIDST of this Whitehall *brouhaha*, Churchill made two highly unorthodox changes to his chiefs of staff committee. Their chairman, Admiral Sir Dudley Pound, was no longer up to the task. He often appeared to be asleep, looking in Brooke's vivid words 'like an old parrot asleep on his perch.'¹¹ By-passing Portal, the airman, to whom the post should by rights have gone by rotation, Churchill appointed General Alan Brooke as chairman. It turned out to be one of his more felicitous appointments, though for the wrong reasons. Brooke knew how to stand up to the prime minister. After a few weeks, the chiefs of staff meetings began to hum. Major-General John Kennedy, the director of military operations, found that the new organisation worked much better than the old. 'There is very little interference by the P.M.,' he told Lord Hankey, 'and the whole machine is working smoothly.'¹²

Churchill's second innovation was the appointment to the chiefs of staff of the youthful Lord Louis Mountbatten, then only forty-one years old and recently selected as the new Chief of Combined Operations.

His reasoning behind this choice was sound. He intended to expose the chiefs to a lively mind, he said, and to ensure that a Singapore – 'the most shameful moment of my life,' as he told the under-secretaries on March 3 – never happened again.¹³

He invited Mountbatten and the Griggs to lunch at Downing-street on March 4, and told Mountbatten that he was henceforth to sit as a 'fourth chief of staff' on their committee; to which he added the eccentric detail that Mountbatten, a Captain RN, was to have the acting ranks of vice-admiral, lieutenant-general, and air marshal.¹⁴

If General Brooke took poorly to this youthful interloper ('Rather doubtful,' he mused, 'how that business will run!') the First Sea Lord was livid at the promotion of an officer twenty-four years his junior and half way down the captains' list.¹⁵ In the Royal Navy, seniority was a matter taken excruciatingly seriously. Churchill informed him of Mountbatten's appointment only the next day; he explained that he wanted the young officer to exercise his influence 'upon Combined Operations in the largest sense,' not merely the local Commando incursions he had been planning until then.¹⁶

Writing formally to the three chiefs of staff, he directed that the changes were not to be made public; no doubt he wanted to protect feelings that were already ruffled at this unexpected visitation by the king's cousin.¹⁷ Admiral Pound replied frankly that hitherto he had been able to carry the can for almost all the naval operations that had appeared ill-advised, including the last fateful operations of *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*; he feared however that the Navy would believe that Lord Mountbatten's 'wrong' promotion had been undertaken against his advice: 'I am very much afraid that it would be taken as another supposed case of your overriding my advice.' Alternatively, people would assume that Mountbatten's royal blood had earned him, a junior captain in a shore appointment, a 'three steps' promotion.¹⁸

Churchill was unrepentant. He repeated to the chiefs of staff that Mountbatten was to attend all their meetings on major issues; he appended a hand-written note to General Ismay, their secretary, allowing them to discuss only the details of Mountbatten's appointment, if they desired, 'but I cannot have the plan seriously affected.'¹⁹

From Robert Menzies, formerly prime minister of Australia and now a backbench Member of the Opposition in the Canberra parliament, came a fawning telegram. He had an eye on Lyttelton's now vacant post in the Middle East; it had a seat in the cabinet. He had watched recent events, he wrote to Churchill, with a 'clear understanding [of] your problems.' He even expressed admiration for Winston's 'sustained and sustaining courage and leadership.'²⁰

The prime minister sent a routine reply.²¹ Sir Ronald Cross, his High Commissioner in Canberra, explained that Menzies desired to enter the British House of Commons and pull his weight in the war. 'No doubt he also hopes for promotion.' Ignorant, as he confirmed, of Churchill's views, Cross found it difficult to talk with Menzies on the matter: 'I am now in need of guidance as to the line I should take.'²²

The last thing Churchill wanted was a man of Robert Menzies' calibre at Westminster. He could hardly forget the painful remarks by Menzies during the cabinet meetings in the spring of 1941.*

Attlee, equally horrified at the proposal, minuted helpfully that given the dearth of qualified people in Australia, Menzies' duty and utility surely lay there. 'I agree,' wrote Churchill, adding: 'At present.'²³

Upon reflection he thought that a foreign posting – anywhere but Britain, in fact – would be more appropriate. He suggested that Curtin might send Menzies to Washington, as Australian minister. To this end, he shortly brought Richard Casey, the virtually unknown diplomat currently serving there, to replace Lyttelton in the Middle East, offering to Curtin the hollow explanation that it 'strikes the note of bringing statesmen from all over the empire to the highest direction of affairs.'²⁴ Well, if not the highest, at least it left a vacant slot in Washington, into which Menzies could be sloughed away. There was wide support in Canberra for the Washington appointment; but Curtin, the Australian prime minister, vetoed it, and Menzies, one of the empire's finest statesmen, stayed in the wilderness.



On February 23, 1942, Churchill's government upheaval was complete.

He was not proud of it; he scolded himself for having surrendered to newspaper criticism and to public opinion. He had believed himself strong

* Vol. i, pages 514 *et seq.*

enough, he wrote years later, to spit in all their faces: 'This,' he reflected, 'was certainly not my Finest Hour.'²⁵ It had done much to restore Churchill's popularity. The corrosive speculation that he would soon be forced out of office himself eventually ceased.²⁶

For the empire, the unhappy consequence was that the reshuffle had given the National Government a more noticeable leftward bias than the inclusion of the first Labour ministers in May 1940. The cabinet as reconstructed was an ill-fitting assortment. Churchill was not a well man; Eden and Lyttelton both drank heavily, perhaps understandably in these times of trouble; and none of those three was truly Conservative.²⁷ Against them were now ranged not only Cripps, but a remarkably revived Clement Attlee, who in Amery's words was now browbeating them like 'a perfect lion.'²⁸

Cripps was the real danger to Winston's position: possessed of a driving intellect, he had so far played his cards faultlessly. An ignorant public, momentarily dazzled by his achievements as British ambassador in a beleaguered Moscow, had begun a 'Cripps for premier' campaign. How the prime minister must have wished him well away, and far from the London limelight!

THERE IS evidence that the weeks of recrimination which the British public had focused upon Churchill after the loss of Singapore brought him to the brink of a nervous collapse.

Over his Tuesday luncheon with the king on February 24 he openly admitted that Burma, Ceylon, Calcutta and Madras, in India, as well as part of Australia might fall into Japanese hands. 'Can we stick together in the face of all this adversity?' his King and Emperor wrote despondently in his diary.²⁹

Eden, pleasantly aware that he was only a heartbeat away from supreme office, found the P.M. 'in a state of great depression and mental agony.' Desmond Morton believed he was mourning the loss of Beaverbrook and other colleagues.³⁰ General Brooke found him very gloomy at the Pacific War Council, and still 'very tired but cheerful' when they discussed Burma, Ceylon, and India two days later.³¹

The reconstructed war cabinet which met on February 25 had however a new feel, an abrasiveness. In Eden's view the reconstruction received a better press than it deserved, but the cabinet seemed to work better, and Churchill was occasionally overborne by his colleagues. No longer was he their undisputed master. 'This is a much better balanced cabinet,' remarked Bevin as they emerged from one such meeting.³² Winston did not like that

at all. He told Eden that his heart was failing. On February 25 the staff at Chequers were told to stand by for his arrival that weekend, but he did not go down to the mansion.³³

CHURCHILL WAS tired, and this was small wonder. His appointment card was crowded with fixtures. Bad enough that regular cabinet meetings ceased for days on end – he could not bear the new faces – but he called no defence committee meetings either.³⁴ Eden expressed private concern; Cadogan remarked that there was no hand on the wheel.³⁵ Watching Winston's extraordinary, rambling performance at the India Committee's first session on February 26, and his 'complete inability to grasp even the most elementary points,' his old school-friend Leo Amery concluded that the sudden heart problem had finally affected the great man's brain.

'He seems quite incapable,' Amery wrote in his diary,

of listening or taking in even the simplest point but goes off at a tangent on a word and then rambles on inconsecutively. . . Certainly a complete outsider coming to that meeting and knowing nothing of his reputation would have thought him a rather amusing but quite gaga old gentleman who could not quite understand what people were talking about.

Some ministers accepted Churchill's heart problems at face value. Amery morbidly wondered if they were witnessing the beginning of the end. He recalled that with Herbert Asquith and Lord Birkenhead too their gift of oratory had lingered on long after their more important talent for decision-making had declined.³⁶

At least one other minister detected the same signs of Churchill's 'becoming gaga,' as he too put it.³⁷ Bracken warned Eden that the old boy's failing heart might affect his faculties of co-ordination, thought, and speech. Churchill had told Bracken he was already 'most depressed.' 'He . . . said he could only go on for another month and then he would be finished.'

Others close to the inner circle suspected the prime minister of play-acting. Eden's private secretary Oliver Harvey believed that he might be trying to thwart critics by feigning health problems.³⁸ The problems were however real enough. At low ebb, Churchill lunched alone with his wife and youngest daughter on Friday the twenty-seventh: 'Papa,' Mary observed, 'is not too well physically – and he is worn down by the continuous crushing press of events.'³⁹ In some ways the *Angst* crowding in on him was worse

than a Nazi air raid. That night, he fled to Dytchley Park, to spend the weekend out of earshot in Oxfordshire.⁴⁰

Clementine wrote to her sister that these were 'days of anguish' for her husband – 'So . . . impotent to stem this terrible tide in the Far East.'⁴¹ Each morning the boxes brought into his bedroom held new, crushing disappointments. He had hopefully asked General Auchinleck about his intentions; Saturday brought the wordy and affable reply that Auchinleck did not feel able to launch a major offensive against Rommel, or even to recapture the airfields in Cyrenaica, before June.⁴² 'The bloody man does not seem to care about the fate of Malta,' Churchill snapped at his doctor.⁴³ Bracken came, and warily suggested that he appoint Eden as 'deputy minister of defence.' It was not a new idea, and the P.M. was noncommittal.⁴⁴

Eden lay discreetly in wait, listening to the P.M.'s heartbeats. 'Anything may happen to me at any time now,' Churchill said plaintively to him. 'Remember, if it does, you are the one who must succeed.'⁴⁵

Beaverbrook also began to doubt Churchill's continuing mental stability.⁴⁶ His papers contain a folder of ammunition, completed around this time, February 1942, to use against Winston. The two dozen pages were an alphabetical repository of his friend's unfulfilled prophecies and miscalculations from 'A for Abdication' onward, through the 'error' made by Hitler in invading Norway, to the prediction that Germany 'dare not assail' the Soviet Union; the most recent addition to this damning list was the loss of *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*.⁴⁷

Harried by the cabinet ferment over India and the Soviet frontier demands, hounded now as well by an unruly press powered by Beaverbrook and fed directly with titbits by the Soviet ambassador, Churchill slumped in his chair; he alternated, in Bevin's words, between violent resentment and the theatrical posture of a beaten man.⁴⁸

BY ALTERNATELY clutching at his heart and talking of resignation Winston Churchill all but stilled ministerial dissent. A clammy, unspoken fear gripped them nonetheless – namely that Britain's fabulous eastern empire was all but lost. Some blamed Churchill personally.⁴⁹ A few days after the fall of Singapore, General Brooke wrote that if the army could not fight any better than this, Britain deserved to lose her empire.⁵⁰ More particularly, Churchill cursed the Australians – they had refused even to counter-attack in Singapore, he would tell the under-secretaries on March 3.⁵¹ Much as he had earlier mistrusted Menzies for his ambitions, he now detested Curtin

for the manner in which he was standing up to him, despite having a parliamentary majority in Canberra of only one.

How he loathed Australia! He had never visited the antipodes, and according to Lord Moran regarded the Australians (and New Zealanders too) as being of bad stock, as being 'tiresome people with whom contact should be kept to a minimum.'⁵² He scarcely mentioned either nation in his speeches and writings. In May 1943 he would mock General Marshall for wanting to visit Australia – describing the vast and hauntingly beautiful continent as a brush-covered island famous only for a fur-bearing egg-laying animal which made love in the moonlight; Clementine, he quipped on the same occasion, had visited Australia for only one day, and had spent that visiting Melbourne zoo.⁵³



After Singapore the mutual antipathy between Churchill and Australia blazed up anew.

Knowing that the line in Burma could not be held for long, and casting about for reinforcements, Churchill's eye had lit upon the two divisions of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.) which he had himself released from the Middle East after Pearl Harbor, moving them first toward the Pacific, latterly toward Sumatra and Java, and now – at Canberra's instance – allowing them to steer for home. A glance at the map room chart confirmed that, if diverted immediately, the 7th Australian division, loaded in the *Mount Vernon* convoy, could reach Rangoon within days. He evidently counted on forcing the Australians to accept the diversion of their following division as well, because the two had been loaded in such a way that the destination of both would be governed by that of the first.⁵⁴ Since the Norway fiasco of 1940, it is fair to presume that he had always kept loading considerations in mind.

Churchill put this proposed diversion of the 'leading Australian division' to General Ismay on February 17.⁵⁵ He also asked Canberra; and when permission was curtly refused, he appealed again on the twentieth, promising to relieve these troops at the earliest.⁵⁶ 'I suppose you realise,' he began, 'that your leading division . . . is the only force that can reach Rangoon in time to prevent its loss and the severance of communication with China.' That was language of acceptable robustness, but what followed was not. He reminded Prime Minister Curtin of his earlier accusation that to abandon

Singapore would be 'an inexcusable betrayal,' and – carefully picking his words to avoid lying – said that 'agreeable with your point of view' he had therefore put the 18th Division and other reinforcements into Singapore, where they had now been lost, instead of into Burma. 'You . . . bear a heavy share on account of your telegram,' he charged, rubbing the point in.⁵⁷

He did not believe that the Australians would relent.⁵⁸ Nevertheless on February 21 he ordered the *Mount Vernon* convoy diverted northward toward Rangoon. Meanwhile he also asked Roosevelt to lend his weight to the appeal to Curtin.⁵⁹ Roosevelt did so, arguing that he was sending thousands of American troops to Australia.⁶⁰ Curtin rebuffed him, politely; he refused Churchill's 'rather strongly worded' request (received 'at this late stage') quite rudely, referring with all the tactlessness which is so much a part of the Australian charm to his fears of 'a recurrence of the Greek and Malayan campaigns.' He doubted, he said, that the leading Australian division could even be landed in Burma, let alone 'brought out as promised.'⁶¹

Still hoping to persuade Curtin, Churchill ordered the Australian convoy, now on the high seas between Colombo and Rangoon, to slow down. He admitted that he had already 'temporarily' diverted the convoy toward Rangoon – 'The convoy is now too far north . . . to reach Australia without refuelling.'⁶² His duplicity shocked Curtin: Australia's soldiers had fought in Malaya and the Dutch East Indies. 'Now you contemplate using the A.I.F.,' he wired angrily to Churchill, 'to save Burma. All this has been done, as in Greece, without adequate air support.'⁶³ Churchill caved in: on February 23 he conceded that the convoy would refuel at Colombo, then 'proceed to Australia in accordance with your wishes.'⁶⁴

There was of course a silver lining to all this. He had now a scapegoat for the loss of Burma. 'We have made every appeal,' he radioed to the Governor of Burma, 'but Australian government absolutely refuses. Fight on.'⁶⁵

In Burma the situation deteriorated rapidly. The British 17th Division (two British battalions and an Indian brigade) was driven back, retreating toward the Sittang river; the premature demolition of the only bridge trapped two of the brigades. On the last day of the month the governor radioed that he was evacuating Rangoon. Thus the Japanese tide rolled onward, and India itself, glittering bauble in the crown of Britain's Far Eastern empire, seemed to many to be only just beyond the next horizon.

CHURCHILL HAD NO REASON to consider Australia at risk of invasion; he had cypher Intelligence which supported his belief. Equally, he differed with his

colleagues in his assessment of the rising agitation in India. 'I doubt,' he informed Ismay on February 23, 'whether the internal security problem in India will become serious. The mass of the population will hold their breath as usual till the arrival of a new conqueror. There will I think be a healthy dread of the Japanese.'⁶⁶

On the same date, the master Lend–Lease agreement between Britain and the United States was signed.⁶⁷ With this ticklish negotiation out of the way, Roosevelt now felt free to intervene directly over India. He sent a highly sensitive message to London for Ambassador Harriman to deliver to the prime minister in person on the morning of February 26.⁶⁸ This inquired what steps Churchill proposed by way of conciliating the Indian leaders. The letter was an impertinent demand for Britain to give up India.

Truly it might be said that the empire had more to fear from her allies than from her enemies. 'States which have no overseas colonies or possessions,' Churchill would write, dipping his pen in the vitriol of sarcasm, 'are capable of rising to moods of great elevation and detachment about the affairs of those who have.'⁶⁹ He wondered what right a country might assert to take such a lofty view when it had such troubled race relations as the United States.⁷⁰

In fact he had just set up an India Committee to examine this very issue – it was at its first meeting that evening, February 26, that Leo Amery decided that Churchill was on the brink of nervous collapse. The Viceroy of India, Lord Linlithgow, objected to Churchill's plan to promise India Dominion status after the war. He wrote to Amery protesting about 'these explosions in the prime minister's mind.'⁷¹ Amery, the only Conservative on the India Committee, saw three options – to do nothing; to revert to British rule in its most intractable form, or to move onward to an All-Indian Executive Council. Cripps however agreed with Churchill's scheme, as did Attlee and Sir John Anderson.⁷²

Adrift in a rising political tempest, Churchill dragged his anchor. At that India Committee meeting on the twenty-sixth, in one of his more 'expansive moments,' as Amery charitably put it, the P.M. suggested that they might just dump India and concentrate on the defence of the British Isles, Africa, and the sea route to Australia.⁷³

He was in a *fin-de-siècle* mood. It brought to mind Lord Beaverbrook's vivid simile of the housemaid who spites her nagging mistress by dropping the tray with all the priceless porcelain, before handing in her notice.⁷⁴

CHURCHILL RETIRED to Dytchley Park for a few days, leaving the Committee to thrash out their proposal on India. The original intention had been for him to make a Declaration in Parliament, and to broadcast it to India. This speech would avow Britain's intention of granting full Dominion status after the war. If the Congress Party still proved obstructive, suggested Amery, then India should be partitioned: the Moslems should have their 'Pakistan.'

By Monday March 2 the draft document was ready. It contained sensational provisions. There was only indirect reference to the Crown; and India was to be told that she was free to leave the British empire. Amery objected that this would invite trouble from India's predatory neighbours Afghanistan and Nepal.⁷⁵ He asked Lord Linlithgow what the effect might be on these neighbours, and on the frontier tribes, the princes, and the Indian Army. He did not expect the Congress Party to favour the declaration.⁷⁶ The viceroy's reply showed that he liked the draft better than Churchill's original scheme, although he feared the effect on the Indian Army of announcing that India was free to leave the empire.⁷⁷

Truculent and unreasoning, Churchill did what he could to obstruct: while appearing neutral himself, he would throw the matter open to debate by those upon whom he could count to object. Shown the draft declaration, he asked for a special cabinet meeting to be called on March 3, to discuss 'this India business.' Thereafter, he indicated, he would feel obliged to consult all the other ministers and 'probably' all the under-secretaries too. 'Moreover,' he pointed out, 'the king's assent must be obtained at an early date, as the rights of the imperial Crown are plainly affected.'⁷⁸

Hitherto, of course, he had not been known to consult His Majesty so diligently. As for his other tactic – appealing to *all* the ministers – this was the same means as he had adopted to subvert his colleagues' eagerness to accept Hitler's peace offers after Dunkirk in May and June 1940.*

GENERAL AUCHINLECK's telegram, anticipating mounting no desert offensive against General Rommel before June 1942, had dismayed the prime minister. He advised Eden from Dytchley that Stalin, Roosevelt, and 'everybody else' would judge this delay 'intolerable.'⁷⁹ He drafted an abusive message to Auchinleck, insisting on an earlier date, but showed it to the C.I.G.S. upon his return to London on Monday, March 2. Brooke consid-

* Vol. i, pages 301-2.

ered it an unpardonable interference with a commander's judgement – it reminded him of a similar interfering message uttered by Churchill at the time of Dunkirk. The chiefs of staff withheld Churchill's draft and sent a more temperate message of their own.⁸⁰

Thwarted yet again, Churchill voiced his anger at the after-dinner meeting of the defence committee – the first in two weeks. Lyttelton said it was wrong to blame the generals; their losses were 'mainly due to mechanical defects in their tanks,' particularly the cooling system, which had needed distilled water, but had been refilled with the foul product of desert wells. The German tanks had greater fire-power, and their commanders were using superior tactics; Brooke chimed in about the Cruiser tanks' fan-belt drive and lubrication, and about poor morale. They wrangled until two A.M., with Churchill 'at his worst,' according to Eden's secretary, 'discouraging, complaining, groaning.'⁸¹

At the end of February Churchill's health continued to fail. Bracken found him sitting with his head in his hands and talking of having only a few weeks to live. 'Wilson,' recorded Eden, referring to the doctor, 'fears that the heart will affect his circulation & perhaps even his speech, that there may be something in the nature of a "blackout" temporarily on occasion. All this sounds very alarming & more like a stroke.' Once again Churchill's friends urged him to offload his duties as minister of defence onto Eden. The latter might perhaps, suggested Bracken, appoint a deputy foreign secretary. Bracken insisted on putting the suggestion to Winston and, noted Eden, 'I did not discourage him, for I think that I could help.' He doubted, rightly as it turned out, that Winston would readily agree.⁸²

AN ADDITIONAL problem boiling up was whether to appease Stalin. Eden was still insisting that they entertain the Soviet frontier demands.⁸³ Resting at Dytchley, Churchill drafted a telegram to Stalin, painting the situation in darkening hues of grey. Cadogan intercepted it and Eden suggested several additions. Winston sent a disapproving message to the F.O. that night, drawing Eden's attention to a further pessimistic telegram from General Auchinleck in Cairo. Back in London that Monday, March 2, Churchill again objected to the proposed alterations.⁸⁴ 'Fact is,' wrote Cadogan on March 3, 'P.M. is in a sour mood – ill, I think – and frightens anyone.'

Churchill toyed with the idea of flying out to Teheran to meet Stalin for the first time; over dinner on Tuesday he invited Lord Beaverbrook to accompany him. On Wednesday Eden advised that it was better to send no

message at all than just the proposed gloomy litany. No message finally went.⁸⁵ Churchill however enlarged his travel plans to include flying on to Russia, and 'clearing up Cairo' – meaning the obdurate General Auchinleck – on the way. 'This,' observed Eden's private secretary with admiration, 'from a man afflicted with [a] heart which may collapse at any moment. What courage.'⁸⁶

The plans came to naught. Churchill 'phoned Beaverbrook: their trip was off. Circumstances, he said, made it undesirable to go away at the present. It would be August before he either set eyes on Stalin or 'cleared up Cairo.' His differences with Beaverbrook were seemingly forgotten. 'For your personal information,' wrote Harriman to Hopkins on March 7, 'Max will not come to America.' The Canadian's disposition, he reported, had improved and he expected one day to return to government; until then, he would run his papers and play politics with his exaggerated support for the Soviet Union. 'He intends,' Harriman however believed, 'to be loyal to Churchill.'⁸⁷

JAPANESE TROOPS had invaded Java on the last day of February 1942, sinking four British destroyers as well as the cruiser *Exeter* and four cruisers of Britain's allies in the invasion battles. General Wavell had three days earlier made good his escape to Ceylon. He had rather doubted that he should make this move – to Ceylon – stating in a message to Winston on February 21: 'I hate [the] idea of leaving these stout-hearted Dutchmen and will remain here and fight it out with them as long as possible if you consider this would help at all.' The prime minister had authorised the general's departure: 'You should proceed to India where we require you to resume your position as Commander-in-Chief.' He also informed Wavell that despite Canberra's refusal, he had yesterday diverted that troop convoy northward toward Rangoon, 'being sure Australian Government would not fail to rise to the occasion.'⁸⁸ He suspected that after devouring Java the Japanese would strike toward Ceylon, where the Royal Navy would now have to convert Trincomalee into a naval base to replace Singapore.⁸⁹ He conveyed all these sorrows to the king over lunch on March 3.⁹⁰

His gloom became more impenetrable. He saw no way of gaining a strategic initiative. The signs of a more general malaise multiplied. 'I don't think he's well,' Cadogan chronicled, 'and I fear he's played out.'⁹¹

Churchill pinned his hopes on the awakening American giant. He was now sending frequent telegrams to the president through his most secret

channels, involving Bletchley Park, 'C,' and the F.B.I., thereby by-passing Eden, Lord Halifax, and the state department. Since many of the messages were now numbered, it dawned on the ambassador that there were some that he never saw. 'They may of course be purely personal,' Halifax chided Eden, reporting this discovery; but political or military telegrams, he argued, should surely be shown to himself or Dill. 'I am all for Winston and the president intercommunicating with complete freedom,' he added, 'and I suppose you know what messages pass. If you don't, I would think we might possibly get into some difficulty.'⁹²



It remains a tantalising challenge for historians – the certainty that there were many messages passed between the two leaders which even now, for whatever reason, have not been found or released for public scrutiny.* In July 1941 J. Edgar Hoover, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (F.B.I.), reported to his chief Francis Biddle, the attorney-general at the U.S. justice department, that no American official was permitted to know the code used for the two or three hundred messages a week (which were passed via the F.B.I.'s radio station in the United States) between Sir William Stephenson, head of British Security Co-ordination in New York, and S.I.S. headquarters in London. Stephenson's reason for this secrecy was that they 'reflected' a correspondence between the president and Churchill.⁹³

Biddle paid an angry visit to the British embassy and challenged Lord Halifax about these code messages; the ambassador stated that 'he had inquired of Stephenson whether these cypher messages going forward were kept secret because they reflected a correspondence between the president and Churchill; Stephenson had denied that he had ever made any such statement.' Biddle brandished at him Hoover's report to the contrary. Lord Halifax professed to be unconcerned; but he was seen to be smiling blandly as the Americans left his embassy. Biddle remarked: 'Somebody has been doing some tall lying here.'⁹⁴

Among the four wordy telegrams sent by Churchill through regular channels to the president on March 4, 1942 was a sombre admission of how the torrent of events since Pearl Harbor had crushed his hopes.⁹⁵ 'When I reflect how I have longed and prayed for the entry of the United States into

* See Appendix I

the war,' he began, 'I find it difficult to realise how gravely our British affairs have deteriorated by what has happened since December 7.' He hoped that all could be retrieved 'in 1943 or 1944.' He pointed out however that the 'Levant-Caspian' front – the Middle East – depended on Stalin's ability to hold off Hitler's coming offensive.

In the Pacific, he relied on the Americans regaining their lost naval superiority. After describing his own planned naval reinforcements, moving British aircraft-carriers and battleships into the Indian Ocean by May, Winston predicted: 'The next fortnight will be the most critical for Ceylon.'⁹⁶

A spark of the old aggressive spirit glowed among these embers of despondency: drawing Roosevelt's attention to Japan's widening commitments, he suggested that the Americans mount Commando raids against these far-flung Pacific islands during 1942. He himself was not excluding, he confided, staging a raid on Europe the moment Hitler resumed his offensive in Russia.⁹⁷

THE KING felt grave concern about the cabinet's draft declaration on India, which he had now seen. The notion that India was free to 'walk out of the empire' astonished him. He grilled Leo Amery for an hour about what was going on. 'He was frankly puzzled,' noted the minister afterwards, 'as to how the thing had all come about so suddenly.' Amery blamed Roosevelt and Attlee; but there was pressure from the Chinese and left-wing British public opinion too.⁹⁸

Churchill had called a special session of his cabinet on India, and it met in his room at the House on March 3; here he 'shook his head very much' over the whole business, as Amery dictated that day. 'For once, he took views round the cabinet. No one did otherwise than accept.' Churchill bowed to the inevitable, but refused to broadcast the declaration himself.⁹⁹ Amery told the king the next day that the 'storm' was purely internal: Winston hated giving up ancient prejudices – he was 'undergoing all the conflicting emotions of a virtuous maiden selling herself for ready money.'¹⁰⁰

Churchill had however still not decided to sell out over India. He dictated another telegram to Washington educating Roosevelt on the broader implications of issuing the declaration on India 'at this critical juncture.' Britain, he argued, had to regard the rights of the one hundred million Moslems, the Indian army, and the thirty or forty million Untouchables, as well as her treaties with the Princes' states. 'Naturally,' he chided the presi-

dent, 'we do not want to throw India into chaos on the eve of [a Japanese] invasion.'¹⁰¹

Churchill brought everything to a head at midday on Thursday March 5. Using his '1940' technique to outflank his war cabinet, he put the India declaration to the full, and still broadly Conservative, body of ministers of cabinet rank. Showing what Cadogan called 'a strong bias against,' he asked their opinions; virtually all objected, as Churchill knew they would, to enabling India to secede from the empire.¹⁰² There was angry spluttering about resignations. Churchill thanked them. Once again, democracy had its uses.

He then told the war cabinet that they would resume these deliberations on Monday the ninth.¹⁰³ 'We shall have to think again very carefully,' Amery wrote to him later that Thursday, 'before proclaiming to the world and the Indian soldier that India can walk out of the empire.' He suggested that Churchill send an emissary to India.¹⁰⁴ 'There will therefore not be a statement,' wrote R. A. Butler, of the foreign office, relieved, 'and, when it comes, it should not sell everything away.'¹⁰⁵

It was only a brief respite. Churchill lunched with his old cronies of the Focus days, General Spears and the Henry Strakosches.^{106*} He went, well oiled, into the war cabinet at six. Cripps coldly accused the prime minister of having wriggled out of issuing the declaration, but these rebukes slithered off the P.M.'s back.¹⁰⁷ 'Talk,' summarised Cadogan, '— only talk — of resignations from [the] war cabinet.'¹⁰⁸

Resentful and truculent, Churchill dined at the foreign office. The alcohol again flowed freely, but according to General Brooke the situation was strained. Now it was Winston who was talking of resigning: he would return his Seals of Office on Monday, if necessary, and Eden should take over.¹⁰⁹ Eden, preoccupied with his own sudden fears that Stalin might do a deal with Hitler again, spoke only of the need to appease Moscow.¹¹⁰ He boasted to his private secretary the next day that Churchill, 'in his cups,' concurred, and this was how the sellout of eastern Europe to the Soviets began.¹¹¹ In a post-prandial haze, Churchill dictated a telegram to Roosevelt so supportive of Eden's arguments that it was almost a parody. ('Having called Anthony every name from a dog to a pig for suggesting composition with Stalin,'

* The Focus was a group of wealthy or influential socialist, Jewish, and opposition Conservative politicians and financiers who had financed his lifestyle from July 1936 on. In 1938 Strakosch had 'lent' him £18,000, a considerable fortune in those days, and wrote it off a few years later. See vol.i, page 104.

marvelled Lord Halifax, reading the telegram in Washington, 'he now goes all out for it himself.'¹¹²)

'The increasing gravity of the war,' Churchill blandly wrote,

has led me to feel that the principles of the Atlantic Charter ought not to be construed so as to deny Russia the frontiers she occupied when Germany attacked her.

Incongruously, he then argued that Stalin's own crimes entitled him to these territories: 'I expect that a severe process of liquidating hostile elements in the Baltic States, etc., was employed by the Russians when they took these regions at the beginning of the war. I hope therefore that you will be able to give us a free hand to sign the Treaty which Stalin desires as soon as possible.'¹¹³ Without waiting for Roosevelt's comments, he informed Stalin of this message.¹¹⁴

IN AMBASSADOR Gil Winant's absence in Washington his rival, Ambassador Harriman, had called at Downing-street that Friday, March 6, 1942. Churchill showed him the cables about India. Harriman assured Roosevelt privately that Churchill and his colleagues were struggling to find a formula that would satisfy public opinion in Britain, the United States, and India – no easy task; Harriman suggested that the president might like to convey through him to Winston what he had in mind on India.¹¹⁵ In a private letter the American added that he was worried about Churchill – about his spirits and about his survival as prime minister as well. The P.M. had not taken the recent criticism well, he said; he had also been tired of late.¹¹⁶ 'The prime minister,' he wrote in a further letter that weekend, 'hates the kind of rum-pus he has had to go through and it has taken a lot out of him. He is better now.'¹¹⁷

In Burma, the Japanese were bearing down on Rangoon. 'Appalled by events,' as young Mary Churchill described in her diary, and 'desperately taxed,' her father prepared for Chequers.¹¹⁸ That he would be joined there by both his doctor and the cardiologist Dr John Parkinson shows that the concerns about his heart were real.¹¹⁹

The political crisis allowed no respite. Cables from India showed that both the viceroy and Wavell regarded the planned declaration as a calamity; the former spoke of resignation. The Dominions' High Commissioners, meeting in London, also objected. Bringing forward Monday's planned cabi-

net meeting to Saturday morning, Churchill argued there for postponing the issue of any declaration.¹²⁰ Nehru, in a speech, had however categorically ruled out any postponement. Churchill spoke of a stalemate, and then again of resignation, and then of the innate strength of the Tory party – a sequence which caused Eden to write: ‘It was all rather out of tune, but he has a strange hankering after party politics again.’

Stafford Cripps diffidently suggested flying out to India himself; but the idea did not at first sink in.

Delayed by all these events, and saddened, the prime minister left for Chequers. ‘I have to be careful,’ he cabled Roosevelt, ‘that we do not disturb British politics at a moment when things are increasingly aquiver.’¹²¹ The India Committee resumed. That afternoon Cripps told Eden that he was quite prepared to co-operate with Churchill about India on almost any basis except the status quo. Learning that Cripps was about to go down to Chequers, Eden telephoned ahead to Winston and suggested that if Cripps repeated the offer to go out to India they should accept it with alacrity.¹²²

SHORTLY, SIR Stafford and Lady Cripps arrived at Chequers.¹²³ Cripps did indeed repeat his offer to fly out to India, ‘immediately,’ to discuss the revised declaration.¹²⁴ Forewarned by Eden, Churchill seized this opportunity. It offered a three-in-one solution: it would spike his critics’ guns, muzzle the Indians for months, and remove this obnoxious young cabinet minister from London. With any luck, the Cripps mission would fail. Bent on ensuring that, Churchill arranged for Cripps to be given ‘a private cypher code’ to communicate directly with him, by-passing the viceroy, and he bestowed on him special powers ‘if he sees fit to use them,’ as Sir Stafford confided to Lady Cripps afterwards.¹²⁵

Churchill’s mood brightened as his own cleverness sank in. ‘Winston in very good form,’ wrote Amery, invited down for lunch. Warmed by the food and drink, the P.M. lectured his captive audience with Table Talk on free will and predestination, and on the relief afforded by expletives in times of stress. Afterwards Amery showed him the latest telegrams from Lord Linlithgow, the viceroy. Churchill looked at one, and tossed the rest aside. It was clear to Amery that it had pained Churchill deeply to abandon his old die-hard position: with Cripps going out there, however, India was now out of his system. He had excreted them both.

Amery, who was also pushing seventy, put up a lame case for going out himself, but Churchill detected not one tithe of the political profit that was

to be gained from dispatching Cripps.¹²⁶ He told Eden that he was persuaded more than ever of the 'loyalty and integrity' of Cripps, while criticising Attlee freely for his petty and perpetual hunt for offices for his party comrades.¹²⁷ Informing his senior ministers on the tenth, he would dwell upon Sir Stafford's self-sacrifice and courage in departing on such a difficult and dubious mission.¹²⁸ His heart was a gleam with candles again.



He had another cause for gladness. He now also had a prospect of really hurting Germany.

Among that Sunday's lunch guests at Chequers was a stocky, sandy-haired figure in air chief-marshal's uniform – Sir Arthur Harris, fondly known as 'Butcher' Harris ever since he had commanded No. 5 Bomber Group.¹²⁹ He was the new commander-in-chief of Bomber Command.

Churchill had met him at close quarters only once before, and that was only briefly, at Dytchley. His staff had first taken notice of Harris in Washington a few weeks earlier. Ian Jacob had placed him in his diary as cross-grained, cynical, and tactless – not the sort to hold a position needing diplomacy and understanding. He was a commander of men, noted the army colonel, with strong views and powerful methods of promoting them, and 'not a co-operator.'¹³⁰ These were astute observations on Harris's weaknesses and strengths. Single-minded and terrifying, Churchill's new bomber commander would change the nature of warfare over the next three years.

If Churchill needed something to show the Russians, what better than the devastation of Germany's cities? The bombing had come to a halt after the dismaying losses suffered during bad-weather operations one night three months before. On January 4, 1942 Sir Charles Portal, while still in Washington, had submitted an analysis of this disaster to Churchill. They had concurred that the command's leadership was at fault, and Sir Richard Pierse was replaced by Harris.

Harris was nearly fifty, but his leadership qualities were undeniable. His military career in the empire had begun as a boy bugler in the Rhodesia Regiment in 1914 and he had seen service in the Royal Flying Corps in World War One. Faced with declining aircrew morale and doubtful bombing accuracy, Portal had directed the command to husband its strength until the spring, and had invited Harris, an old friend and flying comrade, to return from Washington to take over the command.

The decision to go all-out for what became known internally as ‘saturation bombing’ was not Harris’s, and it is fair to make this clear. It was in place when he arrived at Bomber Command’s headquarters in High Wycombe – which was conveniently close to Chequers – when he took command at the beginning of the last week in February 1942. A few days earlier, on February 9, Sir Archibald Sinclair had circularised to the defence committee the Air Staff’s arguments that the time had come for Bomber Command to resume operations. Some of the bombers had now been fitted out with GEE, an electronic navigation device which tracked an invisible radio grid that covered the Ruhr and Rhineland; this promised to enable bombers to find, and concentrate in time and space over, enemy targets. Sinclair proposed fire-raids on the Ruhr, Rhineland, and north-west Germany. He believed that this was the best time of year for such ‘concentrated incendiary attack.’¹³¹ He particularly deprecated the recent diversion of forty per cent of Bomber Command’s limited effort to hitting the ‘extremely small targets’ presented by the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* at Brest – a problem which had solved itself anyway three days later.

The proposal to resume the attack on Germany’s cities met with opposition from the admirals, as well as from Lord Beaverbrook and other ministers. Beaverbrook drafted a paper to the defence committee, pointing out that Bomber Command had lost 2,075 airmen and 376 bombers in the last half of 1941 to little purpose. ‘The weight of bombs dropped recently on Cologne, Emden, or Hamburg,’ he argued, ‘would have utterly destroyed the port of Tripoli’ – Rommel’s main supply gateway in Libya. The bombers could have saved Malaya and Borneo. The remaining squadrons, he argued, should now be flown out from England to the Middle East and Far East.¹³² This was not Churchill’s view and, as Harris soon found, the prime minister usually got his way – he had ‘this rather unfortunate trait of the man who has almost absolute power, knows his own mind, and really does not want to be bothered with everybody else’s ideas.’¹³³

Churchill wanted to see Europe’s cities ablaze. He had always had an obsession with fire; in 1940, as we saw in the first volume, his writings had more than once dwelt on the phrase ‘palls of smoke.’ A sinking enemy warship did not capture his imagination as much as the promise of a blazing enemy skyline. He endorsed Sinclair’s plan, writing to him on February 14 that since there were now no German warships left to bomb at Brest he was ‘entirely in favour of the resumption of full bombing of Germany,’ to which he added the proviso, ‘subject always, of course, to our not incurring

heavy losses. . .¹³⁴ 'This means,' Sinclair wrote, paraphrasing the document to the chief of air staff, 'that the conservation policy is at an end.' The bomber offensive was to be resumed as soon as the weather permitted, and sustained at maximum possible intensity.¹³⁵ The Air Staff that same day authorised Bomber Command to resume operations 'without restriction,' subject to weather conditions. The attack should be 'focused on the morale of the enemy civil population and, in particular, of the industrial workers.'¹³⁶

On the fifteenth Portal personally directed his staff to remind the new commander-in-chief, Harris, that under this directive aiming points were to be 'the built-up areas,' and *not* the specific military target (for example the dockyards or aircraft factories) associated with each town.¹³⁷ This directive, with this sinister postscript, would stand for the next twelve months.

HARRIS WOULD BE a rare commander of men. As the bloody bombing onslaught against Europe's cities – not all of them German – began, his reputation became cocooned in legends, many of them true: rebuked by a police constable for driving on the wrong side of Western-avenue with the words, 'You might easily kill somebody like that,' Harris replied: 'Officer, I kill thousands every night.' He was not often glimpsed by his aircrews or for that matter by Winston either. He never failed however to return from his visits to Chequers invigorated with fresh hope and enthusiasm, his spirits revived 'in spite of the appalling hours,' as he would later write.¹³⁸ 'After dinner Winston would talk,' wrote Harris.

He was really thinking about how things were going. He would get repeated reminders that a film show was waiting for him, and eventually we would all go up to the gallery – the household staff, and the rest of the family, and even the military guard from outside – to see the picture. . . One realised, of course, that he was really resting himself in this atmosphere, and that his thoughts were often far away. Sometimes one could hear him rehearse a phrase for a telegram he would send later.

Each man would come to need the other. Harris hero-worshipped the prime minister. 'Winston,' he would recall in one private letter, 'blarneyed, blustered, and bullied with all the force and weight of his incomparable oratorical powers.'¹³⁹ The prime minister would use that oratory as a flail to beat the good grain from the chaff. 'If,' reminisced Harris, 'in the flailing,

some knuckles got rapped and heads broke, so what?, as our Yanks would say. There was no time to be “nice,” but only to be right!’

Supremely convinced of his own rectitude – both tactical and ethical – Harris seduced the prime minister with the prospect of an easy, antiseptic victory, and of defeating Germany with his youthful aircrews, perhaps even without having to risk a conventional invasion.



There remained the matter of the higher strategic direction of the war. Ever since the Washington conference, General Brooke, the C.I.G.S. (who was not there), had scolded his colleagues Pound and Portal (who were) for having sold their country’s birthright for ‘a plate of porridge.’¹⁴⁰ By February 1942 they had begun to agree with him; they now realised that, despite their unreadiness, the Americans ultimately intended to run the war from Washington. Failing to grasp that the R.A.F. bombing offensive was to become the *Schwerpunkt* of Britain’s war effort against Germany, Roosevelt’s advisers saw in Churchill only an alarming tendency to dissipate his forces. The prime minister’s gloomy telegram of March 4 had deeply worried him; but while Roosevelt told his generals that what the British prime minister needed was only ‘a pat on the back,’ in his telegrams he lectured him on global command and India instead.¹⁴¹

Henry Stimson feared that Churchill’s sombre message heralded an appeal for even wider dispersion of their forces. In a foretaste of the controversies to come, he advocated sending an overwhelming American force to the British Isles for an ‘orthodox’ cross-Channel attack later that year. General Arnold backed him, saying that their air forces should set about overwhelming the Luftwaffe in France first; the American navy, in the person of Admiral King, was less keen, seeing his country’s major tasks as being on the other side of the globe, in the Pacific theatre. Roosevelt himself drafted the resulting proposal to Churchill which, Stimson was relieved to see, took the initiative out of the prime minister’s hands (‘where I am sure it would have degenerated into a simple defensive operation to stop up urgent rat-holes’). The new plan simplified the already rickety global command structure into spheres of strategic influence: the Americans to take the Supreme Command in the Pacific, the British in the Middle East, and both nations jointly in the Atlantic and North Africa; the British should command operations in Burma, India, and the Indian Ocean.¹⁴²

Roosevelt's new telegram arrived in Churchill's hands on the ninth. Eden agreed with the prime minister that it was a heartening sign that the Americans were beginning to swing into their stride. Churchill read it out to his Pacific council. His colleagues viewed it with as much enthusiasm as the Curate did the Egg. 'Good in places,' was the assessment by the C.I.G.S., 'but calculated to drive Australia, N.Z., and Canada into U.S.A. arms, and help to bust up the empire!'¹⁴³

At the same time Churchill received a long analysis from Sir John Dill in Washington. In the field-marshal's view, the Americans were still unready for war on this scale. They were inclined to blame the British for their problems, comparing British generals with 'MacArthur the Magnificent and his Miracle Men,' as Dill alliteratively put it. Many Americans comforted themselves with the belief that if only the British had treated their Indians and their Burmese as the Americans treated 'their' Filipinos, the Far Eastern countries would give less cause for anxiety today. 'There is a lot of very unfriendly criticism of Britain in this country,' warned Sir John, 'and a lot of the criticism is based on abysmal ignorance.' Roosevelt was charming, he said, but he lacked 'a tidy mind,' and he did not like facing facts. Dill described Marshall as outstanding and clear-headed, but King and Arnold in less glowing terms.¹⁴⁴



During Churchill's absence in January 1942 the cabinet had expressed the curious view that it would not only be salutary to bomb certain munitions factories in France, but that French morale would be strengthened by such raids, despite the civilian casualties.¹⁴⁵ The chiefs of staff in Washington were unhappy with this, reminding their colleagues in London that their object was to bomb Germany and *lower* German morale – 'It is not clear whether bombing French factories and raising French morale is a sound diversion.'¹⁴⁶

Sir Arthur Harris had no time for such dialectics. A few days after he settled into High Wycombe, the bombing offensive resumed with the Renault factory at Billancourt in northern Paris as the target. The factory was believed to be turning out about a hundred tanks and a thousand trucks for the Wehrmacht each month. It was an easy target, involving only a short penetration. Harris's crews dropped over four hundred tons of bombs, doing damage on a scale exceeding any so far achieved elsewhere by either the

British or German air forces.¹⁴⁷ The bombs killed over five hundred French men, women and children, including 397 whose homes were near the factory; a thousand more were seriously injured. It seemed hard to justify inflicting such carnage on the peoples of a friendly country with which none of the Allies was at war. Admiral William D Leahy, Roosevelt's ambassador to Vichy France, was particularly critical.¹⁴⁸ France declared March 7 a day of national mourning for the dead, and flags went to half-mast throughout the country, including those on the American embassy.¹⁴⁹

To Churchill's admirals the advantages to be sought in bombing even German women and children to death while Britain's fleet and every outpost of her empire were starved of aircraft, were less obvious. By bombing Germany however Churchill hoped, as he informed Sir John Dill in Washington, to take the weight off Russia.¹⁵⁰ 'Now that the season is improving,' he wrote to Stalin on March 9, the day after Harris's visit to Chequers, 'we are resuming [our] heavy air offensive both by day and night upon Germany.' In his reply, Stalin included half a dozen words of appreciation, and to Churchill that made it all seem worthwhile.¹⁵¹

On the eighth and ninth, Harris attempted to raid Essen in the Ruhr, using GEE for the first time. Results were disappointing and Churchill remained unconvinced. Perhaps the air ministry had ridden too hard over naval requirements in order to favour Bomber Command. Lunching with him in London on March 12, the Archbishop of Canterbury touched upon their bombing offensive. For half an hour he held forth on the 'failure' of high-level bombing – it must have been an incongruous conversation, and the prime minister was also perplexed at how much the prelate actually knew about it all. Writing to Portal and Sinclair a few days later he echoed something of the archbishop's scepticism. 'You need not argue the value of bombing Germany,' he assured them, 'because I have my own opinion about that – namely, that it is not decisive but better than doing nothing.' It was, he said, a formidable means of injuring the enemy. He currently considered however that shore-based torpedo bombers should enjoy priority. 'I hope you realise,' he added, 'how very widely the existing policy of the Air Ministry is challenged by opinion,' and he mentioned those which the archbishop had expressed to him.¹⁵²

Portal's response boiled down to one which rather begged the underlying question as to Bomber Command's effectiveness: 'How long the criticisms would survive the resumption of full scale [German] attacks on this country,' the chief of air staff observed, 'seems to me open to question.' Later

that month 134 R.A.F. bombers visited the Rhineland's ancient cathedral city of Cologne. For a day or two Adolf Hitler contemplated retaliation against London's famous architecture. On the sixteenth Portal learned that the Luftwaffe was calibrating its blind-bombing beams for a raid on London that night, just as in the Blitz of 1940. Learning of this, Churchill, still out at Chequers, ingloriously abandoned his plan to return to London to attend that night's war cabinet.¹⁵³ No raid however materialised: Hitler had personally intervened.* 'With P.M. in his present mood,' noted Sir Alan Brooke, 'and with his desire to maintain the air bombardment of Germany, it will not be possible to get adequate [air] support for either the Army or the Navy.'¹⁵⁴

Sunday March 22 found Sir Arthur Harris lunching again with Churchill at Chequers, together with 'the Prof.,' Lord Cherwell.¹⁵⁵ The bomber commander was gaining what is now popularly called the Inside Track.

* Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring inquired on March 21: 'Why did the Führer call off the reprisal raid on London again?' Chief of air staff Hans Jeschonnek replied: 'The Führer does not want to provoke an attack on German cities so long as the British are attacking in such meagre strength and we can't strike annihilating blows in the west.' Transcript of Göring's conference in Erhard Milch's papers; author's microfilm DI-40.

18: *Humiliation Valley*

MANY TIMES, visiting his map room since returning from Washington, Churchill had glared at a coloured pin stuck into the Trondheim fjord in Norway. On January 6, 1942, his Oracle had tipped him off to the arrival there of Hitler's 42,000-ton battleship *Tirpitz*. Bristling with eight fifteen-inch guns, she was one of the most powerful warships afloat. Riding at anchor at Trondheim with the cruisers *Admiral Scheer* and *Hipper*, her mere existence exerted a baleful effect on all Allied naval planning in the northern hemisphere.

'Crippling this ship,' Churchill reminded Admiral Pound, 'would alter the entire face of the naval war.' It would be worth the loss of a hundred aeroplanes and five hundred airmen, in his view.¹ 'The entire naval situation throughout the world would be altered,' he reiterated a few days later, 'and the naval command in the Pacific would be regained.'²

Yet the weeks passed, and nothing was done. At a defence committee meeting in March he demanded an air attack on the battleship while the moon was full. 'Her elimination would profoundly affect the course of the war,' he reiterated. The chief of air staff Sir Charles Portal explained however that *Tirpitz* was now shielded by powerful anti-aircraft gun defences.³

She could not always hide behind them, however. On March 5 radio monitors heard the German admiral commanding the Arctic region reporting in code to *Gruppe Nord* (Naval Group North) that air reconnaissance had located an allied convoy heading for North Russia – it was convoy PQ12; a few hours later, he ordered a destroyer flotilla to stand by. At 4:37 P.M. on the sixth the British heard *Gruppe Nord* radioing instructions that 'Admiral Commanding Battleships [Vice-Admiral Ciliax] with *Tirpitz* and three destroyers will leave square AF.6717 at 1700/6/3 [March 6] northbound at twenty-five knots to operate against enemy convoy.' Two days later, the

codebreakers learned that *Tirpitz* was to rendezvous with other enemy naval units at eight A.M. at square AC4735 – a code-grid location precisely known to the admiralty from captured maps.⁴ Churchill was told that so far the Germans had suspected ‘no unusual British activity.’⁵

The chance had now come to destroy this enemy naval titan as she embarked on her first hostile sortie. With ULTRA giving the game away like this, it was like playing a deadly poker hand with a mirror behind your opponent’s back. Admiral Sir John Tovey, commander-in-chief of the Home Fleet, took his force, which included the new aircraft-carrier *Victorious*, to sea. The vulnerable PQ convoy was diverted to safety. The battle took place on March 9. At eight A.M. the enemy admiral saw that he was being shadowed by Albacore torpedo-planes. As he turned to flee, a cloud of Albacores came buzzing in to attack, hurling their torpedoes at the battleship from every angle in a nine-minute action which none of her sailors, knowing how few had survived the sinking of *Bismarck*, would forget. Fate was with the Germans, this time, as every single torpedo missed the battleship.⁶

Cheated of his prey, Churchill demanded an explanation from the First Sea Lord as to ‘how it was that 12 of our machines managed to get no hits as compared with the extraordinary efficiency of the Japanese attack on *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*. Was *Tirpitz* under an Air Umbrella at the time, or not?’ Pound pointed out that *Tirpitz* was a moving target, while *Prince of Wales* was stopped.

AS A response, this was hardly likely to satisfy Churchill, and it did not.⁷ Fortunately, if such figures in wartime can be believed, his *personal* popularity rating, currently measured by Gallup at eighty-one per cent, seemed inviolate – the British still blamed only their government, rather than its prime minister, for Britain’s misfortunes; but this might not last much longer.

His friends and sycophants like Harriman blamed his problems on Britain’s ‘disreputable press.’ Churchill liked to hear this: he hated the press, and even persuaded the cabinet to appoint a committee to deal with them.⁸ On March 11 Brendan Bracken, minister of information, lashed the parliamentary lobby correspondents, telling them that it would be their fault, ‘If,’ as now seemed possible, ‘Britain lost the war.’ He appealed to them to play down the speeches of the government’s critics, while giving more generous coverage to its supporters.⁹

With Churchill’s approval, Bevin ordered the incorrigible journalist Frank Owen and Percy Cudlipp, editor of the *Daily Herald*, drafted into the uni-

formed forces, and he had a warning sent to the *Daily Mirror* to tone down its political cartoons. Lunching with Bracken and the editor of *The Times*, Churchill rasped that the reporting of the *Mirror*, *Mail*, and *Herald* was ‘calculated to undermine the Army.’ ‘No man has had to bear such disasters as I have,’ he said. The editor of *The Times* responded however in robust terms and, as he observed in his private diary, Winston ‘far from storming’ bore this candour well. ‘A very impressive person,’ summarised the editor, ‘with strong limitations. His utter lack of pomposity is engaging. He was wearing his one-piece “siren suit.” Ate heartily.’¹⁰

Even this worthy newspaperman, Robin Barrington-Ward, found Winston ‘not quite as fit and sparkling as at our last lunch’ however.

Churchill’s doctors seem to have felt the same way, and they ordered him to rest. The rest of his appointments were cancelled, and a car drove him down to Chequers late on Thursday March 12.¹¹ He spent the next six days here in bed or prowling around in his silken dressing gown. On Friday his doctor arrived at the mansion, bringing the Australian surgeon Sir Thomas Dunhill; they stayed for four days. The whisper in Whitehall was that Winston had had a minor operation: it was probably on his thyroid gland. Eden, arriving at Chequers a few days later, found the prime minister still laid up in bed after a ‘minor operation which he most amusingly described.’¹²



From the Oracle he could see that Hitler was planning a spring offensive into southern Russia, and he fretted over how Britain could help Stalin.¹³ Perhaps Britain really should accept all Stalin’s outlandish claims for new frontiers; Churchill decided that, *faute de mieux*, he should put pressure on the United States to this end.

On March 10 he dined with Beaverbrook and asked him to go to Washington to establish a ‘direct line of communication’ to Roosevelt. He asked Hopkins in a telegram to impress upon the president that although Beaverbrook was ‘for the time being’ out of office at his own wish, they remained ‘close friends and intimate political associates.’¹⁴ Beaverbrook however still made no bones of his criticism of Churchill for having as he said ‘no Russian policy,’ and he continued to urge the need for a Second Front to help Stalin.¹⁵

Churchill, now down at Chequers, ‘phoned him on March 13 with a new proposal – that after his consultations with Roosevelt, he should go on

to Moscow as the prime minister's personal 'plenipotentiary' to Stalin. That should see him in Moscow by the time of Hitler's uneasily awaited spring offensive. It was an odd idea – appointing a plenipotentiary to bypass both the foreign office and Lord Halifax.¹⁶ He claimed to Beaverbrook that Eden was in favour; but evidently he was not, because the next day he phoned again to say that Eden advised against announcing any mission by Beaverbrook to Moscow as this would encourage Stalin to take Britain's agreement on the Soviet frontiers for granted. 'Beaverbrook is off to Washington,' the prime minister nonetheless informed Stalin, 'where he will help smooth out the [frontier] treaty question with the president.'¹⁷ Perhaps he, Churchill, should see Stalin himself? The idea kept dancing into his head. Over lunch at Chequers that midday he asked the Soviet ambassador, who arrived with a 'good message from Joe,' whether Stalin would meet him if he went out to, say, Baku (calling, of course, at Cairo on the way out, to be rude to Auchinleck).¹⁸

Maisky undertook to find out.

IT WAS ON this occasion that Maisky conveyed to Churchill fresh rumours that Hitler was planning to use poison gas in his new offensive.* Eden suggested that they promise that Britain would immediately retaliate with poison gas attacks on the civil population of Germany, and on the eighteenth Churchill laid this grim prospect before the defence committee.¹⁹ Portal assured him that Britain's 'dropping capacity' was greater than Germany's, and Churchill accordingly informed Stalin: 'I have been building up an immense store of gas bombs for discharge from aircraft.'²⁰ Stalin replied expressing gratitude.

Three weeks later, Sir Alan Brooke secretly reported that it would in fact be to Britain's 'grave disadvantage' to become involved in chemical warfare. Countries like India had no gas defences at all. Moreover Britain would have no way to verify any unsupported Russian allegation that the Germans had begun using poison gas. These were serious issues, and the defence committee agonised over how to escape from the commitment that Churchill had given. They also told him on April 28 that, far from having an 'immense store' their own stocks of poison gas shells were only limited. They decided to inform Stalin that throughout the empire gas warfare preparations were 'totally inadequate.'²¹

* There were no such plans.

On the other issue, the Soviet frontiers, the prime minister received an unhelpful telegram from Roosevelt, who still refused to let the British foreign office stampede him.

Since the president saw no real danger that Stalin would ‘quit the war,’ he saw no reason to decide any frontiers until it was over. It was not the first time that the president would display greater statesmanship than Mr Churchill, or his advisers.

Egged on by Eden, Churchill and his cabinet took the other line. It would remain a divisive issue among the allies until long after the war was over. ‘We are selling the Poles down the river,’ the veteran F.O. chief Sir Alexander Cadogan would privately observe, recording his opposition, ‘and everyone will suspect we’re going to do the same to them; and we’re annoying and disgusting Roosevelt. And to what purpose?’²²

WHEN THE prime minister had announced to the House on March 11, before departing for Chequers, that the cabinet was sending Sir Stafford Cripps out to India, there were loud murmurs of approval from his own benches. The socialists were silent, suspecting that he was spiriting their champion out of England for reasons of his own.²³

The next day brought a further nagging telegram on India from President Roosevelt, suggesting that they install a ‘temporary’ Dominion government there. ‘For the love of Heaven,’ the great American concluded, finally using a passage that he had in fact drafted and redrafted two weeks before, ‘don’t bring me into this, though I do want to be of help. It is, strictly speaking, none of my business,’ he added – probably the only words with which the P.M. heartily concurred – ‘except in so far as it is a part and parcel of the successful fight that you and I are making.’²⁴

Churchill ignored the message. He hoped that the India nightmare would soon be over. He dined with Sir Stafford at Chequers on the following day, the eve of his departure for India, and gave final instructions for the mission – Cripps was to consult with both the viceroy and Wavell, and to seek the assent of the Indian parties to the declaration; but it is noteworthy that he gave to Cripps no powers whatsoever to negotiate beyond what the war cabinet had approved.²⁵ This left purposefully vague the actual means whereby the Indian leaders were to participate in their country’s destiny, while stipulating Britain’s need to retain control of her defence. Churchill asked Sir Stafford to visit Auchinleck at Cairo on the way and give him a piece of the prime ministerial mind about the delays. The prime minister

ordered General Sir Archibald Nye, Brooke's deputy, to accompany Cripps to Cairo.

ANXIOUS TO bring forward the offensive in the Western Desert, Churchill had cabled to General Auchinleck, using their private link, a terse request that he come to London for immediate consultations at his 'earliest convenience.' The general had declined, arguing that he was needed in Cairo. Such a rebuff would have been unthinkable before Singapore. Churchill seethed at Auchinleck throughout March and talked of replacing him with Lord Gort. Brooke was dismayed.²⁶ Gort's last field command, in France in 1940, had hardly been crowned in glory – it had resulted in the first recorded occasion when history had allowed the British to reach the beaches before the Germans (at Dunkirk).

On the thirteenth he 'phoned Brooke in fury about Auchinleck's rebuff. He predicted that Rommel would probably succeed in reinforcing his front faster than Auchinleck. That afternoon he 'phoned Brooke again, announcing that he was going to wire Auchinleck immediately.²⁷ Brooke intercepted the message and toned it down. 'A very heavy German counter-stroke upon the Russians must be expected soon,' Churchill's message to Cairo eventually read, 'and it will be thought intolerable that the 635,000 men (exclusive of Malta) on your ration strength should remain unengaged, preparing for another set-piece battle in July.' The next day he followed with another message threatening, to Brooke's dismay, to remove fifteen of General Auchinleck's air squadrons to help Stalin in the Caucasus.²⁸

Churchill squirmed with impatience. After due inquiry in Cairo, Cripps and Nye signed a telegram to Churchill confirming that there was no alternative to accepting the target date given by Auchinleck for the offensive in Cyrenaica. Before the chiefs of staff meeting on March 24 he sent for Brooke. The C.I.G.S. found him in bed wearing his dragon dressing-gown, cursing out loud, and suggesting replacing Auchinleck with Nye. Brooke found this constant need to protect the general exhausting, particularly given that he actually had no high opinion of him as a field commander.²⁹ The next day Churchill agreed to postpone the offensive until mid-May. Given the secret data that he had from ULTRA on the relative tank strengths, he remained convinced that Auchinleck was missing a unique opportunity, and at the next defence committee meeting he made no secret of his impatience.³⁰ Chancing to visit the prime minister at this time, Brooke was just able to prevent his next act of 'madness,' namely removing half a dozen fighter

squadrons from the Middle East to send to southern Russia or India.³¹ If they were to stage the offensive in Libya in May, the C.I.G.S. argued, it would be naked folly to withdraw fighters from the Middle East for India or anywhere else right now.³² Churchill's favourite airman, Charles Portal, had suggested it. It was all hauntingly similar to the controversies about reinforcing a tottering France at the time of Dunkirk.³³

LORD BEAVERBROOK now left for Washington. He was not happy to go. He 'phoned Eden on March 19 in disconsolate mood, suggesting that 'he was being banished' to the former colonies. Eden wearily reminded Beaverbrook that he had in fact proposed it. 'Only to please Winston,' retorted Max. Did the prime minister really want him to go? Eden promised to ask, and walked over to No. 10; he persuaded Winston, whom he found 'almost maddened' by Beaverbrook's changes of mind, to telephone Beaverbrook and put him out of his misery.³⁴

Arriving in Washington, Beaverbrook would find President Roosevelt obsessed with the need to invade western Europe that same year, 1942.³⁵ He well knew that Churchill's government was unanimously opposed to this. Beaverbrook perceived that by taking the opposite line he might yet restore his prestige at home, regain the favour of the shop-stewards, and generally take the left wing by storm. Was this not a far grander cause to espouse than Stalin's dubious frontier claims?

To Lord Halifax in Washington he postulated that no military achievement in the western desert could be an adequate substitute for a cross-Channel invasion. It would bolster Russian morale and help the British political situation and, he said, he personally 'would not grudge the loss of 50,000 men.' If Hitler defeated Russia during 1942, Beaverbrook reasoned, that would be the downfall of Mr Churchill too. Although he was careful to intersperse the remark, 'I am completely loyal to Churchill, who I think is the greatest leader we could have had,' he voiced criticism of the P.M.'s offhand treatment of Australia; Lord Halifax detected a trace of jealousy at the intimacy that had sprung up between Churchill and Roosevelt. The P.M., Beaverbrook complained, no longer showed him what was in their telegrams to each other. Of his own political ambitions the former minister made no secret: 'I might be the best man to run the war,' he meditated out loud to the ambassador. 'It wants a ruthless, unscrupulous, harsh man, and I believe I could do it.' Somewhat improbably, he claimed to have said so to the P.M. too.³⁶

Beaverbrook dispatched a short message to Winston, promising a longer one next week; and a telegram to Eden urging him *nil desperandum* (not to despair) – ‘which,’ mocked the Canadian, ‘you will be able to translate because you were at Eton.’ An odd creature, reflected Halifax, as he showed Churchill’s uncertain friend the door.³⁷ At the end of that month Beaverbrook made a broadcast in which he loudly propagated the Soviet line on the Second Front. Churchill heard it, but sent a surprisingly warm telegram to him.³⁸



There could be little likelihood of hurling any full-scale amphibious assault across the English Channel this year, 1942. ‘Dickie’ Mountbatten was still finding his feet as Churchill’s new Director of Combined Operations. He did however mount two minor assaults on the French coast; in February he landed a Commando team at Bruneval in a brilliantly executed operation designed to take out an enemy coastal radar site and capture electronic equipment essential for planning the attack on the German radar system.

A few weeks later Mountbatten staged a more ambitious *coup de main*. Under cover of darkness on Saturday March 28 he sent an amphibious task force consisting of 353 naval officers and men and 268 Commandos to destroy the large dry-dock at Saint-Nazaire on the Atlantic coast of France; it was said to be the only such dock capable of accommodating *Tirpitz*. He had packed three tons of high explosive aboard the worn-out destroyer *Campbeltown*, converting her into a floating time bomb; she was one of the fifty elderly destroyers which Churchill had acquired from Roosevelt in August 1940. Bathed in the glare of enemy searchlights, and under a hail of fire from the shore, escorted by eighteen coastal force boats flying the German ensign and making German identification signals, this warship forced her way up the Loire river after midnight, and rammed the lock gates. While officers set time fuses on the explosives, Mountbatten’s Commandos poured ashore to destroy the dockside equipment. A pitched battle resulted between these brave troops – four of whom earned the highest British medal for valour on this night – and the German defenders.

Mountbatten spent that weekend with Churchill at Chequers awaiting news of the operation. News arrived only sparsely at first. ‘At first,’ Elizabeth Layton learned, ‘it seemed that all had not gone quite as planned.’ The *Campbeltown* had not blown up as anticipated. On the morning of March 29

the admiralty had to inform Churchill that the operation had been successful 'but costly.'³⁹ This was to become a familiar refrain with Mountbatten's early ventures. Late in the evening however he came into the prime minister's office, 'flashing his charming smile' so that the girls swooned with delight, and asked Miss Layton to put him through to the palace, so that he could give His Majesty the latest reports.⁴⁰

The true facts, as they emerged, were not encouraging. The ship had eventually blown up, destroying the installations; but the raid had cost 144 British lives. Of the eighteen accompanying coastal force boats, fourteen had been destroyed, with the loss of 191 sailors (of these half had been killed). Of the Commando landing party, all but five had been killed or taken prisoner. French (not German) dockyard workers and civilians were crawling over the abandoned *Campbeltown* when it blew up without warning at 11:45 A.M., killing sixty of them. The Germans had pulled well back, and suffered few if any casualties.⁴¹

As was his way, Churchill would maintain that the enemy had bled far more.* He – or perhaps Mountbatten himself, who may well have drafted this passage of Churchill's *The Second World War* – suggested that 'a large party of German officers and technicians were inspecting the wreck of the *Campbeltown*' when it blew up shortly before midday, killing 'hundreds of Germans.'⁴² The British official historian would merely console his readers that 'the enemy's losses were certainly far higher,' without venturing to offer any details.⁴³

The strategic benefit of the Saint-Nazaire raid was slight. For other reasons, *Tirpitz* never ventured out into the Atlantic from her various Norwegian lairs. More significant was the boost which the operation gave to British morale, and the strategic uncertainty that the operation inculcated in Hitler – the sudden awareness of the vulnerability of his entire French coastline, which he now issued immediate orders to reinforce. The raid was thus the origin of the formidable Atlantic Wall.

AFTER DINNER on March 30 the prime minister kept General Brooke up long after midnight examining with him ways of operating against northern France in the event that Hitler's coming offensive on the eastern front

* See our reference to Churchill's statements about the 'four thousand' Germans drowned when his warships sank ten Greek caiques in May 1941; the figure was three hundred. Vol. i, pages 568–9.

succeeded. Brooke had to point out that there was little they could do with only ten divisions.⁴⁴ Having lost her finest officers in what was still called the Great War, Britain lacked good commanders; in Brooke's candid view half of the army's corps and divisional commanders were unfit for their commands. Leaving No. 10 long after one A.M., Brooke felt dispirited by it all. Britain was not much different from a dictatorship, he reflected, governed by one big man who was 'a grave danger' in many respects. 'Politicians,' he philosophised, 'still suffer from that little knowledge of military matters which gives them unwarranted confidence that they are born strategists!'⁴⁵

'You cannot judge the P.M. by ordinary standards,' Pug Ismay had written to Auchinleck early in 1942. 'He is not in the least like anyone that you or I have ever met. He is a mass of contradictions. He is either on the crest of the wave, or in the trough, either highly laudatory or bitterly condemnatory; either in an angelic temper, or a hell of a rage. When he isn't fast asleep he's a volcano. There are no half-measures in his make-up. He is a child of nature with moods as variable as an April day.'⁴⁶ Under pressure from this volcano, the chiefs of staff agreed, three weeks after Saint-Nazaire, that there should be more and bigger raids on the enemy coastline.⁴⁷



There was another front, still barely noticed by the enemy – the bomber offensive. At the same time as Mountbatten's amphibious warriors were straggling home from Saint-Nazaire, Sir Arthur Harris's bomber crews were being briefed for their first major fire-raising attack on a German town, the mediæval port of Lübeck on the Baltic. In every such raid, as Sir Charles Portal had directed, the aiming point would be the town's ancient – and combustible – residential heart, and *not* its factories or war installations. That night, March 28, the conflagrations in Lübeck totally gutted the city centre, and killed several hundred of its citizens. Encouraged by the aerial photographs of the devastation, which Harris was not slow to produce to him, two weeks later Churchill asked the air ministry to do what it could to increase the weight of bombs actually dropped on the German cities; he referred to the new radio-navigation and blind-bombing equipment coming into service.⁴⁸

The bombing campaign was still very much on probation. It had many enemies, but one powerful advocate: the Prof. – Professor Lindemann, now fifty-six years old, the prime minister's faddish and eccentric personal ad-

viser since 1940. He had the happy knack of reducing even the most complicated scientific matters to a language which was intelligible to Winston. On the Monday after the Lübeck raid the Prof. submitted to Churchill what seemed to him, he wrote, 'a simple method of estimating what we could do by bombing Germany.'

The method was based on the crudest mathematics. The 1940 German raids on Birmingham and other cities, he said, showed that each ton of explosives dropped on a built-up area rendered one or two hundred people homeless. Each bomber had a life expectancy of nearly fourteen operational sorties, during which it would drop about forty tons of bombs. By mid-1943 they would manufacture about ten thousand heavy bombers. If even half the total bombload were dropped on the fifty-eight German cities housing over 100,000 people, so Lord Cherwell calculated, then about one third of the German population would be blasted out of house and home. 'Investigation,' he added, 'seems to show that having one's house demolished is most damaging to morale. People seem to mind it more than having their friends or even relatives killed.' He pointed out that he was not even including in his calculations the thousands of American bombers due to enter the fray.⁴⁹

The prime minister circulated this brutal and unfeeling document to the members of the defence committee a few days later.⁵⁰ Sir Archibald Sinclair wholeheartedly adopted Cherwell's views, pointing out 'we must resist to the utmost any avoidable diversion of bombing effort away from Germany.' If these conditions were met, based on the recent results at Lübeck, 'We see no reason to doubt that within eighteen months, and with American help, the degree of destruction which Lord Cherwell suggests is possible can, in fact, be achieved.'⁵¹

Others scoffed at these calculations. Sir Henry Tizard, already a bitter academic rival of the Prof., called his arguments misleading. Doubting even the 'ten thousand bomber' figure, he suggested that seven thousand would be more realistic, and even these would be short of trained aircrews. He queried too whether they could regularly set down half of their bombs in the built-up areas of the target cities. German bombs, he warned moreover, were more efficient than British; German houses were more sturdily built; and meanwhile the navy would be robbed of the support of long-range bombers.⁵² The Prof. sent a bland reply: 'I used the round figure of 10,000 . . . to save the prime minister the trouble of making arithmetical calculations.'⁵³

Churchill was still unconvinced, it must be said. By the middle of April he had commendably decided that a keen intellect, untrammelled by departmental prejudices, should weigh all the evidence. Once again Mr Justice Singleton was asked to investigate.⁵⁴

In truth, with the industrial base for Britain's bomber force already largely laid down in steel and concrete (the blueprints for the Lancaster heavy bomber went back to 1936), and a significant portion of her arms effort devoted specifically to supporting strategic bombing operations, there was no short-term alternative before the government. In April, Sir Arthur Harris took the debate into his own hands. His force executed four classic incendiary attacks on the Baltic city of Rostock (such port cities were much easier to find at night). This time there could be no arguing about the effect. Intercepted German police messages reported over two thousand dwellings destroyed in one such raid, fifty people dead, five hundred injured, and twenty thousand evacuated.⁵⁵ A few days later the prime minister was reading an intercepted Turkish diplomatic telegram which reported that 'as a result of the heavy air raids on Rostock which started on 24th April and continued for four nights, the Neptune naval arsenal and the Heinkel airplane construction works were burnt out and totally destroyed.'⁵⁶

As the fire-raid strategy took shape, the government had to weave an increasingly tangled web of deception. When the British Broadcasting Corporation reported that the R.A.F. had 'destroyed a large number of workmen's houses' in Rostock, an indignant Independent Labour M.P., like a ghostly voice from different times, asked in the House whether it 'was necessary to destroy workers' dwellings in order to impede or disorganise the German war effort?' (Unwilling to shame the Devil and speak the truth, a government spokesman made a non-committal reply). Churchill of course knew what was going on, but he began deceiving his gullible monarch about the bombing campaign; when the German air force started a belated campaign of reprisals – the 'Bædeker raids' targeted on Britain's most historic cities like Exeter, Bath, Norwich, and York – the king bleated in his diary at the end of April, 'It is outrageous that the Germans should come & bomb our Cathedral cities & towns like Bath, which they know are undefended & contain no war industries, as "Reprisal" raids for what we are doing to their war industries.'⁵⁷

Cynical, ruthless and bloodthirsty elder statesmen were now giving the orders to the young and idealistic bomber crews. Often they had volunteered for Fighter Command, and found themselves propelled into the

bomber force instead. Most of them were too young to have families of their own, and they were insensitive to the carnage they were wreaking. It was dark, and they were flying at great height. Peer-pressure and *esprit de corps* maintained discipline. Crew members who balked at flying such missions were branded cowards and transferred in disgrace.⁵⁸ It is true that those who flew with Bomber Command displayed physical courage of an uncommon variety, since their life expectancy was short, and they knew it. But what in the earlier wars, and in more modern times, was universally recognised as a war crime, would become in Churchill's War a commonplace, justified by a lattice of legends, apologies, and lies. Besides, those at the top like Portal and Sinclair firmly believed in killing. Sinclair received a letter from a Member of Parliament describing a visit to Norwich after two nights of 'Bædeker' bombing which had destroyed nearly half of the city's forty thousand houses. 'Incidentally,' the correspondent added, 'I am all for the bombing of working class areas in German cities. I am Cromwellian – I believe in "slaying in the name of the Lord."'

'I am delighted,' Sinclair replied, 'to find that you and I are in complete agreement.'⁵⁹

THE ALLIED CONVOY PQ12 had completed its passage to North Russia almost unharmed, after the brief excitement caused by the *Tirpitz* sortie. PQ13 attracted an operation by enemy destroyers which skirmished with the cruiser escort at the end of March 1942. The commander-in-chief of the Home Fleet, Admiral Sir John Tovey, warned that Hitler evidently intended to do his utmost to stop the North Russian convoy operations.

Churchill was not comfortable with this admiral. Tovey was outspoken and no respecter of persons, as one operation at the end of 1941 had shown: Rear-Admiral Sir Louis 'Turtle' Hamilton had deemed it wise to break off an elaborately planned Combined Operations raid against Vaagsö Island, off north-west Norway, when the Germans moved dive-bombers to Bodö, an airfield dangerously within range. From Washington, Churchill had ungraciously asked the chiefs of staff to justify what he called this hasty departure.⁶⁰ Hamilton however had clear orders from Tovey to withdraw immediately if he considered the danger of air attack to be serious.⁶¹ Both Tovey and the First Sea Lord endorsed Hamilton's action.⁶² For several days Churchill continued to grumble about the Vaagsö raid, calling it 'a marked failure,' and carping that it would have been better not to undertake it at all.⁶³ He rebuked Pound for disagreeing with him, and described Tovey as negative,

unenterprising, and narrow-minded ('This however is entirely between ourselves.'⁶⁴)

The problem for Churchill was that the commander-in-chief was admired throughout the navy. In April 1942 he tried to persuade Admiral Sir Andrew B. Cunningham, brother of the unfortunate general, to replace him; he brought Cunningham back from overseas, ostensibly to offer him the job currently held by Admiral Sir Charles Little as head of the British naval mission in Washington. Reporting first at the admiralty, however, Cunningham found Admiral Pound 'in great distress' and even contemplating resignation, since he had learned that Churchill was thinking of replacing him by the young upstart, 'Dickie' Mountbatten (although Cunningham himself was by seniority and experience the obvious successor).⁶⁵

Deducing that the P.M. evidently had 'some ulterior motive' for bringing him back to London, Cunningham was on guard when he arrived to spend the night at Chequers on Saturday April 11.⁶⁶ It was a full house, with not only Mountbatten and A. V. Alexander, but 'Butcher' Harris and the Prof., and – as we shall see – the Americans Marshall, Harriman, Hopkins, and all the British chiefs of staff staying under the ancient roof as well.

After dinner Winston invited Admiral Cunningham into the map room for a talk. 'Of course there is no reason why you should go to Washington,' Churchill lisped, and when the admiral, his suspicions confirmed, replied that he thought this was why he had been brought home, Churchill continued: 'No, I want you to go to the Home Fleet.'

'But you have a very good Admiral there already,' said Cunningham: 'Sir John Tovey.'

'Oh, I want you to relieve Admiral Tovey,' said Churchill.

'If Tovey drops dead on his bridge,' said Cunningham pointedly, 'I will certainly relieve him. Otherwise not.'⁶⁷



It seemed therefore that Churchill was stuck with the generals and admirals that he had got. People often harked back, he would remind his ministers a year later, to the 'crisis of 1940.' He himself however was far more frightened, he freely admitted, during this spring of 1942. It was at this moment, he would recall, that the Mahatma Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi invited the British to withdraw from India, leaving the sub-continent, in Churchill's words, 'to God, that is to say, to Anarchy.'⁶⁸ Thus these



weeks found him fraught by fears of what seemed to be a vast and sinister Axis pincer movement, with the Japanese ultimately marching through India into Iran and the Germans plunging across the Caucasus into Iran too. That would truly spell the end of the empire. The Japanese seemed to be unstoppable.

After reading one report on Japanese naval construction he asked, 'Is it credible that the Japanese have at present nine capital ships and two large aircraft-carriers all building simultaneously? If so, the future is indeed serious.' He inquired how much steel would be required – this was the parameter on which he had always relied. 'We must on no account underrate the Japanese,' he wrote. 'Facts are however what is needed.'⁶⁹

On the first day of April 1942 he communicated his worries to Roosevelt. Which way would Japan strike next? Toward Australia after all, or India? Confessing himself to be an 'amateur' strategist, he felt that Japan's wisest strategy would be to continue northward through Burma and finish the job in China first. In this message, he professed to doubt that the Japanese had any serious intention of invading either India or Australia.⁷⁰

Already disconcerted by Churchill's sleight-of-hand with their other homebound divisions, the Australian government had begun expressing concern about leaving their division in the Middle East.

On March 23 Churchill had cabled about this to Roosevelt: 'The matter is complicated by Australian Party politics,' he added, 'which proceed with much bitterness and jealousy regardless of national danger.'⁷¹ Roosevelt responded on the twenty-sixth that he had undertaken to send more troops out to Australia, but only the Australian prime minister Curtin could decide whether the division should return home.⁷² Churchill remained reluctant to send scarce resources down under. 'I am by no means convinced that Australia is the chosen target,' he informed the Australian delegate in Washington, adding reassuringly: 'Once the enemy shows his hand, decisions can be made.'⁷³ He had pledged to the prime minister of Australia that if Japan did ever make a serious invasion attempt, by six to eight divisions, Britain would come to his aid. It was all very worrying.

He admitted to Roosevelt that the weight of the war had oppressed him more since his homecoming, and he hinted at making an early return to Washington, perhaps 'when the weather gets better' – he might propose himself for a weekend with the Roosevelts, 'and flip over,' as he airily put it.

Roosevelt, appalled by the prospect of another British invasion of the White House, did not rise to this hint. No invitation was forthcoming.

WITH SINGAPORE gone, it became imperative to hold on to Ceylon, with its capital Colombo and the naval base at Trincomalee.

Late in March Churchill's Intelligence agencies deciphered Japanese messages which indicated the possibility of operations against Ceylon; but the clues were only vague.⁷⁴ From the MOST SECRET account of events rendered afterwards by the First Sea Lord it seems possible that the British were reading JN.25, the Japanese fleet operational code. 'From secret Intelligence,' wrote Pound a few days later, 'we had reason to believe that some operation involving aircraft-carriers was contemplated about 1st April. Having in mind the Pearl Harbor attack, a similar operation against Colombo and Trincomalee naturally occurred to everyone.'⁷⁵

The minuscule pocket diaries kept by Admiral Sir James Somerville, the commander-in-chief, Eastern Fleet, relate the rest of the unhappy story. On March 28, a 'very hot & sweaty' Ceylon day, he had recorded: 'Great flap owing to news that [the] Japs intend carrier-borne attack on this place quite shortly.' The next day he went to the office early and had 'a series of conferences, all on possible Jap carrier attack.'

From which direction would the Japanese strike? Correctly, as it turned out, Somerville expected them to make a hit-and-run raid at Ceylon with carrier planes. He would have to assume they would approach from the south-east – besides, 'we cannot cover all approaches.'

It would be unwise to attack the Japanese fleet with land-based airplanes, as the Blenheim bomber crews lacked experience and the Swordfish torpedo bombers did not have sufficient range. 'So all depends on the carrier,' concluded the admiral, adding however: '*Hermes* cannot fly off T B [torpedo bombers] unless good breeze.' On March 30, he had time to jot down: 'Rush at the office getting ready for sea. To see Adm. Helfrich [Dutch C.-in-C.] & discuss situation. . . . Addressed ship's co. Weighed and proceeded at 2:00.'

Somerville put to sea with the whole of his fleet including the R-class battleships, and positioned himself to the south-east of the great island.⁷⁶ For two days however nothing happened. It looked like a false alarm.

April 2: Heavy rain squalls during forenoon & fine afternoon. . . No news of enemy. . . Decided to start back for base T [Trincomalee] to-night if no report. Rest. Very short of water.

April 3: A very hot fine day. No news of enemy during night.

Still no attack materialised, and he returned the R-class battleships to port; he also detached the eight-inch cruiser *Dorsetshire* to Colombo to complete her refit there, and her sister *Cornwall* to escort an Australian troop convoy, while sending off *Hermes* to Trincomalee to prepare for IRONCLAD, a forthcoming British invasion of Madagascar, the huge Vichy-controlled island off the east African coast. With the British force now fatally dispersed, Admiral Chuichi Nagumo's powerful fleet, which had been 'missing' since the attack on Pearl Harbor, now materialised. On April 4, while down at Chequers, the prime minister received Intelligence that the Japanese fleet was approaching Ceylon.⁷⁷ It included three battleships and five aircraft-carriers. Somerville received word from Colombo that the force had been sighted three hundred miles south-east of Ceylon, in fact just where he had anticipated it. 'So we've missed them,' he cursed in his diary. 'Decided to put to sea as soon as possible. . . . *Dorsetshire* & *Cornwall* ordered to RV [rendez-vous]. Signalled my intentions to Admiralty.'⁷⁸

On the next morning, Easter Sunday, April 5, eighty Japanese carrier-based planes bombed Colombo in a ninety-minute raid. Somerville's force was now widely scattered. That afternoon he picked up an ominous radio report from the cruiser *Dorsetshire* – she was being shadowed, and radar showed a 'formation on her bearing.'⁷⁹ At about 1:40 P.M. waves of Japanese fighter-bombers attacked *Dorsetshire* and *Cornwall*, sinking both ships with the loss of over four hundred lives. Worse was to follow. Raiding Trincomalee a few days later, the Japanese planes caught and dispatched the carrier *Hermes* and a destroyer with the loss of three hundred more lives. In the Bay of Bengal the Japanese naval forces now roamed at will; in the space of a few days they sank one hundred thousand tons of shipping. Somerville prudently moved the remains of his fleet two thousand miles westwards, to ports on the eastern perimeter of Africa. Thus Britain abandoned the Indian Ocean, driven out by this one brief sortie by the Japanese navy.

AGHAST AT this fresh naval misfortune, Churchill asked Admiral Pound what explanation he might plausibly render to Parliament. He needed a scapegoat, and he had never liked Admiral Somerville. The First Sea Lord reminded him however of the secret Intelligence which they had received. He added, 'I do not consider Somerville is open to criticism for what he did at the time.' As for Parliament, Pound stipulated: 'We cannot say anything about the special information' – they should dupe the Members with talk

of aircraft sightings.⁸⁰ In June Churchill would again press the admiralty about Somerville's culpability: 'No satisfactory explanation has been given by this Officer of the imprudent dispersal of his forces in the early days of April resulting in the loss of *Cornwall*, *Dorsetshire*, and *Hermes*.'⁸¹ Pound refused to let this innuendo pass unchallenged, and he himself drafted the reply which his minister, A. V. Alexander, sent to Churchill.⁸² This again referred to the 'special Intelligence' – the intercepts of Japanese signals indicating operations against Ceylon.

The Japanese had never had any intention of invading Ceylon; but characteristically, Churchill acted as though they had and claimed that he had thwarted them in this resolve and, of course, had inflicted great casualties on them. He made much of the air battles and 'twenty-one' Japanese planes shot down at Colombo and 'fifteen' at Trincomalee. 'Ceylon news seems good,' he radioed to Cripps in India, 'and it is lucky we did not withdraw fighter forces.'⁸³

Writing to Roosevelt however he struck a deliberately gloomy posture. When a few Japanese bombs now fell on Indian soil and on Madras, Churchill hinted to Washington that this might be the prelude to an invasion of Ceylon, and he pleaded for some action by the American fleet. The Japanese might take both Madras and Ceylon, he warned, as well as the steel industries of Calcutta; they might sweep on to the Persian Gulf, demoralising the whole Middle East. The British people, he complained, had expected the American fleet to do more than it had.⁸⁴ General Joseph T. McNarney and Admiral King drafted a caustic reply which referred to the foolishness of mingling their two fleets. Roosevelt however softened the message, mentioning only the difficulties that stood in the way.⁸⁵ He told the visiting Canadian prime minister Mackenzie King that this was the worst message he had ever received from Winston.

Roosevelt was mystified by Britain's naval disaster off Ceylon. He had always warned Churchill not to let his ships go beyond the range of air cover. The loss of *Dorsetshire* and *Cornwall*, the president felt, showed that the P.M. had still learned nothing from the loss of *Repulse* and *Prince of Wales*.⁸⁶

The disaster fuelled fresh criticism of Churchill's naval and air strategies. 'It makes me mad,' wrote Rear-Admiral Hamilton, 'to see the air strength of this country being devoted to killing a few women and children in Germany whilst our fleet and empire are being lost to the Japanese daily.'⁸⁷ Even Eden, an unreconstructed apologist for the bombing of German towns,

was worried to find how many aircraft they had actually lost in Ceylon. 'Our margin never seems large enough,' he reflected. 'Now we are to send two more squadrons post-haste from [the] Middle East but they cannot arrive for some weeks & should surely have been sent sooner. Our air people always seem too optimistic in their forecasts. It was the same in Greece last year. . . And then Malta. We ought never to have allowed our margin of fighters to fall so low. Everyone knew of the threat. Nine Spitfires at a time flicked off an old fighter [*sic.* carrier] is not good enough. We always seem to need brilliant improvisation, especially the Air Ministry, & that is not the way.'⁸⁸

From India there came a similar complaint about the waste of R.A.F. resources in Europe: 'I do, I confess,' wrote the viceroy, 'find it very difficult to believe that the concentration of virtually the whole of our heavy bombing force for use on the Continent . . . is a wise policy.'⁸⁹

General Wavell echoed this in a bitterly worded cable to the chiefs of staff: 'It certainly gives furiously to think when, after trying with less than twenty light bombers to meet [an] attack which has cost us three important warships and several others and nearly 100,000 tons of merchant shipping, we see that over 200 bombers attacked one town in Germany.'⁹⁰

DESCRIBING THE naval disaster off Ceylon to the House, the prime minister damned Admiral Somerville with faint praise, describing how he, an admiral fresh from two years of 'almost continuous fighting in the Mediterranean,' had stationed his fleet south-east of the island, expecting the Japanese battle-cruisers and carriers to attack from there. Since the Japanese had not at first shown up, he had abandoned the operation, sending *Cornwall* and *Dorsetshire* to Colombo while the carrier *Hermes* was at Trincomalee.

Almost at once the Japanese had shown up precisely where expected earlier. The admiral had arranged a rendezvous with his now refuelled forces, and told *Hermes* to quit Trincomalee and stay out of the way.

'The admiralty,' explained the prime minister, 'did not interfere at all in these dispositions. When they put one of their best admirals in charge of a fleet and a theatre, they do not stand over him with a stick joggling his elbow. It is only very rarely, when they possess exceptional knowledge, that they override the judgement of the man on the spot. If the admiralty does too much of that they simply destroy the whole initiative and responsibility of the Admirals at sea. Such a bad habit, acquired only through wireless telegraphy, would be entirely contrary to the traditions of the Royal Navy.'

But of course, if the House thinks fit, it may blame me for whatever went wrong.’

All this was pious humbug, and he knew it. ‘Winston in the House was not at his best,’ wrote Harold Nicolson in a private letter on April 13. ‘He feels deeply the loss of naval units and becomes like a surly buffalo – lowered head, eyes flaring right and left.’

On May 1 the viceroy expressed to Leo Amery the hope that their prime minister had finally grasped that there was now ‘no more than a sheet of paper’ between the Japanese drive westward and the German drive south-east from Libya and the Caucasus.

Amery echoed these fears in a letter the next day to Smuts, warning of the danger that the Japanese, by-passing India, would join hands with the Germans in the Middle East.

None of these fears would however be realised. Admiral Nagumo and his fleet had to return to the Pacific, where they shortly met their nemesis in the Battles of the Coral Sea in May 1942, and Midway in June.



Britain’s continuing military humiliation encouraged the Indian nationalist leaders, and particularly the Hindus of Mahatma Gandhi’s All-India Congress, to amplify their demands for self-government.

An ‘Indian National Army’ soon rallied to the Japanese cause, consisting of 25,000 Indian troops who had deserted from the 67,000 who had surrendered in Singapore. In Burma too, people and politicians looked to the Land of the Rising Sun.

Seen from Washington, it appeared that Churchill was committing the error of dispersing the empire’s forces all over the globe. On March 10, 1942 President Roosevelt had sent to London a cable suggesting the creation of a Central Temporary Dominion government in India.⁹¹

Roosevelt and Marshall felt that they should pin down the British as to their intentions for the coming months. The president made plain to his intimates that if the United States were to be held to defeating Germany first, it must be on his terms – and that meant launching a cross-Channel assault in 1942.

In April he therefore sent Marshall and Hopkins to London for one week with instructions to hint that if Churchill would not see things their way, the United States might switch to a ‘Japan first’ policy.⁹²

Thus it was that Churchill received in the first days of April an unexpected telegram from Hopkins. 'See you soon,' this read. 'Please start the fire' – a reference to the American's chilly experience when last housed at Chequers.⁹³

Simultaneously Roosevelt informed Churchill that Marshall and Hopkins were bringing over to London a plan – a plan which he hoped Stalin would greet with enthusiasm.⁹⁴



Churchill too had sent out emissaries – General Nye to Cairo; and Sir Stafford Cripps to India.

The India episode speaks eloquently of the problems confronting Churchill that spring, and how he overcame them. In his war memoirs he would skate over the events between March 22 and April 11, when the Cripps mission collapsed, in one line ('Space does not allow...'). Even his authorised biographer would favour his readers with only ten more.⁹⁵

Cripps had arrived in Delhi, the capital of India, on March 23, emboldened by a burning sense of mission and a conviction of his own piety. The scheme which he was to outline, with the grudging permission of Churchill and the sanction of the war cabinet, was essentially of his own authorship.⁹⁶ Britain promised to give India her independence if a constituent assembly after the war so demanded. His first reports back to London, dated April 1, were gloomy.⁹⁷ The Indians were demanding control of their own ministry of defence if they were to make a stand against the Japanese. Cripps decided to stay on, to talk with the Indian Congress leaders and General Wavell. Telephoning Eden about these telegrams, the prime minister asked him to come up to London for a cabinet meeting.⁹⁸

The cabinet could see no reason not to give to some suitable Indian partial responsibility for defence, but insisted on knowing what the precise proposals were. Beyond that, the cabinet refused to consider amending the declaration.⁹⁹ Churchill himself drafted the cabinet's tough response to Cripps, observing that the declaration had 'won general approval' in the outside world: 'We all reached an agreement on it before you started,' he reminded his emissary, 'and it represents our final position.'¹⁰⁰

* See vol. i pages 243 and 284.

Amery thought Winston's draft 'rather crude and negative, especially if all these telegrams come to be published some day.' Churchill however was in a masterful mood. He again made it plain over lunch to Eden, who confessed to worries about the 'direction and conduct' of the war, that he had no intention of giving up the ministry of defence. 'He sees himself in Roosevelt's position as sole director of [the] war,' recorded Eden bleakly.¹⁰¹ WHAT STRENGTHENED Churchill's hand was that the viceroy did not see eye to eye with Cripps. Just as Churchill was leaving for Chequers on April 2, Amery brought over to No. 10 an urgent cable from Linlithgow, asking permission to express his own views and those of the C.-in-C.¹⁰² Delighted at this development, Churchill obtained cabinet approval; Amery wired back to the viceroy asking whether Cripps' pessimism was justified. In this way there emerged that Easter weekend, as one writer has observed, a direct Linlithgow–Churchill axis behind Cripps' back.¹⁰³ Linlithgow now cautiously asked for categorical instructions from Churchill to report independently.¹⁰⁴ On April 5, Easter Sunday, the prime minister responded: 'Of course telegraph personal to me or secretary of state exactly what you think.'¹⁰⁵

It was like Norway and the Battle of France in 1940 all over again: not for the first time he was thus opening up a direct and secret line of communication to a 'commander' on the spot.* Except that then he had wanted victory; and this time, he wanted – for his political opponents and the Cripps Mission – defeat.

The first reaction from India was approval of the appointment of a native Indian Defence Co-ordination Member, but it emphasised that Wavell's status as minister of defence must be preserved; Linlithgow had informed the general on his return to Delhi two days earlier (Good Friday) that he would tolerate no weakening of his powers as commander-in-chief. Meeting the Congress leaders on Saturday Wavell had reiterated the need for unified control of India's defence. Until that moment, Cripps would later write, Wavell had met only Indian soldiers; even now he plainly understood little of what Jawaharlal Nehru, the leader of Congress, was driving at.¹⁰⁶ Nehru himself, a friend of Cripps, made no bones about it and told the press that the question was simply whether the (Indian) defence ministry was to control the commander-in-chief (Wavell) or vice versa. 'I dare say,' observed Amery, 'we may before long have to clap Nehru in gaol again.'¹⁰⁷

That Saturday night (April 4) Cripps sent his estimate of the situation to Churchill, stating that the time had come when a final decision had to be

reached on 'how far we are prepared to go on the chance of getting a settlement.' There were in Cripps' view once again three options: to do nothing, and make no concession; to transfer the Indian defence ministry to an Indian, who was to be given however strict written policy guidelines; or to create a separate portfolio for an Indian, to whom Wavell could assign certain functions only.¹⁰⁸

Churchill had Lady Cripps staying that Easter weekend at Chequers.¹⁰⁹ He made a surprisingly mild response at first, informing the viceroy on Sunday that he would discuss it all with his cabinet on the following morning.¹¹⁰ In the small hours of Monday the sixth however he received from Linlithgow a powerfully worded attack on Cripps, which the viceroy had in fact been preparing for some days. It supported the first option – doing nothing, the status quo; it questioned Cripps' assumption that a reconstituted executive could function as if it were an Indian cabinet, and it solidly opposed any transfer of the present defence ministry to a native Indian.¹¹¹

The war cabinet, on the advice of its India Committee, agreed that Cripps must be firmly put in his place. 'The position is and must remain,' he was told, 'that the Viceroy in Council acts as a collective body responsible to the secretary of state and subject to the Viceroy's special powers and duties. . . There should be no misunderstanding between you and Indian political leaders on this point.'¹¹²

AT THIS time there was an unforeseen intervention. Roosevelt had sent Colonel Louis A. Johnson, an American lawyer, out to India as his personal representative, ostensibly heading a mission on munitions; Johnson had arrived in Delhi on April 3, as the negotiations between Cripps and the Indian leaders were at their height.¹¹³ He rapidly established a rapport with Cripps, and together they developed an alternative formula on the tricky question of a native Indian minister of defence. Linlithgow immediately reported this to London. Linlithgow complained that Cripps, 'presumably' with Johnson's assistance, had proposed to Nehru that an Indian would become defence minister. He added that Johnson 'acts and talks as though he were sent to India as Roosevelt's personal representative to mediate' (as indeed he was). From Cripps meanwhile Churchill received a rather naive secret telegram, in their private code, asking him to thank President Roosevelt for Johnson's 'very efficient' help.¹¹⁴

Shocked by the scope of the new proposals, Churchill forbade him to proceed, pending the cabinet's decision.¹¹⁵ Receiving Harry Hopkins in the

cabinet room an hour or two later, at ten-thirty A.M. on April 9 – Hopkins had arrived in London with General Marshall on the day before – Churchill read out the viceroy's telegram. He protested in vivid language at Roosevelt's meddling in India, and predicted that his cabinet, meeting at midday, would reject this 'Cripps–Johnson proposal,' as he termed it.

Fearing that Roosevelt's gauche action would set back his own strategic mission in London, Hopkins lied to Churchill: he insisted that Colonel Johnson had had no such instructions from Roosevelt, and that it was Cripps who was dragging Roosevelt's name into the debate for his own reasons. 'I told Churchill,' noted Hopkins afterwards, 'of the president's instructions to me, namely that he would not be drawn into the Indian business except at the personal request of the prime minister.'¹¹⁶

Churchill saw through Hopkins's little subterfuge, but he drafted in long-hand a telegram to Cripps and the viceroy exploiting it to the full: 'Colonel Johnson,' he wrote, with Harry Hopkins looking over his shoulder, 'is not President Roosevelt's personal representative in any matter outside the specific mission dealing with Indian munitions and kindred topics on which he was sent. I feel sure President would be vexed if he, the President, were to seem to be drawn into the Indian constitution issue.'¹¹⁷

The war cabinet was also critical of Cripps.¹¹⁸ They sent him two cables, objecting to the Cripps–Johnson formula, revoking his powers to negotiate, and rebuking him for going behind the viceroy's back.¹¹⁹ In a wounded reply, Cripps indicated that he had belatedly found out that the viceroy was going behind *his* back. 'Your telegrams . . .,' he wrote to the cabinet, 'apparently refer to some sent from here which I have not seen.'¹²⁰

Colonel Johnson would report to Roosevelt that Cripps had explained to him, in some embarrassment, that Churchill had now rescinded his powers and would give no approval 'unless Wavell and [the] Viceroy separately send their own code cables unqualifiedly endorsing any change Cripps wants.'¹²¹ By skilfully exploiting Roosevelt's diplomatic *bêtise*, Churchill had at one stroke thrown Cripps and his mission into promising disarray.

CLEMENTINE CHURCHILL was glad to see Hopkins, because she knew how much his presence elevated Winston's spirit. She sent him these words of welcome: 'Oh how glad I am you are back with us all once more, to encourage, to cheer and to charm us. You can't think what a difference it makes to Winston – he is carrying a very heavy load and I can't bear his dear round face not to look cheerful and cherubic in the mornings, as up to now it has

always done – what with Singapore and India (India, I fear, being messed and juggled about by Cripps, which is very disappointing). We are indeed walking through the Valley of Humiliation.’¹²²

Hopkins had arrived in London on April 8, bringing with him General George C. Marshall, and carrying Roosevelt's written insistence that Britain agree to an early cross-Channel invasion operation. They visited Churchill at No. 10 Downing-street from four to six P.M. In his letter, the president emphasised that what they were about to impress upon the English – namely Operation ROUND-UP as he called it – ‘has my heart & *mind* in it.’ Both their peoples, he wrote, were now demanding a Second Front. ‘Even if full success is not attained,’ the letter continued, ‘the big objective will be,’ – namely drawing Nazi pressure off the Russian armed forces. ‘Best of luck,’ this friendly letter ended, adding: ‘*Make Harry go to bed early. . .*’¹²³

The projected operation as outlined in the accompanying U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff memorandum was a cross-Channel amphibious assault by, eventually, forty-eight divisions (with Britain contributing eighteen), backed by 5,800 war planes (of which 2,550 would be British). This gigantic operation was to be staged during 1942 if possible, otherwise not later than September 1943, spearheaded by six divisions landing on selected beaches between Le Havre and Boulogne, at the narrowest part of the English Channel. The Americans suggested that Churchill's staff also draw up a smaller, largely British, emergency operation designed to exploit a sudden German collapse, or alternatively designed ‘as a sacrifice’ to avert an imminent Soviet collapse.¹²⁴ This latter idea, with its ominous wording, was an innovation.

As General Marshall set out these proposals, he gathered that Churchill was already aware of them. Hopkins indeed suspected at once that Churchill was not taking them seriously.

Marshall, who had expected more resistance, was more optimistic; he thought that Churchill went a long way to meet them.

Remarking that he was ‘prepared to go along’ with the American plan, Churchill set out all the objections which his own chiefs of staff had raised. He began by reviewing the broader military situation, dwelling briefly on the recent disaster in the Indian Ocean. As for the British humiliation in Singapore in February, he admitted that there was no real explanation: the defenders – no doubt he identified the Australians in particular – had let him and the whole British Army down very badly. ‘He also expressed a good deal of criticism of Auchinleck,’ recorded Hopkins; ‘said he had had [a] pretty acrimonious correspondence with him.’ While Winston was press-

ing for action, his commanders invariably responded that they lacked supplies.¹²⁵

Over dinner, at which they were joined by Attlee and the C.I.G.S., the prime minister displayed his talents as a military historian, spending much of the evening expatiating on the American Civil War; in a neat piece of showmanship that was not without effect on the Americans, a message arrived for him during the meal revealing that Harris 'was sending out 350 bombers' over Germany that night. (The figure was inflated: 172 took off to attack Hamburg). He barely touched on Roosevelt's cross-Channel proposals; from what General Brooke said, both Hopkins and Marshall realised that the C.I.G.S. had his misgivings about them.¹²⁶ This may account for the unfavourable impression which he made on Marshall, who decided that he lacked the brains of his predecessor Sir John Dill.¹²⁷

They met again in the cabinet room at ten-thirty the next morning. This was the day of the upset over Colonel Johnson's machinations in Delhi. Churchill staged two more incidents for their benefit: his secretary brought in a telegram reporting the sinking of *Hermes*, and then a 'discouraging' dispatch from Admiral Somerville, announcing the withdrawal of his fleet to East African ports as he could not risk battle with the superior Japanese fleet. Churchill pronounced himself not hopeful about holding on to Ceylon and, in an unspoken criticism of Admiral King, again lamented the lack of joint naval planning in the Far East. The British admiralty, he asserted, told their American colleagues everything, but were fobbed off with responses like: 'We have the matter in hand.'

After reviewing the maps of Rommel's advances in Libya, the Americans reverted tenaciously to ROUND-UP. The British must assume, said Hopkins, that their ground forces would one day be thrown into the fight. 'I said this to him,' Hopkins recorded, 'because, in conversations the previous day, I sensed that his advisers had told him that the ground attack would never be made, at least for nearly a year.'¹²⁸

On the ninth the British chiefs of staff patiently set out to the American visitors all the familiar objections to launching any major operation before 1943.¹²⁹ Brooke was privately contemptuous of the Americans – even by September, he noted, they would have only two and a half divisions available.¹³⁰ The next afternoon, April 10, Churchill expressed concern to Eden that the chiefs of staff might yet endorse ROUND-UP and use it as a pretext for doing less elsewhere.¹³¹ They all dined down at Chequers; with scant regard for his visitors, Churchill kept them up after dinner for another

review of the war situation, followed by a movie which lasted until shortly before three A.M.; General Marshall's face was a study, as Brooke happily entered in his diary.¹³² Exhausted by the journey, Hopkins became ill but he soldiered on and reported to Roosevelt that he felt sure that all would turn out satisfactorily.¹³³ Churchill accounted to Roosevelt for their talks on Sunday, though with his tongue firmly in his cheek, referring to 'your masterly document,' expressing himself entirely in agreement 'in principle,' and declaring that if carried through the invasion would be 'one of the grand events in all the history of the war.'¹³⁴



The ordeal of the North Russian convoys was now beginning. Five of the nineteen merchantmen in Convoy PQ 13 had been sunk by German surface and air attack. The cruiser *Trinidad* had been badly damaged. Of the twenty-three ships in the next convoy, PQ 14, fourteen had to turn back; only eight would reach Russia. Churchill impressed on his war cabinet on Monday, April 13, the need to make the Russians realise the risks that Allied seamen were running.¹³⁵ He invited Marshall and Hopkins to meet his cabinet that day and to sit in on the defence committee on the following night, 'at which time,' so Hopkins informed Roosevelt, still concerned about securing a British commitment to the cross-Channel invasion strategy, 'I believe the matter will be decided definitely.'

As for India, everybody had assured him, Hopkins added in this telegram, that they were disappointed at how things had turned out there; but all believed that no stone had been left unturned to reach agreement.¹³⁶

The Indian leaders had rejected the British offer on April 10.¹³⁷ It was a triumph for Churchill's tactics. 'I was able to bear this news,' he would write in his memoirs, 'which I had thought probable from the beginning, with philosophy.'¹³⁸

Even at the time, everybody chortled. 'I fancy,' wrote Amery, summarising their relief, 'most of us feel like someone who has proposed for family or financial reasons to a particularly unprepossessing damsel and finds himself lucky enough to be rejected.'¹³⁹ After that morning's cabinet, Eden recorded that there still seemed to be some conflict between Cripps and the viceroy, but it was all rather difficult to follow, 'the more so since they don't seem to show each other the telegrams they send.' He sensed that personal relations between the two men were 'pretty edgy.'¹⁴⁰ All that re-

mained was for Churchill to chair, later that afternoon, a meeting of the India Committee where he delivered the *coup de grâce*.

HAVING FAILED in his mission Cripps announced that he would be flying home to London on Monday the thirteenth; Churchill thanked him in an unctuous telegram: 'Even though your hopes have not been fulfilled, you have rendered a very important service to the common cause and the foundations have been laid for the future progress of the peoples of India.'¹⁴¹ The correspondence which had passed between Cripps and Gandhi's officials was now published.

Knowing that Churchill had wittingly destroyed the Cripps mission from afar, Roosevelt sent him an uncomplimentary message which arrived at three A.M. on April 12:

The feeling is almost universally held [*Roosevelt suggested*] that the deadlock has been caused by the unwillingness of the British government to concede to the Indians the right of self-government, notwithstanding the willingness of the Indians to entrust technical, military, and naval defense control to the competent British authorities. American public opinion cannot understand why, if the British government is willing to permit the component parts of India to secede from the British empire after the war, it is not willing to permit them to enjoy what is tantamount to self-government during the war.¹⁴²

In his memoirs, Churchill was rightly scathing about this message. Roosevelt's mind seemed to have ossified in the American War of Independence; he was thinking of the Indian Problem in terms of the thirteen colonies fighting George III. Since the telegram was addressed to him (as 'Former Naval Person'), Churchill decided not to show it to the cabinet. Hopkins, who had been with him as he received the telegram, asked to 'phone Roosevelt at once – three A.M. in London was still late evening in Washington. Mysteriously however, 'owing to atmospheric,' as Churchill explained to him, the call could not get through. From the message which Churchill sent to Roosevelt a few hours later, what Eden's private staff described as a polite raspberry, it was plain that he intended to brook no further presidential meddling in India.¹⁴³ 'You know the weight which I attach to everything you say to me,' Churchill silkily assured the president, 'but I did not feel I could take responsibility for the defence of India if everything had

again to be thrown into the melting-pot at this critical juncture. That, I am sure, would be the view of cabinet and Parliament. . . . Anything like a serious difference between you and me would break my heart, and would surely deeply injure both our countries at the height of this terrible struggle.'

Thus Churchill effectively shelved the Indian constitutional issue for the duration of the war. Neither he, nor Amery, nor Lord Linlithgow trusted the Congress Party. In sabotaging the mission, he had also taken Cripps down a useful peg or two. 'Good-bye Mr Cripps!' mocked the viceroy in the margin of one telegram.¹⁴⁴

After an eight-day journey, Cripps arrived back in England on April 21. Roosevelt continued to interfere, grumbling to his own cabinet about India, and firing off more letters to Churchill. Once they even spoke by telephone about it; the prime minister again deprecated any American intervention, and lectured Roosevelt that neither Gandhi, a Hindu, nor his Congress Party represented all the Indian people. A million Indians had already enlisted in the British army, he pointed out.¹⁴⁵ On the last day of May 1942 he would send another acerbic telegram to Washington, this time about rumours that Nehru was to be invited to the United States; he added that neither he nor the viceroy relished the prospect that the meddlesome Colonel Johnson was to return to India. 'We are fighting to defend this vast mass of helpless Indians from imminent invasion,' he chided the American president. 'I know you will remember my many difficulties.'¹⁴⁶

All this was just treading water. Deep down, he regarded the Indian sub-continent as lost. He would 'amaze' King George VI, the Emperor of India, in July 1942 with the casual remark that his cabinet colleagues and all three parliamentary parties were 'quite prepared to give up India' after the war. 'Cripps, the Press, and U.S. opinion,' observed the king, somewhat mystified, in his diary, 'have all contributed to make their minds up that our rule in India is wrong and has always been wrong for India.'¹⁴⁷



Let us now revert briefly to where we left General Marshall and Harry Hopkins, urging ROUND-UP upon a reluctant prime minister and his chiefs of staff. Meeting the latter gentlemen on the morning of April 14, 1942 Marshall argued that they might have to take action in the next three or four months because either Russia or Germany was on her last legs. (We may suspect that 'or Germany' was routinely added as a sop to avoid charges

of defeatism). Both Mountbatten and Brooke pointed out that the shortage of landing-craft severely limited anything they could do except on a small scale before 1943.¹⁴⁸ This, it turned out, was just one of the factors which the U.S. Joint Planners had failed to take into account.

THE DIFFICULT American visit was nearly over. Hopkins saw Churchill again on April 14 and dined with him later.¹⁴⁹ At Churchill's bidding he sent off a telegram to Washington drawing attention to the naval danger developing in the Indian Ocean. Hopkins told the president that Marshall had presented their case on the cross-Channel operation impressively; the prime minister had regretted that Admiral King had not come and he had complained that the U.S. navy was not communicating to them its strategic intentions.¹⁵⁰

After dinner Churchill invited the defence committee to hear the 'momentous proposal' that Hopkins and Marshall had brought over from Washington, and in an 'impressive pronouncement,' according to Marshall, declared his complete agreement.¹⁵¹ Answering the American criticisms, he continued that Britain must defend India and the Middle East. 'Furthermore, Australia and the island bases connecting that country with the United States must not be allowed to fall, as this would inevitably prolong the war.' Thus, he reasoned amiably, they could not lay aside 'everything' else. In short, Churchill seemed to agree with everything, while in reality he had accepted nothing. Even so 'Pug' Ismay, whom he had asked to take a minute of this important conference, regretted that his master had not spoken out more vigorously about the problems inherent in a cross-Channel operation.

General Marshall was thoroughly bamboozled by Churchill's bland assurances. He skated over the main difficulties – the shortage of shipping tonnage, landing-craft, aircraft, and naval escorts. All agreed that Germany still came first as the main enemy. In closing Churchill delivered a homily on 'unanimity,' and 'going ahead with the utmost resolution.' 'The two nations,' he said, his prose now flowing unstopably like Ol' Man River itself, 'would march ahead together in a noble brotherhood of arms.' He suggested that they make a public pronouncement of the resolve of the English-speaking peoples on the liberation of Europe.¹⁵² As these rivulets of Churchillian verbiage joined into a torrent, the Americans willingly believed that great harmony had been achieved. They lunched the next day, April 15, with the king and Queen, and dined that night with the king and

chiefs of staff – and inevitably Mountbatten – at No. 10.¹⁵³ In retrospect, it might seem remarkable that important military and political figures had to travel thousands of miles to establish in personal meetings what an exchange of letters could have done equally well.

In fact, letters would have added a certain contractual validity to the assurances so blandly uttered.

The Americans believed however in the benefits to be drawn from looking people in the eye. Writing to Churchill after his return home, Marshall expressed the belief that they had laid a firm foundation for co-operation 'without the interminable delays and usual misunderstanding common to such joint enterprises.'¹⁵⁴

BEFORE THE irksome visitors left, Churchill thought it wise to summarise the limits of his agreement in writing to Roosevelt. He accepted the Roosevelt project *subject* to the qualification that enough Allied resources be set aside to halt the Japanese advance. Their military staffs would accordingly start planning for the 1943 cross-Channel operation at once. As for launching a smaller-scale operation, the prime minister warned that it might become necessary even before September 1942, as things might easily 'come to a head' before then.¹⁵⁵

While still in London, General Marshall received a signal from Washington which he immediately passed on to Churchill. MAGIC was indicating that Tokyo was now pondering whether to dispose of Russia first or to 'wipe out' the power and influence of the United States, Britain, and China. The Japanese consensus favoured attacking Russia first; and Germany, the message said, was also urging this action. The date of June 15 (for such an attack) had been derived from other sources.¹⁵⁶

All this contradicted however everything that Bletchley Park had deduced; to their 'friends' at the U.S. navy department, they secretly signalled that they had seen no Japanese telegrams indicating designs on Russia.

'Recent telegrams,' the British codebreakers argued, 'indicate intensification of the campaign against India or Australia, preferably the former.'¹⁵⁷ From secret Intelligence on Japanese troop movements, Churchill deduced that there was no immediate intention of invading Australia.¹⁵⁸

Inevitably, the loss of *Dorsetshire* and *Cornwall*, and now of the carrier *Hermes*, evoked fresh anxiety in Australia. Mr Curtin wired to Churchill demanding the fullest information about the cause, and a statement on how he intended to combat the Japanese naval forces in future.¹⁵⁹

The Japanese threat to India continued to alarm Churchill. On April 15, at a time when he was already sending hundreds of bombers to raise fires in German cities, the prime minister appealed to Roosevelt to allocate American bombers to India. 'Might I press you, Mr President, to procure the necessary decisions?'¹⁶⁰ The president replied that fifty fighter planes and almost as many bombers were already wending their way out to India. There were limits to the prime minister's concern however. When Attlee suggested that they transfer the whole of Bomber Command to India and the Middle East, the prime minister predicted to him that the squadrons would do nothing once they arrived: 'We have built up a great plan here for bombing Germany,' he explained, 'which is the only way in our power of helping Russia.'¹⁶¹

Nothing was cut-and-dried about the political constellations in Europe. On the morning of Saturday April 18, as Churchill was talking with Portal and Pound in his bedroom in the Annexe, Hopkins showed him a secret message from Washington, revealing that Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring was currently meeting Admiral Darlan near Forges-les-Eaux. Portal already had this information, however, and replied that if he could confirm it he would 'bomb the place.'¹⁶² Battleships and Nazi brass hats; women and children; factories, homes, and workers – there still seemed little rhyme or reason in the deployment of Churchill's increasingly costly bomber force.



Hopkins and Marshall left for home. They paused in Northern Ireland to visit the American troops now stationed there. Whitehall was relieved to see them go, but later that day Churchill had a 'phone call from Hopkins, who had now heard rumours from Roosevelt that Admiral Darlan had replaced Marshal Pétain. To the Americans, ever starry-eyed about using Vichy France, this suggested the possibility of encouraging an independent move by the French in their colonies in North-West Africa. While Eden scoffed at the prospect, Churchill wanted Hopkins and Marshall to return to London immediately; but when Hopkins phoned Roosevelt again, the president would not hear of it.¹⁶³

While the rumour proved unfounded anyway, it did set Churchill thinking about those French colonies, and he cabled to Roosevelt the proposal that they ought now to make an offer of Allied support to the Vichy leaders 'Pétain and/or Darlan' if they would agree to move the remaining French

fleet to African harbours. Should Roosevelt agree, the prime minister would cable to him details of what forces Britain could, 'on invitation' and unopposed, land in Morocco. 'It seems to me,' wrote Churchill, 'they ought to be offered blessings as well as cursings.'¹⁶⁴ The answer from the White House was deliberately evasive, suggesting that they allow the situation to develop first.¹⁶⁵

ROOSEVELT'S TWO emissaries arrived safely back in Washington on April 20. From London, Churchill and Harriman sent a one-word cable: 'Hurrah.'¹⁶⁶

Marshall assured Henry Stimson that the British had swallowed ROUND-UP practically without change. He warned however that Churchill was overpreoccupied with the 'dangers on all sides.' At one stage in the military negotiations there had been a sudden crisis with a PQ convoy; at another, 'there came the news of the president's foolish intervention in India with Louis Johnson.' Churchill, said Marshall, had become so excitable that he and Hopkins had had the greatest difficulty in cooling him down.¹⁶⁷ Hopkins confirmed this vividly, relating to Stimson that 'the string of cuss words lasted for two hours in the middle of the night.'¹⁶⁸

Briefing the British ambassador, Hopkins again underlined the importance of launching an early cross-Channel invasion. The Americans would not stand for putting men and planes into England just to sit around. 'He had said this,' Lord Halifax gathered, 'to everybody in London.'¹⁶⁹ Pound's idea, he said, was to 'try and do something in the way of a landing in order to bring on an air battle,' calculating that even this would assist the Russians by inflicting casualties on the Luftwaffe.¹⁷⁰

Winston, said Hopkins, did not like having to consult Roosevelt. He preferred to run the war by himself.¹⁷¹

19: *Three Men and a Baby*

SOME WEEKENDS, in the blackness of the night after the last of his guests at Chequers had retired to bed, Winston Churchill imagined enemy bombers flying overhead – not only to attack some target like Birmingham, but also to debouch by parachute silent squads of assassins charged with orders to kill him. He wondered how well his bodyguard – the police sergeants armed with regulation-issue revolvers and even the Guards officers whom he favoured for his own security detail – would fare in such an event. During the first weekend in April 1942 he asked Tommy Thompson to have the matter looked into.¹

His health had improved, but there were little pointers that his popularity was no longer inviolate. In the Grantham by-election in March, his own man was trounced by an Independent whom he had publicly attacked. Labour M.P. Aneurin Bevan criticised his faiblesse for wearing his ‘siren suit’ in public. Then, showing a temerity unthinkable a few months earlier, General Auchinleck refused to have the prime minister’s son Randolph back in the Middle East, explaining that he had made himself highly unpopular.²

THE PROBLEMS with Randolph ran deeper than that. His marriage was falling apart. It had seemed doomed from the start. In October 1939, he had married the nineteen-year-old Pamela Digby after a two-week courtship; the daughter of a distinctly unenthusiastic Lord and Lady Digby, this auburn-haired society beauty and *Tatler* cover-girl had devoted herself initially to Randolph, but then in increasingly generous measure to a number of handsome and wealthy visiting Americans including, it is clear, the millionaires Averell Harriman and Jock Whitney.³

In December 1940 Pamela had presented the Churchills with a son and heir, Winston. Despite their family’s standing, the Randolph Churchills were

not well off, and Pamela had little over ten pounds a week for keeping house; she set up a rented home in an old rectory at Ickleford in Hertfordshire. Randolph had joined No. 8 Commando, with ten troops each of fifty men.

His troop boasted the more raffish element of his White's Club drinking pals – they considered themselves a cut above the rest, and some were certainly better card-players than the prime minister's headstrong son. When they left England aboard the troopship *Glenroy* bound for the Middle East, they had necessarily taken the long route around the Cape to Cairo, which they would not reach until mid-March 1941. According to the novelist Evelyn Waugh, a fellow-officer, they whiled away the long journey playing roulette, chemin-de-fer and poker. In two disastrous evenings Randolph lost £850, around twenty thousand pounds in today's money.

In a telegram from Capetown he confessed to Pamela that he had gambled away a fortune; he pleaded with her to keep this from his father, and asked her to pay off his debts to a list of these rich friends by instalments, at the rate of ten pounds a month. In some marriages such a calamity would have brought the couple together in adversity; in his own shaky circumstances, it marked the end of any affection that she had felt for him.⁴ She had to sell off her jewellery and wedding presents, and rent out their rectory home. Lord Beaverbrook wrote her a generous cheque – he was continuing to pay the absent Randolph £1,500 per year as a journalist – and offered to let the young and undeniably comely Pamela stay with the infant Winston and his nursemaid at Cherkeley, the Beaverbrook country estate.⁵

In March 1941 the handsome and immensely wealthy W. Averell Harriman, a married man, had arrived in London as the head of an important American mission connected with Lend–Lease. His interest in Pamela, a girl thirty years his junior with innocent 'kitten eyes,' started soon after, and her father-in-law the prime minister did shockingly little to discourage it. Divorce was unthinkable. Cecil King had noted one earlier conversation with the Churchills from which it was plain that Winston was flatly opposed on principle to divorce: whereupon, the newspaper editor had noted in embarrassment, Clementine had 'embarked on a long story of her parents' matrimonial differences,' murmured more or less into his ear.

'It is difficult to know what to say,' the newspaperman wrote in his diary that night, 'when the P.M.'s wife goes off into a long account of the differences of her parents, her father's infidelities and failure to pay the children's allowances specified under a judicial separation, and his habit of pursuing his women friends for ever after in a vindictive spirit!'

A few weeks later the prime minister's private secretary John Colville ran into Harriman and Pamela strolling arm in arm in Horse Guards Parade.⁶ The liaison flourished. Cecil King would write that society was buzzing. 'She is looked on as young and silly – brought up in a very strict home by parents who were against the Randolph match. She is tired of him and disgusted, and has been carrying on this affair with Harriman for some time.' It had become so blatant that he put it about that he had asked Pamela to be a chaperone for his daughter Kathleen. 'The whole episode,' concluded this journalist with a practised pen, 'reveals a new aspect of lease–lend!'⁷

ON JUNE 8, 1941, while the scandalous affair was still in its infancy, the prime minister wrote to Randolph that Harriman would soon be visiting Cairo on a mission of inspection; with what misplaced sense of devilry did he now order his cuckolded son appointed to the Harriman mission?

Randolph was seemingly resigned to the inevitable. In a circumlocutory letter, which he sent back to London by the hand of Harriman himself, he thanked his father for the appointment, since he had thereby obtained from Harriman 'all the latest news of you and Pamela.' 'I have become very intimate with him,' he wrote, surely hinting at his own knowledge of the awkward truth, 'and he has admitted to me all the business he has transacted.' He chivalrously kept his suspicions from his wife. In a wry letter to Pamela on the same date Randolph confessed that he had found the American absolutely charming. 'He spoke delightfully about you,' he added, '& I fear that I have a serious rival!'⁸

Two or three months later Randolph persuaded Oliver Lyttelton to put him in charge of the army's propaganda bureau in Cairo. His rough-and-ready methods did not endear him to the more comfort-loving staff officers, and early 1942 found him home on leave. He spent the weekend of February 7–9 with Pamela at Chequers; as did Averell Harriman and his daughter Kathleen.⁹ It was only now that Randolph realised that what had been going on while he was on duty overseas was rather more serious than a wartime romance. When he and Pamela spent the following weekend at Chequers he learned that while Pamela had parked their infant at Lord Beaverbrook's, she was living a gay and independent life in London. He learned too that his own father fully condoned this Randolph–Pamela–Harriman triangle; for this, Randolph found he could not forgive his father. On March 17 he again spent the night at Chequers; Harriman came too. This time Pamela stayed away.¹⁰ She now confessed to a profound loathing for Randolph, her lawful

husband. Throughout one trying weekend, which he spent with her father Lord Digby in London, Evelyn Waugh, another guest, noticed that she could not bear even to sit in the same room as Randolph.¹¹ When Randolph accused his father of taking the wayward Pamela's side against him, the row became so upsetting that Clementine forbade him to return home for the duration, lest the prime minister's fragile heart seize under the strain.¹²

The whole Churchill family was up in arms against Randolph. His sister Mary, just twenty years old and the baby of the family, wrote him a furious letter suggesting that he return to the front.

Whatever else might be said of him, Churchill's son would never be found wanting in courage. He appealed to Mountbatten to let him return to the Commandos, but a few days later he received orders to return to Egypt instead. In Cairo, he found that Auchinleck's officers refused to have anything to do with him. Claiming to find life as a staff officer in Cairo too tame, Randolph cabled to Pamela that he was volunteering for a parachute unit. He impulsively joined the Special Air Service, commanded by Major David Stirling. Clementine wrote an emotional, grieving letter to Winston about this new decision, anguished that Randolph had done this 'because I know it will cause you harrowing anxiety, indeed, even agony of mind.'

I feel this impulse of Randolph's, caused by natural disappointment that he has lost his interesting post [in Cairo], is sincere but sensational – Surely there is a half-way house between being a Staff Officer and a Parachute Jumper? He could have quietly & sensibly rejoined his Regiment & considering he has a very young wife with a baby to say nothing of a Father who is bearing not only the burden of his own country but for the moment that of an unprepared America, it would in my view have been his dignified & reasonable duty.

Clementine continued that she regarded her son's action as 'selfish & unjust' and with regard to Pamela, she added, 'one might imagine she had betrayed or left him.'

I am really very sorry he has lost his post because his talents & capacities suited him for it; but alas – these were not sufficient to outweigh his indiscretions & the hostilities which he arouses – It's no use offending & antagonising everybody unless you really are indispensable.

She asked Winston whether it would be any use for her to send an affec-

tionate telegram begging him on Winston's account to rejoin his regiment, arguing: 'He has already left one Commando [No 8] & if he takes up parachuting & then gives it up for perhaps some other Staff job he might be regarded as theatrical & unstable.' She signed this heartfelt letter of a sorrowing mother to her husband, 'Your poor loving Clemmie.'

Caught in this family maelstrom, the prime minister dispatched a peremptory cable to his son to Cairo: 'Please let me know what your employment is as naturally I like to follow your fortunes. Acknowledge.'¹⁴

Pamela was unimpressed. 'Randolph went to the Middle East about three weeks ago,' she wrote to Beaverbrook, after a day in the country with Hopkins, Harriman, and his daughter Kathleen (their alibi), 'and has joined some sort of Commando unit out there. Which is I think the best thing he could have done. We have moved into a flat in Grosvenor-square, so much nicer than the Dorchester.'¹⁵ The 'we' is the give-away: it was Pamela and Averell. He had begun renting a top floor apartment in Grosvenor-square for her; Beaverbrook's papers show that he himself paid the quarterly rent fee, and Harriman (usually tardily) reimbursed him.¹⁶

When Harriman now fell ill, 'K.H.' (Kathleen) typed a letter to the prime minister on April 25 which confirms that they were all living under the same roof: 'Mrs Randolph [i.e. Pamela] says that he has a high temperature, and two nurses are in attendance. Lord Dawson [a leading physician] came to see him last night.' Kathleen promised the prime minister that 'Mrs Randolph' would tell Harriman that he had inquired about him.¹⁷ Responding to an inquiry from Hopkins, Churchill reported that the unofficial diagnosis was paratyphoid: 'I have just spoken to Kathleen,' he added, 'who does not seem at all anxious. I am keeping in the closest touch with her and Pamela.'¹⁸

London society was enthralled by the juicy scandal. It was learned that Pamela had replaced young Winston's nanny with a new young thing at nearly three times the previous salary, paying her £150 per annum, and that Harriman was paying the difference; when Beaverbrook bought a complete trousseau for the child, from the White House in Bond-street, the gossip was that Pamela took everything back and exchanged the goods for things for herself. Rather than see young Winston looking shabby and shivering, Harriman himself had forked out for a coat. 'In fact,' observed Cecil King gleefully in his diary, 'of pride or dignity in the PM's family circle there is at this writing no trace.'¹⁹

CHURCHILL HAD cut his only son adrift, but he continued to dote on him in his absence and to overlook all, or most, of his shortcomings. When their paths did cross, they snarled at each other in a most unbecoming manner. Early in May 1942, writing to him about the family news, he reported on Harriman's illness, and described how Pamela was 'watching over him' with Kathleen; in a gentle, perhaps unintentional, hint that the American millionaire meant more to him right now than Randolph he added, 'I earnestly hope he will be better soon, for he is a true friend of our country, and I have taken a great personal liking to him.' The infant Winston had, he mocked his hapless son, 'not so far grown old enough to commit the various forms of indiscretion which he would be expected to inherit from his forebears.'²⁰

What are indiscretions to one man are another's heroism. Returning from his first sortie behind enemy lines with Stirling and the S.A.S. in the third week of May 1942 – a long-range patrol into enemy-occupied Benghazi – Randolph was injured when their car overturned. To Winston's dismay he returned, temporarily disabled, to England in August and delivered a fiery speech in the House at the end of September (he was still Member for Preston). His marriage and his life were in equal turmoil. Writing that October to Winston 'with full knowledge of all the circumstances' about Pamela, Lord Beaverbrook, who had been through much the same with his own son Max Aitken, spoke up for Randolph: 'He is losing his balance and giving way to despondency. It is my hope that you will see something of him now and give him your sympathy and even some support.'²¹

A dear friend of all the parties involved in this *mélange*, Beaverbrook talked things over with Randolph and Pamela a day or two later, then wrote this comforting letter to the prime minister. 'My dear Winston: Everything is settled. No more trouble now. Both Randolph and Pamela are pledged never, never, to talk with anybody at any time about their differences. The Boy [the infant Winston] goes to Chartwell now and to town when the flat is ready.' Randolph, he enthused, had behaved wonderfully well, and there were grounds to hope that he would give no more cause for anxiety. After signing the letter, 'Max' added: 'PS: & Pamela won't talk. – M.' 'PPS: Randolph has discussed and settled money affairs. I hope his plans will stand up and without any supplement.'²²

While Pamela continued her affair with Harriman, her husband sought solace with an old childhood flame, Laura Charteris. On October 30, 1942, Cecil King confirmed: 'Randolph has been playing around on his own account.' Recovered from his injuries, Randolph resumed his military exploits

at the end of October 1942, joining the military operation that will enter the annals of this history as TORCH. From the troopship taking him to join the British First Army descending on North Africa he wrote to Laura: 'We are on a much more exciting venture of which you will soon be reading in the papers.' No equivalent letter went to Pamela. Randolph had been supplanted in her affections by Harriman. From time to time Harriman wrote out cheques on her behalf (again via Lord Beaverbrook, who was probably happy to obtain this illicit supply of otherwise unobtainable dollars), including a £1,000 cheque on April 5, 1944.²³ This arrangement left most of the parties, if not the honour of the Churchills, satisfied.



During these spring months of 1942 the prime minister had his mind on graver matters. He had decided to address a Secret Session of the Commons, and dictated the script for his speech at Chequers on April 13.²⁴ He delivered it ten days later; he entered the Chamber to virtual silence while Sir Stafford Cripps, newly arrived from India, was received with cheers.

Churchill had however devised his secret speech well, opting for what one called 'his stolid, obstinate, ploughman' manner.²⁵ In a well-paced speech that lasted for one hundred minutes, he contrived to move the Members with a deliberately woeful catalogue of misfortunes. There is inevitably no record in *Hansard*, but one senior Labour minister called it in his diary 'a very sombre picture,' with Churchill –

naming places which may well be lost to the Japs in the near future, and various misfortunes (principally naval, and what a hell of a run of bad luck we have had!) in the near past and present. Enough, but not too much, on Singapore. Events there quite out of harmony with our traditions and our previous experience. . . .²⁶ It would do no good and would only divert active men from the immediate business of the war to hold an inquiry. Great praise for New Zealand. Their one Division is still in the M[iddle] E[ast] with no request for its recall. . .

Then to the future, and the grounds for undiminished confidence. American production; recent consultations; Hopkins and Marshall in London; the matters discussed; their return to U.S.A.; exchange of messages between P.M. and President. This most dramatically ends the speech. 'Who wants a public session after that?' one Tory asks me.²⁷

Churchill would later sell his own typescript for this speech to *Life* magazine.²⁸ In this version, he explained that his ambition all along had been to have the United States in the war, while Japan stayed out. 'I frankly admit,' he continued, 'that the violence, fury, skill, and might of Japan has [*sic*] far exceeded anything that we had been led to expect.' At the time of Pearl Harbor the 18th Division had been rounding the Cape of Good Hope bound for the Middle East, while the 17th Indian Division was leaving India bound for the same theatre. He had diverted both forces to the Malay peninsula, and before leaving for Washington on December 12 he had started six anti-aircraft units and 250 aeroplanes off to India and Malaya; this transfer, he warned, would account for any coming German successes in Libya. 'The House must face the position squarely. Not only have we failed to stem the advance of the new enemy but we have had to weaken seriously the hopeful operation we were carrying on against the old.'

By the time of the loss of Singapore, he continued, he had landed in the Malay peninsula, or moved from India into Burma, seventy thousand troops, three hundred guns, 'a certain number' of tanks and 350 aeroplanes. 'During these times a series of unexampled losses fell upon the Royal Navy.' These included the loss of the 33,950 ton battleship *Nelson*, crippled by a torpedo on September 27; a torpedo had sunk the carrier *Ark Royal* on November 13; the 31,000 ton battleship *Barham* had foundered off Libya twelve days later with the loss of eight hundred men. Two days after Pearl Harbor, they had lost the new 35,000 ton battleship *Prince of Wales* and the 32,000 ton battle-cruiser *Repulse* in the Far East.

'It was to be hoped,' explained the prime minister, 'that their presence there might be a deterrent upon the war party in Japan, and it was intended that they should vanish as soon as possible into the Blue' – an unfortunate choice of words, given the fate of those warships. 'A further sinister stroke was to come,' continued the prime minister, unfolding his tale of woe. 'On the early morning of December 19 half a dozen Italians in unusual diving suits were captured floundering about in the harbour of Alexandria. . . Four hours later explosions occurred in the bottoms of the *Valiant* and *Queen Elizabeth*.' Both these 30,600 ton battleships would be out of action for many months. 'Thus we had no longer a battle squadron in the Mediterranean.' Since the ships looked all right from the air, he was hoping that the enemy would not realise their loss; in theory, the Italians now had naval superiority in the Mediterranean, and they could have invaded Egypt or the Levant.

He then brought the story forward to February 1942, with Hitler's battle-cruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* passing boldly up the English Channel: 'I have been impressed,' he explained, 'by the shock which the passage of these two ships through the Channel gave to the loyal masses of the British nation. Personally,' he said dismissively, 'with my special knowledge, I thought it a very annoying incident but not comparable at all to the other happenings I have just described.' He confided to the House the admiralty's remarkable appreciation of the situation written on February 2, ten days before the event. Their Lordships had anticipated Hitler's intention of forcing the Channel only too well:

At first sight [the admiralty had warned] this passage up the Channel appears hazardous for the Germans. It is probable however that as their heavy ships are not fully efficient they would prefer such passage, relying for their security on their destroyers and aircraft, which are efficient, and knowing full well that we have no heavy ships with which to oppose them in the Channel. We might well, therefore, find the two battle-cruisers and the eight-inch cruisers with five large and five small destroyers, also say twenty fighters constantly overhead (with reinforcements on call) proceeding up the Channel.

'I have read this document to the House,' explained Churchill, 'because I am anxious that Members should realise that our affairs are not conducted entirely by simpletons and dunderheads as the comic papers try to depict.' Any featherhead, he added, could have confidence in times of victory; the test was to have faith when things were going wrong.

Which brought him to Singapore. There had been one hundred thousand British, Australian, and Indian troops in the Malay peninsula. They found themselves confronted with only thirty thousand Japanese invaders. 'After five or six days of confused but not very severe fighting,' related Churchill, 'the army and fortress surrendered.' Some, he said, blamed the Australians. The fall of Singapore had led to the loss of Java and Sumatra; as for Burma, 'The best that we can hope for is that the retreat will be as slow as possible.'

The Japanese warriors, he lamented, cost about a quarter as much as equivalent British 'and still more, American,' troops to feed. In consequence of all this, Australia naturally feared immediate invasion, and he had sent back most of her forces from the Middle East.

He reminded the House that the war could be ended only by the defeat of Germany. The liberation of Europe by 'equal numbers' of British and American troops was, he said, the main war plan of their two nations.

The timing, the scale, the method, the direction of this supreme undertaking must remain unknown and unknowable till the hour strikes and the blow falls.²⁹

IT WAS oratory calculated to numb the mind of listeners with dismay and even disbelief. His tactics were flawless. His speech had opened the eyes of the House to so much, as he wrote privately to Randolph in Cairo – 'to the vast panorama of war and its many grievous dangers,' that the debate itself collapsed.³⁰ The debate, expected to last until seven P.M., was over by five. It is itself debatable whether this clever deflation of the will to debate was ultimately a good thing. 'This,' wrote one observer, 'would indicate a petering out of the attack.'³¹ There was now a feeling that things would turn out all right in the end. This was where Winston was so much bigger than those around him, suggested one minister – and he mentioned Eden, Beaverbrook, and Cripps in this connection – namely, 'in his sublime refusal to concede even the possibility of anything but a successful outcome.'³²

Beaverbrook was safely out of the way, but Cripps' prestige was still dangerously high, and there was Oliver Lyttelton too.³³ Rather drunk, Eden confided to his circle that the future of the country rested on himself, Lyttelton, and Cripps.³⁴ When Eden urged him to bring as many cabinet members into his plans as he could, the prime minister agreed, although he feared this might slow up the cabinet machine. 'However,' recorded Eden, 'Cripps, Oliver [Lyttelton], & I [were] he thought pretty powerful with himself. Attlee he liked but he was very feeble.'³⁵



Immediately after the Secret Session, Churchill arrived at the Royal Albert Hall for a military pageant staged by the *Daily Express*. A roar went up as he stepped into the Royal Box. Fatigued from his speech to the House he warned editor Arthur Christiansen that he would not be staying long. 'The last scene he saw,' wrote Christiansen to Beaverbrook in Washington,

demonstrated the spirit of attack. The house lights were down, and the

limes were concentrated on the arena. From loud-speakers all round the hall the word 'Attack' was whispered. Second by second it grew more urgent, then waves of Commandos, Guards, paratroops swept across the white canvas floor, their long shadows making the scene more sinister. As they reached the platform they let out their battle cries; and as each wave reached the platform a new wave started across the floor. All the while the word 'Attack' was being muttered.

Churchill left his family at the Albert Hall with Bracken and Eden to watch the final Olympiad- (or Nuremberg-) style spectacular, as the flags of all the empire and its allies were paraded into an arena now packed with two thousand troops and civil defence workers. The United States and USSR alphabetically bringing up the rear got loud cheers – though not as loud as Malta, an island displaying much fortitude under air attack.³⁶ After singing the national anthem the audience turned to Churchill's box again. 'I think they wanted,' wrote one of Beaverbrook's men, 'or expected, him to speak. But by that time he had gone.'³⁷

CHURCHILL DID speak again the next day, April 24, at a Savoy luncheon of American newspapermen. He displayed a surprising compassion for Vichy France.³⁸ 'It is not easy for us here,' he said, 'fully to appreciate the sufferings of the French, the constant series of alternating threats and tantalising offers which their "oppressors" hold over them and their complete helplessness to defend themselves. Even Vichy does its best, I suppose, to resist.' That said, he added: 'If news came through that some patriot had done in [prime minister Pierre] Laval, I can't say that I would enjoy my dinner any less.'

He observed that had London and Washington devoted less attention before the war to reducing each other's battleships in size and number, and more to enforcing treaties, the present conflict could have been averted; he called it 'the unnecessary war.'³⁹



If Malta, this island bastion, were lost it would close the eastern Mediterranean to British ships as securely as the loss of Gibraltar would close the western. By holding on to Malta, Britain retained a base from which her forces could harass the enemy's supply lines to North Africa. Rommel had stated in a message, probably intercepted by the codebreakers, 'The

Panzer Army is to attack as soon as possible after the capture of Malta.' At a defence committee meeting on the afternoon of April 22 Churchill had decided that they must fight supply convoys through to the island whatever the cost.⁴⁰ Reluctant though the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff were to venture into the Mediterranean, Roosevelt agreed to allow his carrier *Wasp* to transport forty-seven Spitfire fighter planes to the airfield at Malta. In a second daring operation the same carrier would fly off sixty-one more planes to the island on May 9. Thanking the ship's crew, Churchill made this signal: 'Who said a wasp couldn't sting twice?'⁴¹

Mellowed by a mood of nostalgia for the past he drove down to Chartwell, in Kent. The house was empty, its contents in mothballs and dustsheets for the duration. Spring was blossoming in all its beauty, as he wrote to Randolph a few days later. Nature was running rampant. 'The goose I called the naval aide-de-camp,' he added – more family gossip – 'and the male black swan have both fallen victims to the fox.' After a while however the feline which he called the Yellow Cat had arrived, purring continuing friendship with all the fervour that long-neglected cats display, and this pleased the prime minister as he had not been down there for many months.⁴²



Attack! In order, as he claimed, to forestall the Japanese in the occupation of Madagascar – but more likely driven by a commendable desire to do something, somewhere – Churchill had ordered the invasion of Madagascar, a nine-hundred-mile long island off the eastern coast of Africa. The French colony currently had a garrison loyal to Vichy France. Since Washington still maintained diplomatic relations with Vichy, and Roosevelt was still anxious to observe the niceties of international law, he let Churchill know that he 'preferred not to be openly associated with' this enterprise.⁴³

On April 24, the day after the Secret Session, Eden recorded in his diary a meeting with the chiefs of staff about IRONCLAD, the code-name for this new operation. General Brooke was hostile to the plan, fearing armed resistance by the French, or even an open invitation by Vichy to the Japanese to come in; Eden discounted both possibilities. Churchill pointed out scornfully that it was 'of course' easier to do nothing – if they called off the enterprise now, they should not have to run any risks; but he had already informed Roosevelt and Smuts of his intent, and if the Japanese were allowed to 'walk' into Madagascar it would take 'a deal of explaining away.'⁴⁴

For security reasons they had to conceal the operation from General de Gaulle, leader of the Free French in Britain. The prime minister now reinstated all the security restrictions enforced against him in September 1941. Hearing that de Gaulle was intending to leave for Brazzaville, in the French colonies, Churchill ordered in mid-April 1942: 'He must not go.' Informed of further erratic behaviour by the general on the day of the chiefs of staff meeting on IRONCLAD, Churchill wrote to Eden, 'This is what I have long feared; & explains why I have given directions (some months ago) to prevent De G. leaving in any aeroplane from this country.' He instructed Desmond Morton to contact both the air ministry and admiralty to ensure that de Gaulle did not slip out of Britain by air or sea, and he directed the security services to step up their watch on the general's telephones. 'Meanwhile make sure that no accident occurs,' Churchill told Morton.⁴⁵

AFTER ISSUING these instructions Churchill took his afternoon nap. It was a sleep so deep that when he awoke he could not remember where he was.

Eden arrived at about five P.M. to find him 'striding about his room in vest and drawers with cigar in his mouth, whisky & soda at his side & calling for Nellie [the parlourmaid] to produce his socks.'⁴⁶ He showed the prime minister a telegram just in from Moscow, responding to the message they had sent two weeks earlier inviting Molotov to Britain to sign an Anglo-Soviet treaty. Stalin's telegram indicated that not only would Molotov be bringing with him a draft treaty, but he would also take up the question of the Second Front.⁴⁷

This was less agreeable. The Americans disliked the whole process. Ambassador Winant half-jokingly admonished Eden that Washington now regarded him as 'a Bolshevik.' Roosevelt could not see any necessity for a treaty on frontiers, and felt that keeping up the rate of Allied supplies to Stalin should be enough. The London Poles too would hardly leap at such a treaty, as it would legitimise Stalin's 1939 depredations on their country's eastern territories. In July 1941 Eden had written assuring General Wladyslaw Sikorski, prime minister of the exiled Polish government, that His Majesty's government did not recognise any 'territorial changes' effected in Poland since August 1939. On the thirtieth of that month, however, the very day that diplomatic relations were restored between this Polish government and the Soviet Union, Eden had put a different spin on the question, stating in the House of Commons that this note to Sikorski did not involve any guarantee of *frontiers*. Surely, one innocent Labour Member had asked,

the existing guarantee to Poland, under which the war had been declared on Germany in 1939, still held good? 'There is, as I have said, no guarantee of frontiers,' Mr Eden stubbornly replied.⁴⁸

Trouble between Moscow and the Poles had begun to fester soon after. Stalin refused to reveal the fate of tens of thousands of Polish officers captured by his army. The Kremlin described the formerly Polish city of Lvov as 'Ukrainian.'⁴⁹ Soon after, the British ambassador informed Sikorski that Stalin was planning to annex East Prussia to Poland and to force back Poland's eastern frontier – to 'push Poland from the East to the West,' as Sikorski remarked, adding ominously: 'But that cannot be done without Polish consent.'⁵⁰ These Polish eastern territories were the very territories that he had conquered, or re-conquered – the semantics are unimportant here – in 1920; they had been ceded to Poland by the treaty of Riga in 1921.

Obstinate, intransigent, and overly proud – in many ways a Polish 'de Gaulle' though vested with greater legitimacy – Sikorski discussed these problems with Churchill on the last day of January 1942, candidly advising him to delay any visit to Moscow until the Red Army was in difficulties again. He predicted that Hitler would launch his summer offensive toward the Caucasus, relaxing his present thrusts toward Leningrad and Moscow. While the prime minister made the odd observation during this conversation that Britain was not 'afraid of' communism, and would not oppose it if Europe should embrace it, he did give Sikorski his solemn word, according to the Polish record, that 'as long as victory has not been achieved the problem of the future State boundaries in Europe will be in no way discussed.'⁵¹

As the Soviet claims were more rudely asserted, Sikorski began to wonder whether Churchill's word would be enough. On March 11, during a long talk with the prime minister and Eden, he protested that despite his sacrifice in signing the agreement with Stalin the leopard had not changed its spots: the treaty which Eden hoped to sign with Molotov would be pure folly if there were no *quid pro quo*. He did not want this to sound like a threat, he added; but he would no longer hold back the release of brutal information exposing to the world 'the real face of the Russians.'⁵²

In Washington, whither Sikorski now flew, he found that President Roosevelt, under the watchful glare of seven million Polish voters, was more inclined to stand firm on the frontier issue.⁵³ Churchill was thus caught between two major powers with very different views on Poland. He invited Sikorski to come to Chequers with Count Edward Raczyński, his foreign minister, and Joseph Retinger, their senior adviser, and over Sunday lunch

on April 26 he put it to them bluntly that even though it would involve violating the Atlantic Charter he saw no alternative to making the concessions which Stalin was demanding. This was the least of several evils. He urged the Poles to accept something like the old Curzon Line as their post-war eastern frontier. After all, the Russians would then just be recovering what they had held in 1919.⁵⁴ It was at very least a simplistic view of eastern Europe's political geography, but there was not, in Churchill's belief, much that the Poles or he could do about it.



The British working class pinned their faith on Stalin, and wanted to do everything possible to help the Soviet Union.⁵⁵ The voters showed their nagging disapproval of Churchill's policies in two by-elections at the end of April 1942 when they returned two Independent candidates: the candidate for Richard Acland's new Forward March movement romped home at Wallasey with a majority of six thousand, while William J. Brown, fighting the government candidate at Rugby, scraped in with a majority of six hundred. With his campaign probably secretly funded by Lord Beaverbrook, Brown had followed the latter's line and demanded a 'Second Front now.'⁵⁶

Beaverbrook was still in the United States, his clandestine activities against Churchill being closely monitored by the state department and the F.B.I. On Thursday April 23 he delivered a speech, which was broadcast from coast to coast, at a newspaper dinner in New York; at this he raised the same demand for an immediate Second Front. His tone was one of unstinted praise of Stalin. 'Communism under Stalin,' the mischievous Canadian said, 'has won the applause and admiration of all the western nations.' He painted a portrait of a Soviet Union in which there was no religious persecution, and 'the church doors are open.' He even defended Stalin's political purges of 1930. 'Strike out to help Russia!' he said. 'Strike out violently! Strike even recklessly!' He remarked to his secretary: 'I wonder what that fellow Churchill will say.' He knew that these words would sting the prime minister, and he admitted privately that he was 'a little ashamed' of having said these things.⁵⁷ In London, *The Sunday Times* called the speech 'unfortunate' and attacked him for circulating rumours that Churchill's days were numbered; but there was support for him from the usual left-wing icons.⁵⁸

Astonished by the New York speech, Churchill telephoned him from London the following morning, April 24. Hoping now to keep the mis-

chief-making Beaverbrook out of England, he offered to put him in charge of all their various wartime missions in Washington, and of the handling of supply and liaison with Harry Hopkins. Beaverbrook now had higher ambitions than that however; convinced that Churchill would not last much longer in office, he wanted to return to Britain and replace him.⁵⁹ (He told Halifax, the British ambassador in Washington, that Cripps was 'very ambitious' and another contender).⁶⁰ Naturally reluctant to see Beaverbrook back in London, Churchill continued to ponder the idea of making him British supply minister in Washington and he discussed it with Eden and Lyttelton after the late-night defence committee on April 29. The latter reminded him that Max would not take orders, and predicted that he would soon be at loggerheads with the Americans, just as he had been with his colleagues in London. 'I suggested,' noted Eden, '[that] we should await Max's return, his moods change so often.' Churchill talked it over with Halifax via the transatlantic telephone, informing the ambassador that, when asked if he was 'interested,' Beaverbrook had replied that he would do whatever the prime minister commanded. The idea was, Churchill explained, to nominate a high-ranking cabinet official to go to Washington to guide the higher handling of supply matters, tie up with Harry Hopkins, *et cetera*.

Halifax at once made clear to Beaverbrook that, friends though they were, he did not intend to play second fiddle to him. It was by all accounts an awkward conversation. Making no secret of his underlying ambitions, Beaverbrook began an ill-tempered discourse on the political situation in England: to Halifax, he seemed obsessed, talking of the fan mail he was receiving, and of how people regarded him as ruthless and imbued with the proper sense of urgency. He seemed in two minds. One moment he talked of creating a storm in the House of Lords about Singapore's lack of defences; the next, he was assuring Lord Halifax that he would 'never do anything to make Winston's position difficult.'⁶¹

Dismayed at the thought of the meddlesome Max remaining in Washington, Halifax wrote secretly to Churchill and then to Eden, pleading with him to 'help discreetly' to ensure that 'M' (Max) got no permanent job there.⁶² A few days later Lord Beaverbrook decided to return to London.



The pressure increased, and not only from Moscow, to run the next North Russian convoy from Iceland soon. Ships with cargoes destined for

Russia were backing up in United States ports; Hopkins suggested in a telegram they should expand the size of each PQ convoy.⁶³ After Churchill informed Hopkins that the onward convoy situation was serious, Roosevelt himself cabled to London on April 26 expressing concern: 'We have made such a tremendous effort to get our supplies going,' he wrote, 'that to have them blocked except for the most compelling reasons seems to me a serious mistake.'⁶⁴ Churchill explained in his response that it placed an extreme strain on his fleet to provide the escorts; escorting each convoy now entailed a major fleet operation. 'With the best will in the world,' he insisted, '[the] cycle of convoys cannot be more than three in two months.' PQ15, he added, consisting of fifteen ships, had just sailed; he was willing to increase the next convoy, PQ16, to thirty-five ships. 'But 35 is the absolute maximum number which it is safe to risk without further experience of the scale of enemy attack.'⁶⁵

The admiralty hated these convoy operations. Escorting them was a dangerous drain on Britain's dwindling flotillas of destroyers. The Germans mounted an even heavier attack on PQ15; submarines crippled the cruiser *Edinburgh*. From the comfort of Pennsylvania-avenue in Washington, Roosevelt pressed for at least one more big convoy to be run from Iceland during May in order to break the log-jam.⁶⁶ 'With very great respect,' responded Churchill, 'what you suggest is beyond our power to fulfil.' 'I beg you,' he pleaded, 'not to press us beyond our judgement in this operation, which we have studied most intently, and of which we have not yet been able to measure the full strain. I can assure you, Mr President, we are absolutely extended, and I could not press the admiralty further.'⁶⁷

Roosevelt gave way, and agreed to tell the Russians to reduce their clamour for supplies, using the argument that the Allies would need all possible munitions and shipping to mount what he now called BOLERO, the cross-Channel invasion.⁶⁸

Stalin insisted that Churchill must do what he could to send on the ninety shiploads of war materials for the Soviet Union presently 'bottled up' in Iceland.⁶⁹ Churchill assured him that the Allies were resolved to do what they could, but he referred to the threatening presence of *Tirpitz* at Trondheim. 'I am sure you will not mind my being quite frank,' he continued, and he suggested that the Russians might now themselves provide long-range fighter and escort cover for the convoys at their own end of the hazardous Arctic route.⁷⁰ Stalin's dour response was that most of his aeroplanes were engaged 'at the battle front.'⁷¹

ON MAY 1 Ambassador Maisky brought back the Russian answer to Eden's draft of an Anglo-Soviet treaty. Stalin wanted the more delicate parts of the treaty – which would permit Soviet bases in Finland and Romania – to be treated in a secret protocol. Eden had not originally envisaged this.

'It is a tough job to make progress with these people,' he realised. 'They always ask for more.'⁷² The Americans were likely to object since Roosevelt disapproved of all and any wartime attempts at redrawing frontiers without the consent of the populations involved. He lost no opportunity to impress on visiting statesmen that he would not support any frontier claim which meant ignoring the Atlantic Charter.⁷³ Eden discussed the Russian draft with the U.S. ambassador, and got nowhere. 'Winant clearly worried by President's attitude & that of Hull & Welles,' he wrote afterwards.⁷⁴



The Japanese had invaded southern Burma, part of the British empire, in January 1942. By late April, with the Japanese at the gates of Mandalay, the end of British rule in Burma appeared near.

Churchill had barely bothered with this country until now apart from one minor transaction during his visit to Washington. The prime minister of Burma, U Saw, after fruitless talks with Leo Amery and an ample luncheon with Churchill at Chequers in October 1941 had foolishly decided, after weighing his options, to cast his lot with the Japanese and set up a 'Quisling' government on their behalf.⁷⁵ While both men were visiting Washington early in January 1942, Churchill slipped a handwritten message to Roosevelt's staff reading, 'Can [the] President get U Saw & his companion Tin Tut on first available plane going to West Africa?' Roosevelt himself typed the following comment for his files: 'I got He Saw, We Saw, U Saw on to the plane, in accordance with above request and they were arrested by the British in the Near East before they got back to Burma. U Saw had been communicating with the Japanese.'⁷⁶ U Saw, whose name was the butt of such levity, was executed as a traitor in 1948.

In the face of the Japanese invasion the First Burma Corps had displayed unexampled gallantry, fighting a nine-hundred-mile retreat toward their country's frontier with India. At one minute to midnight on April 30 they demolished the centre spans of the Ava bridge across the Irrawaddy river. It

was, described General William Slim, a sad sight and a signal that the British had lost Burma.

‘THE DEPRESSION following Singapore,’ Churchill nonetheless dictated in the letter to his son that weekend, ‘has been replaced by an undue optimism, which I am of course keeping in proper bounds.’⁷⁷ He was out at Chequers as news arrived of the fall of Mandalay and the end of the campaign in Burma.⁷⁸ In an act of charity, he directed the British governor of Burma to abandon his post and make his way by air to India immediately.⁷⁹ He also took steps to salvage General Sir Harold Alexander, one of Britain’s finest soldiers, from the morass, ordering Wavell to bring him out to India too as soon as seemed opportune.⁸⁰

In London an unusual spell of fine weather had arrived. In what was left of Burma, the monsoons had begun. General Slim’s corps continued the retreat westwards across the Chindwin river until mid-May, then slithered on, retreating up slippery slopes and tracks feet deep in slime, drenched with rains that became ever colder as the months progressed. Unwilling even now to write off this country, Churchill set his vivid imagination to work. ‘What are the standing instructions for dealing with “infiltration”?’ he asked Brooke on May 14. He suggested they raise special small-force units to wipe out any such bodies of two to three hundred Japanese, rather than withdrawing the whole front.⁸¹ ‘By far the best and easiest way to defend India,’ he minuted three weeks later, ‘is to attack the Japanese lines of communication through Burma.’ He had put urgent proposals to the chiefs of staff on this subject, but they had made no headway.⁸²

THE JAPANESE had sent a makeshift invasion force by sea to the Solomon Islands and northern New Guinea, seizing key points. Operating in the Coral Sea, five hundred miles from Australia, on May 4 the American navy intercepted this fleet and over the next three days sank or damaged several Japanese ships for the loss of only one carrier, *Lexington*, and one destroyer, inflicting a defeat which started the tide turning against the enemy in the Pacific. The Japanese abandoned plans to land on the tenth at Port Moresby in New Guinea.

‘The evidence at present available,’ wrote Churchill to Roosevelt, ‘shows that Japanese carriers are equipped with striking forces of fighter dive bombers in large numbers.’ He concluded that it would be necessary to increase his own fighter aircraft strength in the carriers of the Eastern fleet; he asked

for the loan of two hundred more American fighter aircraft. 'There is another urgent matter to which I would like to draw your attention,' he continued, 'namely the early supply of transport aircraft for our airborne forces.' He hoped to use these forces in summer operations. 'Without this help,' he concluded, 'our airborne forces can only be lifted at the cost of the bombing offensive against Germany.'⁸³ This was however an offensive which he was very unwilling to reduce.

From Field-Marshal Smuts came a telegram highly critical of Allied naval planning. 'I am deeply dissatisfied with the strategy which has divided our resources and sent the American fleet to Australasia,' wrote the field-marshal. 'The vital front this summer is the Indian ocean and the surrounding lands, and the Japanese move towards Australia seems to me no more than a clever feint.'⁸⁴

The British contribution to this naval battle was the reading of the Japanese fleet code. The Japanese messages showed that another major fleet operation was brewing, involving six battleships and other carriers and warships to match. Hopkins told Lord Halifax on May 19 it was uncertain whether this battle fleet was making for Hawaii, Luzon island, or even Australia.⁸⁵ By May 21 British naval Intelligence, 'based on our own best sources in Melbourne' as Admiral Pound told General Ismay – a reference to Commander Nave, the chief British codebreaker working on Japanese naval codes there – deduced that the Japanese target was Midway Island. Since the British had not revealed to the Americans that they were reading JN. 25, Ismay suggested to the prime minister that they state to Washington merely, 'There are very good reasons for believing that operations against Midway Island are certain, against Aleutian Islands very probable, and against Hawaii probable.'⁸⁶ The Battle of Midway in June would seal the Japanese navy's defeat.

At first however there was no clear news of the Japanese naval movements. By May 21 it was clear that the Japanese had abandoned any designs they might have had against New Guinea and Australia – namely against Port Moresby and Darwin. 'I feel much more hopeful,' Churchill signalled to Wavell, 'that you will get through the next two months than I did two months ago. The end of July if all goes well should see you more comfortable.'⁸⁷

Drafting a reply to Smuts on May 27, he set out the basis for his own immediate strategy in the Far East. He would send his warships to Ceylon by late July. 'My own belief is that Japanese will strike north and try to finish off Chiang Kai-shek but the distances are very great and there will be

time if we do our best to strike eastward at the Japanese communications through Burma in the autumn. For this purpose it will be necessary to have naval and air command on the western half of the Bay of Bengal and a good umbrella of shore-based aircraft in its northern quarter. Ceylon is the naval key-point of all this.' Churchill admitted that any German successes in the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea would be difficult to meet, but there was no reason to anticipate such a disaster yet.⁸⁸



Discussing the Madagascar operation *IRONCLAD* again with his defence committee on April 28 Churchill had agreed that the operation would have to be carefully synchronised with American messages to Vichy France transmitted through the various Vichy and American ambassadors.⁸⁹ When he informed Roosevelt a few days later of his intention of seizing Madagascar, there were misgivings in Washington – some people feared that it was another example of Churchill's activism; Lord Halifax went so far as to protest to Eden, but received no reply.⁹⁰ On the twenty-ninth, President Roosevelt announced in a speech that the United Nations would take all necessary measures to prevent the Axis powers from using French territory 'in any part of the world.' It was a useful formula, and Churchill expressed his gratitude to the president.⁹¹

Even he wondered what he was letting himself in for. He directed the chiefs of staff on April 30 not to lay too much stress on 'gaining control of the whole island.' He invited them to lunch on May 4, arriving late from Chequers for this engagement in visibly good form – evidently elated at the prospect of the imminent assault on Madagascar.⁹² British troops invaded the huge Indian Ocean island the next day. Meeting his defence committee that morning Churchill was disconcerted to find that the chiefs of staff suddenly had cold feet, worried that Laval might now allow the Nazis to occupy Dakar on Africa's other coast. Sending for Eden and addressing him somewhat quaintly as 'Mr Foreign Secretary,' Churchill asked his view. Eden replied evasively that this was a political question, so politicians must assess how Laval might react. 'There,' triumphed the prime minister. 'You see, the secretary of state takes the same view as I do.'⁹³

That evening he explained to a more docile Pacific War Council his reasons for ordering the invasion. The Japanese would not now find it easy to establish air bases on the island, he felt, 'as they would be unaware of our

strength.'⁹⁴ Although he had airily assured the council that 'opposition was slight,' Churchill admitted to Brooke on May 6 that the operation had been 'rather sticky' during the last twenty-four hours.⁹⁵ On the seventh the Vichy commanders at Diego Suarez, in the northern part of the island, surrendered to the British task force commander Rear-Admiral Sir Neville Syfret, who was an old friend of the prime minister's. Who should now govern the island? Less enamoured than Eden of de Gaulle, Morton suggested that the general's men did not deserve any power in Madagascar. 'I am getting vy. tired of de Gaulle,' scribbled Churchill on May 8.⁹⁶

On May 11 Eden recorded a 'very stiff' meeting with the French leader about Madagascar. 'He is a most difficult creature to handle & I had no easy task to keep my temper.' 'But I am sorry for any exile,' he added charitably, 'so I just did!'⁹⁷

By mid-May the chiefs of staff were still uneasy about the operation's progress, wanting now to occupy only the northern half of Madagascar, leaving the rest to Vichy. Eden warned that Vichy could not be trusted.⁹⁸ Field-Marshal Smuts proposed that South Africa send extra troops across the straits to complete the operation and install a Free French administration throughout the island. For political reasons, Eden also wanted to see de Gaulle's generals take over, but Churchill doubted whether Smuts' force would suffice, and without telling Eden he sanctioned negotiations with the Vichy commanders. After talking with him on the thirtieth, Eden noted: 'We are in danger of a muddle. I have no confidence that they will hold by anything they promised.'⁹⁹ The next day Winston rang up Eden to report that the battleship *Ramilles* had been torpedoed at Diego Suarez. 'It might be Jap float plane or Vichy,' commented Eden in his diary, adding, in the absence of any enemy claims: 'I guess the latter.'¹⁰⁰ After Vichy airplanes on May 18 shot down an Allied Catalina on anti-submarine patrol from Gibraltar, Eden wrote a bloodthirsty letter urging that they punish Vichy. But how? He knew no way – unless they bomb the town of Vichy, 'but the moment for that does not seem to have come yet; and the Americans would certainly not like it.'¹⁰¹

The behind-the-scenes duelling between the prime minister and his young foreign secretary over de Gaulle resumed on June 1. Given the conditions prevailing in Madagascar, General Brooke found Churchill's outright support of the Vichy French against de Gaulle very refreshing; he even wrote privately, 'Eden's support of de Gaulle will go near losing the war for us if we do not watch it.'¹⁰² De Gaulle demanded facilities to send his men to

Diego Suarez and when Churchill refused on the sixth he sent strongly anti-British telegrams to his generals Georges Catroux, Philippe de Hauteclocque Leclerc, and Edgar de Larminat; these missives Churchill somehow 'obtained,' and he sent Eden to tax 'his' general about them.

Since de Gaulle recanted only partially, the prime minister renewed the ban on his leaving Britain. It would stay in force until August.¹⁰³ He now sent for de Gaulle himself, treated him 'like a little boy,' according to Morton, and 'pricked his balloon badly.' When the general began to cavil about being frozen out of Madagascar, Churchill retorted that the French officials on the island wanted nothing to do with him. On this occasion, he also urged de Gaulle to broaden the basis of his National Committee, and to bring in Churchill's old friend and pre-war fellow-conspirator, the diplomatist Alexis Léger, in whose political judgement he vested much confidence. He found the general 'most humble throughout'; in view of which he allowed, as he escorted him to the front door of No. 10, 'We must see each other again.'¹⁰⁴

On June 3 the prime minister dictated a well-reasoned (and, in the light of later events this year, significant) memorandum in which he argued that whatever their scorn for Vichy, they must not forget that Pétain and Darlan ran the only French government capable of giving the Allies what they wanted, namely the Toulon fleet and the right of entry into the French North African provinces. He expressed downright admiration for the patience with which Vichy had borne, 'with the least possible show of anger,' not only the humiliations of Oran, Dakar, and now Madagascar, but the British naval blockade and air raids. While he had always been 'ready to take rough action against Vichy,' he now looked forward, he concluded, to a time when the certainty of Allied victory would produce a sudden and dramatic change in the action of the Vichy government.¹⁰⁵

The foreign secretary swooned with rage when he read this document. In his response, he tore into Pétain's defeatism, Laval's hostility to Britain, and especially Darlan ('it is unnecessary,' Eden spluttered in his draft, 'to quote his many anti-British utterances'). In an ugly mood Eden even hinted, 'It is possible that Pétain's white hairs may not save him from the fate which is awaiting Laval, Doriot, Déat, and perhaps Darlan.'¹⁰⁶

Eden continued to beat this powerfully anti-Vichy and pro de-Gaulle drum, but met no support from Churchill who knew more about de Gaulle than Eden suspected. His codebreakers had now decyphered a treacherous telegram from the general to his senior officers in the Middle East, bleating that the Allies were about to rob France of Madagascar and, soon, Dakar. 'I

am not disposed to remain associated with the Anglo-Saxon powers,' de Gaulle raged, and he secretly instructed the other French generals as follows: 'We must form a united front against all comers and have no relations with the Anglo-Saxons under any circumstances and at whatever cost. We must stand fast in the liberated territories and defend them, and warn the French people and the whole world by radio of Anglo-Saxon imperialist designs.' De Gaulle concluded, 'I have been asked to visit Beirut and Brazzaville, but the British have prevented it.' Amused, Churchill noted on this intercept in red ink for Eden's benefit, 'So much for Gen. de Gaulle.'

It was deceptively easy, the prime minister admonished Eden two days later, to list 'all the shameful things the Vichy Government have said' – but his own instincts ran differently. Vichy was living on the sufferance of the enemy. His own great hope was to persuade them to sail their fleet to North Africa 'and to get an invitation for British or American troops to enter French North Africa.' Vichy was the only party who could bestow these 'good gifts.' 'There is much more in British policy towards France,' he lectured, 'than abusing Pétain and backing de Gaulle.' He urged Eden to withdraw his paper abusing Vichy, failing which he himself would weigh in, and inform the cabinet of the intercepted 'traitor' telegram, which he thought would convince most people that de Gaulle had better stay in Britain 'under our control.' 'Imagine what he would do if free to fulminate from Brazzaville,' he wrote.¹⁰⁷ It is hard not to believe that Churchill thoroughly enjoyed needling Anthony Eden over his support for the incorrigible general.

EDEN AND his foreign office officials took a stubbornly different line, insisting on sending Free French representatives into Madagascar in July 1942, just as the British forces were completing their negotiations with the local authorities. 'The foreign office's love for de Gaulle,' noted Brooke again, 'will finish by losing us this war!'¹⁰⁸ The Madagascar problem simmered on all summer. After failing to agree terms with the Vichy governor of the rest of Madagascar, Armand Annet, the foreign office urged that they now occupy that half too; Churchill objected, telling Eden, 'Annet's quite a good chap: Clemmie met him in a train somewhere once.' To the foreign office this did not seem an adequate credential.¹⁰⁹

The British completed the island's occupation in November, when despite all Churchill's remonstrances it was handed over to de Gaulle's Free French, in line with foreign office wishes. This did not see an end to Churchill's problems with the general.

20: *Molotov and the Mongolian Smile*

VISITING CHURCHILL'S England in May 1942 for the first time in a year – in 1941 the English were diffident, harried, and listless – the American air force commander 'Hap' Arnold now found the countryside green and prosperous; the sheep and cattle were fat. The cities were still poor and seedy; their shops were open but few goods were on sale. Everything but jewellery seemed to be rationed, and there were long lines outside the butchers' and bakers' stores. 'The Londoners of 1942 were however a breed apart from those of the year before; the people now had an interest in life, and the scars left by the Blitz were fast healing. 'Now,' he found, 'men, women and children have lost that expression of dreaded expectancy . . . that look of almost fearful bewilderment.'²

Power shortages were still biting deeply. Queen Elisabeth painted a red 'Plimsoll line' around the royal bath to limit the hot water's depth to five inches; following her example, London clubs marked a two-inch line in wash basins. Lighting in Tube stations was reduced to only a few dim bulbs.³ The cost of living was rising. After lunch for two at Gourmet's, Winston's private secretary John Martin found he got only one shilling change out of a one-pound note.⁴ His master encountered few such problems. Late in April 1942 the prime minister was sighted in the Savoy restaurant with Clementine and a young man; there seemed to be a problem, and the waiter went off to speak with the head waiter. The latter shrugged and told a reporter afterwards that the prime minister had insisted on his party having fish *and* meat, even though the waiter objected that this was against his own government's wartime regulations.⁵

If there were still morale problems at the end of April 1942, Cecil King believed that one reason was the graft perceived in high places, apostrophised as 'jobs for the boys' – of which Attlee's appointment as deputy

prime minister was one proof, and Randolph's safe seat at Preston another. Other reasons listed by King were that Britain's generals had turned out to be duds; and that Churchill had no intention of altering his government's constitution.⁶ Given Britain's run of military disasters, few people were happy that he was remaining minister of defence.⁷ While educated men like Cripps believed that the British people would even get over, if necessary, the loss of India, Iran, Iraq, Egypt, and the Mediterranean, Cecil King felt that far smaller disasters would 'break the people's heart' and lead to an irresistible demand for peace.⁸

CHURCHILL HAD now been prime minister for two years. Those twenty-four months of political and military crises had been like a savage painting executed in alternating hues of glory and sombreness. After lunching alone with the prime minister late in April 1942, Anthony Eden recorded: 'He was in better form than I have known him for ages. We spoke of painting and pictures, the light on the Horse Guards, the right tactics in politics, and so forth.' Churchill impressed upon his chosen heir the importance of 'not being afraid to drop out for a bit,' and he regretted that he had not toured the empire when in the political wilderness. If one had once played a great part, Churchill now realised, one would not be forgotten.⁹

No matter how often he decried those who called him a dictator, he left no doubt that he was in control. Hugh Dalton attended one cabinet meeting where fuel rationing was discussed for no less than eighty minutes. 'I have never thought so ill of the P.M.,' he wrote afterwards, 'nor been so vexed by him, before. He talks more than half the time, and has clearly not concentrated his mind on the details of the subject at all. . . He argues at immense length, almost alone, against a substantial majority of his colleagues.'¹⁰ There was a general fear of Churchill. Even Attlee once approached Leo Amery to propose an action on India which he dared not put to Churchill direct.¹¹ Bevin said that the prime minister mistook criticism for attack, and that it was difficult to tell him the truth.¹² Amery however had a different impression. 'There is no doubt,' he wrote after one minor triumph on India, 'that if one stands up to Winston and argues with him . . . the argument often sinks into the subsoil and comes out as a Winstonian flower later on.'¹³

As for the late hours engendered by Churchill's loquacity, Lord Hankey, now unencumbered by any chains of office, had publicly criticised them in the Lords on March 25. During World War One, he recalled, the war cabi-

net had met only four times after dinner and none of these meetings lasted after midnight. Churchill however regularly kept his cabinet or its defence committee up until two or three in the morning; this meant that junior staffs in the ministries had to wait about until the meetings had finished.¹⁴ ‘We sit up at night dealing with all sorts of subjects,’ wrote one admiralty official, ‘& then it goes to the chiefs of staff & then Winston & the cabinet interfere & the Ministry of War Transport butts in & this sub-committee & that. . . We began one meeting at a quarter to midnight & finished just after three!’¹⁵ Churchill thought nothing of telephoning staff at one or two A.M. for no evident reason other than what Alan Brooke called his ‘impish habit of pulling people out of bed for the fun of it.’¹⁶ Churchill made light of such criticism. He ended one late defence committee meeting in April 1942 with the remark, ‘It is half past eleven. We had better knock off now, or we shall have Lord Hankey on our tracks.’¹⁷



Sitting in the underground Cabinet War Rooms on May 10, 1942, the second anniversary of his *Machtergreifung*, Churchill broadcast live what he called ‘a message of good cheer’ to the world. His text struck no new chords. He ridiculed Hitler for forgetting the Russian winter: ‘We all heard about it at school,’ he mocked, ‘but he forgot it. I have never made such a bad mistake as that.’ In more serious vein, he pledged Britain to retaliate with poison gas if Hitler chose to initiate its use, whether against Britain or Russia.

From start to finish of this broadcast however he never referred once to the empire: ‘It just doesn’t occur to him,’ wrote one minister, distressed by this omission, ‘except as a mere appendage to this country and covered by the reference to ourselves.’¹⁸ He had originally drafted, but ultimately omitted, a passage defending his record against criticism by ‘the weaker brethren’ who had become more vocal since Singapore. ‘In particular I am much blamed by a group of ex-ministers,’ he stated, ‘for my general conduct of the war.’ These men would have liked to reduce his powers. He was however, he once more averred, no dictator: ‘I am only your servant.’¹⁹ It showed how the criticisms had stung.

As broadcast, the government’s pollsters found, this speech acted as a tonic to the people. The broadcast ‘stimulated militancy, increased confidence, silenced fretting over inaction, and re-established Churchill as the natural leader of people at this time.’ Depressed by their recent losses to

Rommel and the Japanese, British spirits were elevated by the prime minister now talking of visiting even greater ruin on Hitler's homeland. The broad mass of the British people, there could be no doubt, backed his bombing policy. They regarded with indifference the R.A.F.'s destruction of German workers' homes and non-military targets 'whether by accident or design.' In north-eastern England, in fact, the researchers of public opinion found that any softening by the air ministry toward Germany might result in Churchill being thrown out of office.²⁰

AT THE start of May 1942 the left-wing *Tribune*, edited by Aneurin Bevan, carried a well-aimed attack on Churchill written by 'Thomas Rainsborough,' evidently a pseudonym for Michael Foot; it alluded to the prime minister's fondness for drink and the readiness of his tears.

This was one more barb sponsored by Lord Beaverbrook.²¹ He made no secret of his intentions. An American Intelligence unit near Roosevelt's country home learned from a source close enough to call Beaverbrook 'droopy-pants' that he was boasting that he would be Britain's new prime minister, as 'Churchill is all done.' After sizing up his prospects Beaverbrook returned from Washington to talk things over with Churchill on May 5.²²

In London, Beaverbrook reported to the prime minister that Lord Halifax had made plain that as British ambassador he wanted 'all or nothing' – that there was no room for the two of them in Washington. 'All right,' the prime minister unexpectedly growled, 'take everything. The embassy as well.' It suited him: he was already becoming disenchanted with Halifax in Washington.²³ It was not as easy as that.

Churchill chewed on this problem all week. On the morning of May 12 he asked Eden to come over and, struggling with his bath towel like a Roman emperor in his toga, talked of sending Beaverbrook back over the Atlantic to replace Halifax. 'Winston doesn't like him loose,' perceived Eden, writing in his diary. 'He maintains Max has entrée to President which is all that matters, that he would do as told or be recalled, that he would get us what we wanted as none other could, etc.'

Eden disagreed with most of this but eventually agreed that Winston should casually sound out Hopkins. The draft telegram which the prime minister showed Eden that same day seemed to be stampeding the Americans – it smacked of asking for an '*agrément*' to Beaverbrook's appointment as ambassador. The foreign secretary persuaded him to add, 'This is not official, please tell me frankly what you think.'²⁴

The message, as dispatched on May 12, asked Hopkins to inquire of the president whether Beaverbrook might replace Halifax as ambassador. 'I should also be glad to have Halifax home here to lead the House of Lords and for general duties in the war cabinet.'²⁵

Although Hopkins replied in the affirmative, it was an icily diplomatic reply; Churchill however interpreted it as enthusiastic acceptance.²⁶ Now however Beaverbrook himself spiked the idea, by making his return to Washington conditional on 'the promise of a definite strategic decision in favour of a Second Front.'

Churchill had to decline. Thus unfolded another final conflict between the two cantankerous old friends. Lord Beaverbrook directed his newspapers to promote his new Second Front crusade. He began to fund a 'Centre of Public Opinion,' and this staged mass meetings at which prominent left-wing speakers demanded the Second Front. His real purpose in all this was to overthrow Churchill and replace him.

SEEKING TO bolster his flagging popularity the prime minister left to tour the northern Midlands on May 14, taking Dr Herbert Evatt, now Australia's representative in London, and others in his train. 'He was given a staggering welcome,' wrote his secretary, 'and was so pleased and touched by it all.' Evatt afterwards sent glowing telegrams to Canberra.²⁷ Churchill and Evatt visited some of Harris's bomber stations and an ammunition filling factory, then spoke to twenty or thirty thousand people from the steps of Leeds Town Hall on the sixteenth.²⁸ He told the crowd there that it would be premature to talk of having 'topped the ridge.' At least they could now see that ridge ahead.



In the Arctic, the edge of the ice pack came and went each year like a slow frozen tide. It was still so far to the south in May as to force every convoy within range of the German bombers stationed in northern Norway. Seizing on Churchill's absence from London, on May 15 the chiefs of staff tried to engineer a delay in any further Arctic convoy operations for six weeks.²⁹ Churchill overrode this advice on his return; he informed them on May 17 that both Stalin and Roosevelt would object to any delay. 'My own feeling, mingled with much anxiety, is that the convoy ought to sail on the eighteenth. The operation is justified,' he felt, 'if a half gets through.'³⁰

This next convoy would be PQ16, laden with hundreds of tanks and aeroplanes for Russia. At the cabinet on May 18 voices were still raised against risking the operation. Dr Evatt stated forcefully that Australia now needed tanks and aeroplanes as much as the Soviet Union. Against his colleagues' unanimous advice Churchill decided to send PQ16 on its perilous way. It was their duty, he said, to fight these convoys through 'whatever the cost.' All but three of the ships in PQ15 had got through, he pointed out; this time they might again do better than they feared.³¹ The convoy would sail two nights later.

Churchill did what he could to tilt fortune in its direction. He invited Stalin to send Russian squadrons to attack the German bomber bases in North Cape. 'If luck is not with us,' he now informed the Soviet leader, mindful of his cabinet's hostility, 'and the convoy suffers very severe losses, the only course left to us may be to hold up further convoys until . . . the ice recedes to the northward in July.'³²

CHURCHILL WAS necessarily aware of how each theatre interacted with the other. At the southern end of this vast European theatre of conflict, the German and Italian bombers maintained a ceaseless air attack on Malta. Hitler had issued a formal directive for the island's capture. Further south still, in North Africa, General Auchinleck was planning to hold off his attack on Rommel's army until July. Until Rommel's bombers were driven out of their airfields in Cyrenaica, Malta would remain exposed to this crippling air attack. By early May the defences of the island fortress were down to six Spitfires. The Maltese were facing starvation. The Governor of Malta wilted under the strain. Churchill sent Lord Gort, Governor of Gibraltar, to replace him. 'It has been decided not to try to reinforce Malta in May,' the king learned, 'and if we cannot do so in June we shall have to try and evacuate it.'³³

Churchill was dismayed by Auchinleck's senseless procrastination. From his Olympian heights, drawing upon all the secret Intelligence, he believed that he knew better than the general how weak Rommel's army now was. On April 21 the codebreakers had informed him that Rommel had only 161 tanks running in the forward areas.³⁴ Auchinleck put the figures higher, assessing a few days later that Rommel had 265 running with forty-five more in the tank workshops. On the last day of April Churchill received from 'C' a dozen fresh signals from Rommel's headquarters; the Nazi general intended to reinforce the Panzer Army by May 15. Churchill thoughtfully

ringed the '15' in red ink, and on the other pages he ringed the numbers of tanks, and totted up the totals for himself.³⁵ He now informed Auchinleck that the latest 'most secret' information confirmed his estimate; Rommel moreover would be getting twelve thousand troop reinforcements during the coming month.³⁶ Every day that Auchinleck waited, his opponent was growing even stronger. On May 2 a new intercept showed Rommel as having enough fuel in reserve to sustain thirty-eight days of battle.³⁷

Churchill was furious at Auchinleck's dilly-dallying. Once before, he reminded Eden, General W.H.E. 'Strafer' Gott had wanted to hang on to Benghazi, while Auchinleck had favoured a retreat to Marsa Matruh.³⁸ Now he was talking of postponing his offensive until July or August. Conversely, on May 4 military Intelligence advised Churchill that Rommel was now planning to launch his own offensive early in June.³⁹ By that time, Malta might be lost. The next day however, Churchill gathered from his Oracle that Hitler had transferred a bomber and a fighter group from the Mediterranean to the eastern front in preparation for his coming summer offensive; so he informed Wavell on May 5.⁴⁰ By mid-May the crisis here seemed past.

They could not keep going on like this. Early on the seventh he sent for General Brooke. (The C.I.G.S. found him 'a wonderful sight' in bed, sucking on a large cigar, his hair somewhat ruffled, with papers and messages littering the bed and a large spittoon next to it to drop cigar butts into). While Brooke, who also thought little of Auchinleck, listened impassively, the prime minister began to develop wild plans of ridding himself of this tardy commander-in-chief and replacing him with Alexander, still valiantly fighting his retreat through Burma.⁴¹

On the eighth Auchinleck sent a new cable to London, still urging postponement, at least until mid-June. Churchill referred this to all his colleagues.⁴² The C.I.G.S. admitted to the cabinet that he was surprised that Auchinleck was not timing his own attack to spoil Rommel's offensive. The issue was so clear that Churchill risked asking each minister his view 'individually' – it was again one of those occasions when 'democracy' had its uses.⁴³ Emboldened by their response he fired off to Cairo a telegram reminding Auchinleck that the loss of Malta might lead to the loss of the Nile Valley, which would be a disaster of the first magnitude to the empire (the word 'empire' too sometimes had its uses). Therefore, whatever the risks, Auchinleck should attack Rommel's forces 'and fight a major battle,' during May if at all possible.⁴⁴ On May 10 he sent a further telegram, phrased in unmistakable language instructing the general to fight a battle with 'your

whole army.' On the twelfth the cabinet instructed Auchinleck to begin his offensive in June, whatever his misgivings.

Despite a reminder from the P.M., a full week passed before the general even replied.⁴⁵ It was May 19 before Auchinleck bestirred himself – so it must have seemed – and submitted his intentions in a lengthy telegram. Its tone was one of pained reproof, as from a veteran warrior to a lay bystander. He did agree that there were signs that Rommel intended to attack in the immediate future; the results of that action, he pointed out, must govern any future action by the Eighth Army.⁴⁶ A further telegram went from Downing-street to Cairo on the twentieth, but it failed to move the general to any speedier action.⁴⁷



Beside Beaverbrook, Rommel, and the Arctic convoys, the prime minister had other preoccupations: Molotov had been due to arrive in Scotland on May 11, but the draft treaty which he would be bringing was in Churchill's view unacceptable, as it betrayed Poland's interests completely. He wished that the Russians and the treaty would go away. 'We must remember,' Churchill said, 'that this is a bad thing. We oughtn't to do it, and I shan't be sorry if we don't.' Eden hopefully redrafted the document omitting all reference to post-war frontiers, while guaranteeing mutual assistance after the war against renewed German aggression.⁴⁸

Molotov was delayed and did not arrive until May 20. He brought with him his secretary-general and a couple of Russian generals. Ambassador Maisky travelled down with them on the special train from Scotland; Eden, Cadogan, and General Nye were waiting to greet the Soviet delegation as the train pulled into a suburban station at Brooklands. Not entirely trusting Winston's security staff at Chequers, the Russians stationed a female Cerberus to watch over each of their bedroom doors in the mansion. The prime minister, who still harboured fantasies about Nazi parachutists arriving by night, ordered a pistol put beside Molotov's dispatch box each night.

WHEN THE negotiations on the treaty began in London at eleven-thirty the next morning, Churchill himself unenthusiastically chaired the inaugural session in the cabinet room at No. 10; the other six meetings would be held in Eden's room over at the F.O. Curiously studying the Soviet foreign minister, Cadogan decided that he had all the grace and conciliation of a totem

pole; he wore a natty brown suit and a fixed Mongolian smile. Ignoring Eden's draft, Molotov stated, as Churchill reported at that evening's cabinet, that Russia was demanding 'as a minimum' the recognition of the Soviet frontiers at the time Hitler invaded in 1941 – frontiers which included the Baltic States and sizeable helpings of eastern Poland and Romania.⁴⁹

Having stated the Soviet position on the frontiers, as the Soviet transcripts show, Molotov switched to talk about the Second Front. Churchill refused to be drawn on dates or locations, and referred their visitors to General Brooke; the Russian woodenly insisted that 'it was not simply a military problem but primarily a political one, and, what's more, one of great urgency.'⁵⁰ Reverting to the frontiers, Churchill spoke of the need to act in conformity with the United States, and of his reluctance to contravene the Atlantic Charter. Molotov for his part referred both to Eden's proposals, stated in Moscow in December – which he described as similar to his own – and to the need to heed Soviet public opinion.

These painful talks lasted for several days. The Russians also had meetings with other ministers and with the king, who found Molotov to be a small, quiet, polite man with a feeble voice; but, the monarch decided, he 'really is a tyrant.' The king gathered, perhaps from Churchill, that Britain now had 'some sort of hold over Russia.'⁵¹ That Friday May 22 Churchill and Eden took their visitors back to Chequers.⁵² Their first conference here revolved around the Second Front. The eastern front, Molotov predicted, would be 'fraught with danger' for many weeks: Hitler's summer offensive would soon begin, and his 'bands of brigands' outnumbered the Russians. The Soviet Union was expecting Britain and the United States to deliver more war supplies and to mount a Second Front with the object of tying down at least forty German divisions during Hitler's offensive.

Analysing the possible target of such a major amphibious operation, Churchill responded that Britain could expect air superiority only over the Pas de Calais, the Cherbourg peninsula, or Brest. As for the date, the limiting factor was the availability of landing-craft: on August 1 Britain would have only 383, and a month later 566. In 1943 the position would be greatly improved. Nonetheless, his government would see what it could do to relieve the pressure on the gallant Russian armies. 'With the best will in the world,' he continued, 'it is improbable that any operation which we can undertake in 1942, even if successful, can draw away a significant number of ground forces of the Germans from the eastern front.' There were, he argued in mitigation, already forty-four German and Italian divisions fac-

ing the British in Libya, Norway, France, and Holland. In 1943, he added, they would have a million British and American troops available for a large landing operation. Sketching the problems of such amphibious operations, he pointed out that poorly armed though Britain was after Dunkirk, in June 1940, even Hitler had hesitated to make the crossing. He suggested that their respective generals and admirals meet to discuss landing operations.

'What precisely,' asked Molotov, according to the Soviet record ('with a hint of irony,') 'are the prospects of such a military staff conference?' Churchill, 'confused,' nevertheless persisted that there should be such a meeting.⁵³

MOLOTOV WOULD confess to President Roosevelt a few days later that he had been treated most agreeably at Chequers 'where one evening Churchill had kept him up talking until two A.M.'⁵⁴ The post-war Soviet-Polish frontier remained however the sticking-point. While still at Chequers, the prime minister sent a message to Stalin on May 23 explaining that to sign the treaty as proposed by Molotov would mean Britain going back on her undertakings to Poland.⁵⁵ This he was not, in 1942, prepared to countenance. Molotov sent a parallel cable to Stalin on that same day, confirming that Churchill was at odds with him over both Poland and the Second Front; and that the British government was insisting that after his forthcoming talks with Roosevelt he return through London to Moscow.⁵⁶

The American ambassador was horrified at what the British were doing, warning repeatedly of the horrendous effect that British 'appeasement' of Stalin would have on American public opinion, which was far more anti-Soviet than that in Britain.⁵⁷ It was not until Winant personally explained to Molotov Roosevelt's profound opposition to Soviet territorial claims that the Russian backtracked somewhat, and agreed to commend to Stalin the redrafted treaty which Eden and Winant had between them worked out; all of this becomes plain from the unpublished diaries of Cadogan.⁵⁸

Thus to Eden's surprise Molotov's delegation suddenly gave way. The foreign secretary recorded a meeting at four P.M. on May 24 at which the Russians produced several concessions, notably on the Polish issue. When Eden now produced yet another draft, Molotov took him aside and murmured through an interpreter, 'I cannot understand your attitude. We have made many concessions, yet you act as tho' you did not want agreement.' He said that he knew that Churchill had never wanted the Treaty – having told Molotov himself that he was half-American. Eden afterwards telephoned Winston, who was greatly cheered to hear that Molotov was capitulating.⁵⁹

Churchill was relieved to get it over. An Anglo-Soviet treaty binding the two parties to friendship for twenty years was agreed on Whit Monday, the twenty-fifth.⁶⁰ It made no mention of the frontiers. Churchill and Eden had a final discussion with Molotov and Maisky – and no others – at No. 10 that night: it began at ten P.M. and ended once again after one A.M., ‘the prime minister,’ as Molotov reported to his master, ‘flamboyantly smoking a cigar and sipping at a glass of whisky,’ as he had done on the twenty-second.

Together they pored over, and Molotov corrected, the map of the eastern front drawn by the war office. Churchill expressed dismay and even disbelief when Molotov predicted that during the coming year Hitler would be able to field as many divisions as Stalin, ‘and perhaps even a few more.’

The P.M. drew up a balance sheet: the Americans were currently producing 3,150 war planes per month, Britain 2,100 (in April) and the Soviet Union 2,900 (at which Molotov interrupted with the words, ‘Far less!’). Germany however was producing only 2,500 per month, Italy five or six hundred, and Japan four or five hundred. The growing Allied preponderance in the air was, argued Churchill, the guarantee of inevitable victory. Britain, he added, would shortly begin huge air raids against Germany, ‘and in these raids about one thousand bombers will take part simultaneously.’

Churchill hinted that he would like to meet Mr Stalin. ‘Well,’ he exclaimed, as they parted, ‘let us clear up northern Norway and upon conquered territory let’s set up our meeting, perhaps even a meeting of all three of us, with the participation of President Roosevelt.’⁶¹

After the Russians left Winston flattered Eden that the treaty would be far his greatest achievement. Molotov hosted a memorable luncheon for them at the Russian embassy on the following day. Only General Brooke seemed to have any qualms. ‘Somehow,’ he wrote in his diary, ‘the whole affair gave me the creeps and made me feel that humanity still has many centuries to live through before universal peace can be found.’⁶² The foreign secretary glowed as the prime minister generously allowed him sole credit for the dubious Treaty. Molotov proposed Eden’s health, and Eden proposed that of Stalin. After so many toasts, the participants retired for a little sleep that afternoon before the Treaty-signing ceremony itself.⁶³

Eden and Molotov signed the document at six-thirty in the foreign secretary’s grand room at the foreign office while Churchill, Attlee, Sinclair, and assembled F.O. dignitaries looked on.⁶⁴ The text was eventually explained to the cabinet – its start having been delayed from five-thirty P.M. to six, and then until after seven as the carousing at the Soviet embassy

went on. 'Winston came in very jovial,' recorded Leopold Amery; and Cadogan wrote, 'Winston relieved and delighted, and bouquets were heaped on A[nthony]!'⁶⁵ 'Grand parade,' recorded Eden smugly, recording this cabinet, 'where Simon could hardly conceal his chagrin. He had written to Winston against earlier draft & hates this one but can find no complaint except to hint that U.S. should have been brought in to sign.'

It was an eye-opener for many to find that the Russians could be out-faced. 'We had a very good week with Molotof [*sic*],' Churchill told Smuts, 'and completely transformed the original draft of the Treaty which is now in my opinion quite inoffensive to the United States.'⁶⁶

The treaty was kept secret for two weeks, to enable Molotov to complete his round of talks in Washington. A communiqué was issued stating that during the London talks full understanding had also been reached on creating a Second Front in Europe in 1942; this was, as Churchill admitted in private, vintage hogwash designed to deceive Hitler. It would cause him not a little inconvenience in Moscow later.

MOLOTOV TRAVELLED on to Washington.⁶⁷ There the British ambassador would also find that the treaty had undergone this startling change: 'Having made all our lives hideous,' as Lord Halifax wrote in his secret diary, 'by insisting on the recognition by us of their right to absorb the Baltic States, the Russians have almost overnight changed their tune, and have now signed a general alliance with us in quite innocuous terms which will save us all a good deal of trouble.'⁶⁸ From Washington the president sent a message to Churchill, describing his talks with Molotov. He had however gone a long way to commit the Allies to invading France before the end of 1942:

Molotov's visit is, I think, a real success because we have got on a personal footing of candor and as good a friendship as can be acquired through an interpreter. . . He has made very clear his real anxiety as to the next four or five months, and I think this is sincere and not put forward to force our hand. . . Therefore, I am more than ever anxious that BOLERO [the cross-Channel invasion] proceed to definite action beginning in 1942. We all realize that because of weather conditions the operation cannot be delayed until the end of the year.⁶⁹

This angered Churchill. He had handed to Molotov before his departure a memorandum carefully stipulating that he was making no promises what-

soever.⁷⁰ ‘We are making preparations for a landing on the Continent in August or September 1942,’ this said. Any later month was impossible because of the risk of Channel storms. The underlying problem was, as this document once more made plain, the shortage of landing-craft. ‘Clearly it would not further either the Russian cause or that of the Allies as a whole if, for the sake of action at any price, we embarked on some operation which ended in disaster and gave the enemy an opportunity for glorification at our discomfiture. . . We can therefore give no promise on the matter.’⁷¹



In the wake of the Saint-Nazaire raid Churchill’s advisers had agreed that there should be more such raids, and larger ones.⁷² Out of this consensus there emerged a potentially dangerous desire to do anything that might assist the Russians. On May 5 Mountbatten had informed the chiefs of staff that SLEDGEHAMMER – the British code-name for an operation against Brest or Cherbourg – could not take place before mid-August; he argued on this occasion that a large amphibious raid which he was currently planning against Dieppe for late June would make up for this delay.⁷³ The French would have to start suffering too now. On May 19 the chiefs of staff asked Churchill to relax the restrictions which forbade bombing raids against France when conditions ruled out accurate attack. Eden supported their demand, but said he was still against any ‘indiscriminate bombing’ of France at night – except in connection with an amphibious raid on the coast.⁷⁴

The search for viable alternatives to SLEDGEHAMMER continued for several weeks. After a chiefs of staff meeting on May 23 Churchill invited Brooke and Mountbatten round for lunch, and for three hours they discussed ways of raiding France. Carried away by his own optimism as much as by Molotov’s demands, as the C.I.G.S. described in his diary, Winston continued the search throughout lunch until three-thirty, and was soon establishing lodgements all along the coast from Calais to Bordeaux, with blithe disregard for the forces needed and the facilities required to put them ashore.⁷⁵

Brooke’s was a military mind, congealed in staff college doctrines – basically, the art of what was practicable. Churchill’s brain was more fertile – he was prepared to countenance unorthodox solutions. He dictated an inquiry to Mountbatten three days later about building special floating piers jutting for a mile out to sea from the invasion beaches, to enable freighters to unload. ‘They must float up and down on the tide,’ ruled Churchill, since

the alternative – building permanent structures – seemed unacceptable. 'The anchor problem must be mastered.' The ships should have 'a side flap' cut in their hull so that they could unload alongside the floating piers. 'Don't argue the matter,' he directed. 'The difficulties will argue for themselves.'⁷⁶ This was the genesis of the MULBERRY harbours used in June 1944.

Discussing with Brooke once more on the following evening the problems of mounting a cross-Channel assault in August or September, Churchill readily appreciated that it was impossible to establish a bridgehead wide enough for a realistic Second Front with landing-craft capable of lifting only four thousand troops and 160 tanks in the first 'flight.' By March 1943 however there should be a radical improvement, with enough landing-craft by then built to carry one hundred thousand troops and eighteen thousand vehicles in the first wave.⁷⁷ We note in passing that there is no reference in Brooke's diary on these dates to Mountbatten's Dieppe planning.

BY THIS time Churchill's attention had reverted – and not for the first time – to North Cape, the extreme northern region of Norway. It was not far from the scene of his 1940 humiliation, and he glared at that coastline with the same kind of fervour that occasionally seized him when he saw maps of Gallipoli and the Dardanelles, where he had first met his nemesis in 1915.⁷⁸ It was from bases in this far northern region that German bombers and U-boats were wreaking havoc on the Allied PQ-convoys to Russia.

He suggested that they embark one or two divisions aboard ships assembling as if for a PQ-convoy, which should then suddenly divert southwards and seize the North Cape region. This brainchild grew into operation JUPITER. 'He was very amenable to reason,' Brooke found, referring to the postponement of any cross-Channel assault, 'but inclined to transfer the scene of action to North Norway! Which we are now to examine.'⁷⁹

The Norway project became more and more extreme as the spring of 1942 became the summer. Encouraged by Mountbatten, Churchill devised a scheme to build 'armoured fighting snow vehicles' which the two men calculated would afford to the invaders a tactical edge similar to the tanks at Cambrai; this weapon, code-named SNOWPLOW, was to be carried in heavy transport planes.⁸⁰ Relaxing in an expansive, even optimistic mood at Chequers, he had dictated a memorandum to his chiefs of staff directing them to attach 'high political and strategic importance' to an invasion of northern Norway. Seizing Norway's North Cape would not only open up the northern convoy route, he said, it would open a second front. To these

remarks, which had something to be said for them, he added a comment of breathtaking foolishness. 'If the going was good,' he argued, 'we could advance gradually southward, unrolling the Nazi map of Europe from the top.'⁸¹

The going from northern Norway to the south was however anything but good; it was mountainous, and barred by hundreds of fjords; the amphibious crossing to Denmark alone would be an operation of suicidal prospect. Nonetheless Admiral Pound wearily directed his planners to examine such an operation; the admiral suggested that they dig out the records of the 1940 Norway fiasco to illuminate the problems.⁸² Admiral Sir Reginald Drax warned that they would have to put no less than one million men into the selected area.⁸³ The chiefs of staff viewed the operation with unanimous distaste. Their joint planners found that the chances of British forces being able to capture and hold the German air bases in North Cape throughout the winter were 'so slight as to be unacceptable.'⁸⁴

Unwilling to accept this advice from the joint planners, a body he regarded as tainted with defeatism, Churchill ordered the chiefs of staff to study the Norway plan once again.⁸⁵ They refused to hear of it. Telephoning Eden about the latest disappointments in Libya, Winston seemed depressed by this sudden decision to cancel plans to take what Eden, writing with proper caution in his diary, called only a 'certain place' in the north. 'I had not heard of this change,' noted Eden. 'W. feared it had to do with [Admiral Sir Jack] Tovey's extreme reluctance to continue Russian convoys.'

'The politicians,' commented the prime minister sourly, 'are much abused, but they get little help or inspiration from their service advisers.' Eden commiserated with him.⁸⁶

CHARGED WITH lend-lease goods supplied by the American and British war industries for the Soviet Union, the richly laden convoy identified as PQ16 had met near-disaster. One of its ordinary seamen wrote in his narrative, 'We were loaded with war materials including 450 tons of high explosive, loaded fore, aft, and amidships.' He added the sardonic commentary, 'They were not taking any chances on our getting through to Russia.'⁸⁷ For a while the thirty-five freighters, pregnant with American tanks and aeroplanes for Russia, had fared relatively well as they ploughed at a slow eight knots from Iceland toward North Russia. In their first eight days at sea, as Churchill reported to Roosevelt in a telegram which also mentioned his idea of seizing North Cape, only five were sunk or obliged to return to Iceland. The

northern ice pack was however still forcing the ships within range of the German airfields; on May 27 over a hundred Junkers and Heinkel bombers attacked the convoy south-east of Bear Island, and six more ships went down, taking 147 tanks, seventy-seven aeroplanes and 770 other vehicles to the ocean floor with them. The Germans operated 245 bomber- and torpedo-plane sorties against PQ16.⁸⁸ Shaken by the losses, the war cabinet agreed on June 1 that the next convoy should sail up to two weeks later than planned, to allow more time for the ice edge to recede.⁸⁹

The Soviet military situation was not promising. Reporting on the eastern theatre of operations on that day the Joint Intelligence Committee assessed that during August and September it would be 'touch and go' whether Germany or Russia collapsed first.⁹⁰

THAT SAME day, June 1, Lord Mountbatten told the chiefs of staff that having now virtually abandoned plans to launch a major cross-Channel assault in 1942 it was important to execute 'at least one more big raid.'⁹¹ On the same day a telegram came from Roosevelt: he had also gained the impression from his talks with Molotov that the Soviet position was deteriorating; he urged that they go ahead with BOLERO, his code-name for the full-scale cross-Channel assault, that same year.⁹² Churchill, closer to the realities of war than was the Oval Office, succinctly minuted his chiefs of staff: 'I do not think there is much doing on the French coast this year.'⁹³ General Brehon Somervell of the U.S. army mocked that Churchill lacked the degree of 'sustained excitement' that was necessary to carry such an operation through; but it was not excitement that was lacking, it was landing-craft. Of the British chiefs of staff, by early June 1942 only Portal supported invasion; Brooke was flatly against, and Pound at best only neutral.⁹⁴

General Brooke attended a cabinet meeting held later that month in Churchill's room at the House to review the prospect of establishing a Second Front. Churchill was in good form. He carried his colleagues with him, as he defined their current strategic policies: Britain, he said, would not put troops into France unless she intended them to stay there; and he would approve even that operation only if German morale was in decline.⁹⁵

It is impossible to reconcile the raid which Mountbatten carried out two months later against Dieppe with either of these sound criteria.

21: *One Thousand Bombers*

EXPLAINING HIS reluctance to launch a cross-Channel assault merely to impress Stalin, Churchill stated at this time that a failure ‘would result in terrible consequences to our French supporters.’¹

The welfare of his supporters in Czechoslovakia, a far away country, was of less concern to him. Two days before the end of December 1941 a Halifax bomber had parachuted two units of the Special Operations Executive (S.O.E.) into Czechoslovakia, code-named SILVER A and SILVER B, and two Czech army sergeants, Joseph Gabčík and Jan Kubiš, in a unit called ANTHROPOID, with orders to execute sabotage or terror acts grave enough to become known abroad. The intelligence chief of the Czech president-in-exile Edouard Beneš, Colonel František Moravec, had suggested they kill either S.S.-*Obergruppenführer* Reinhard Heydrich, who was Heinrich Himmler’s deputy and the acting ‘Protector’ of Bohemia–Moravia, or his secretary of state Karl-Hermann Frank. Beneš hoped that the inevitable Nazi reprisals would be of such a scale and savagery as to jolt his oppressed people out of their passivity. Moravec later stated that ANTHROPOID was calculated to provide a spark to ignite the mass of the Czech people.²

It would not be easy. Heydrich, still aged only thirty-eight, had since his appointment in October 1941 pacified Czechoslovakia by a mixture of cunning, blandishments, terror, and far-sighted social reforms; he had brought this country into line with neighbouring Germany’s welfare state. With not a little help from the native population his police had succeeded in mopping up almost every S.O.E. unit dropped into the country; by late May 1942 only Gabčík and Kubiš were still at large. The local Czech resistance leaders moreover thoroughly disapproved of London’s cynical ANTHROPOID plan, of which they had learned, and on May 12 they sent a message to London in protest; Moravec brought this message to Beneš and to ‘C’ –

Churchill's secret service chief – in person. With 'C's' blessing, Beneš insisted that the operation must go ahead.

THERE HAD in recent weeks been dissenting voices about the future of the S.O.E., which Churchill had created in 1940, when he had instructed Hugh Dalton, its minister, to 'set Europe ablaze.'^{*} A running feud had developed between the socialist Dalton and Winston's favourite, Brendan Bracken, over propaganda in foreign countries (a comic parallel to the Nazi backbiting between Ribbentrop and Goebbels on just the same issue). An S.O.E. bomb incident in Tangier had gravely compromised the foreign office; and then the S.O.E.'s organisation in neutral Portugal had been unmasked, causing difficulties with the country's dictator António de Oliveira Salazar.

Dalton was replaced by Lord Selborne, and there was even talk of winding up S.O.E., but Eden urged the prime minister in February 1942 not to take a final decision yet 'as to the disposal of S.O.E. (Dalton's organisation).' Cadogan had convinced him that the machine merely needed a thorough overhaul. Eden recommended that they make S.O.E. answerable to both the chiefs of staff and the foreign office.

On April 5, he further recommended that S.O.E. be run by a soldier (the choice fell on General Colin Gubbins). Eden was never comfortable with the organisation, even so; it was always too big for its boots, and up to some scheme or other. He protested to Churchill on April 7 that he had proof that the S.O.E. was communicating with its agents in special cyphers, which put them beyond the control of the foreign office; and certain S.O.E. officials in the Middle East had made broadcasts encouraging Greek political elements opposed to the king and his lawful government in exile. 'This,' Eden pointed out, 'is in direct conflict with our policy.'

Everywhere he looked, he found evidence of S.O.E. malfeasance. Lunching with him that same day the Turkish ambassador Rauf Orbay complained that the agency was squandering its funds abroad, and dealing with German double-agents. 'Find out which of your intelligence men sent a telegram under the pseudonym LOBSTER from a Turkish ship a little while ago,' Orbay mysteriously added. In Cairo alone, Eden complained to Churchill, the S.O.E. was now said to employ 190 army officers and four hundred other ranks, not to mention the men from other services. Churchill had created a hydra, and it was running out of control.³

^{*} See vol. i, page 373.

On May 27 he was reading John Steinbeck's *The Moon is Down*.^{*} Inspired by this thriller, he sent a note to Lord Selborne drawing attention to the importance of providing the oppressed peoples with simple weapons such as sticks of dynamite which could be easily concealed and used.⁴ But at precisely this moment, operation ANTHROPOID took sudden effect. The S.O.E.'s Czech assassins ambushed Heydrich's dark-green Mercedes-Benz as it slowed down for a sharp bend on his daily drive into Prague. The Sten gun wielded by Gabčík jammed, but Kubiš threw a grenade which exploded inside the car. Mortally wounded, Heydrich contracted septicæmia and died in agony eight days later.⁵ Deeply angered by the attack, Hitler offered a one million-mark (\$250,000) reward for the capture of the assassins; the Czech president Emil Hácha doubled the amount. While the two S.O.E. assassins and their local accomplices hid in a Prague cathedral crypt, the German security forces exacted draconian reprisals; on the morning of June 10 they raided the village of Lidice, believed to have harboured the fugitives, rounded up every male over sixteen – 173 all told – and machine-gunned them against a barn wall; their womenfolk were deported to concentration camps, and their children (108 of them) sent to Germany. The village of Lidice was razed to the ground, and this reprisal was announced to the outside world.[†] This made ANTHROPOID a success beyond even the dreams of President Beneš and Churchill. Lunching with the king five days after Lidice they both talked solemnly about the 'outrage' – but Churchill hoped privately that there would be many more.

IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, things looked different. Shocked by the reprisals, and disillusioned by the Beneš government in exile, Sergeant Karel Čurda, a member of the S.O.E. team, OUT-DISTANCE, which had parachuted into the country on March 28, denounced Gabčík and Kubiš in an anonymous letter to the police, and then surrendered himself on June 16 to Gestapo headquarters in Prague. The assassins were flushed out of their cathedral hiding-place by the Waffen S.S. two days later and put to death on the spot.

^{*} The Viking Press, New York, 1942.

[†] It was not an end of the killing. The Germans re-enacted Lidice at the village of Leáky on June 24, murdering every adult inhabitant. The bishop and all the cathedral officials implicated in sheltering the assassins were executed in Kobilisi; 252 of the assassins' relatives were executed in Mauthausen concentration camp on October 24, 1942. Half of the cash reward went to S.O.E. Sergeant Čurda. He and Karl-Hermann Frank were hanged after the war.

Over lunch with President Beneš, Churchill promised to discuss with his cabinet a project to wipe out two or three German towns of similar size as a reprisal for Lidice.⁶ He instructed Bomber Command to investigate this operation, to be code-named RETRIBUTION. Beneš welcomed the idea. Returning to his Putney headquarters he composed a letter assuring the prime minister that such a reprisal would encourage the Czechs and make the Germans think twice about murdering any more. 'Yesterday,' he wrote, 'the Germans gave the Czech people a new ultimatum expiring on Thursday night: unless the attackers on Heidrych [*sic*] are discovered by that time they threaten to begin with another sequence of the most brutal reprisals.'⁷

Nothing ever came of RETRIBUTION; perhaps nothing ever does. Harris, a realist, advised that it would not be easy for his bombers to obliterate without trace a village of one thousand inhabitants. It would require one hundred bombers attacking at low level on one of the few precious full-moon nights. A high-level raid would need two hundred bombers, he added, but even they could not guarantee to 'complete the job.' 'I understand that the population of Lidice was 800,' wrote Harris to the prime minister. 'It would make things easier and more economical if we selected, say, one village of 5,000 to 10,000, rather than three of 800. The retribution scale could thus be preserved.' For tactical reasons Harris asked that the objective and the 'reason why' be announced after the event rather than before. 'I am looking out for suitable targets,' he promised.⁸ The war cabinet decided not to follow this up. As Portal said, there was nothing the Germans would like more than to divert Britain's bomber effort from 'their built-up industrial areas' to their villages. In fact, he said, the Germans might well start a regular campaign of shooting hostages just to obtain that effect.⁹

Eden told Portal that he had been approached (by whom, he did not say) with the similar suggestion that after each of their next mass bombing raids they announce that it had been a reprisal for some specified act of Nazi barbarity. Portal dismissed the idea. Sir Archibald Sinclair, his minister, was equally negative: 'The policy of reprisals is to my mind weak and bad,' he continued. 'Our heavy raids will grow more frequent and we shall be in an absurd position if we have to search for an atrocity to justify each one!'¹⁰



That summer of 1942, Churchill's gaze focused on the North African desert. In mid-April 1942, his codebreakers had recovered one of the Ger-

man army ENIGMA keys; from this and intercepted Luftwaffe signals he knew precisely when and how Rommel would start his counter-attack.¹¹

His interventions became consequently more frequent. After dinner on May 25 he telephoned the C.I.G.S. to discuss sending a 'quite unofficial and private' telegram to Auchinleck, drawing comparisons with the Battle of Austerlitz, where Napoleon had delivered a 'preconceived rupturing counter-stroke' – what would more usually be called a spoiling attack. 'Special intelligence,' he advised Auchinleck, 'seems to give us opportunities for timing a blow upon the enemy at his most vulnerable moment.' Anxious to leave his desert generals a free hand, Brooke persuaded him not to send it; Winston sent it to General Smuts instead.¹²

On the twenty-seventh Rommel started his own offensive. He had sprung his attack by moonlight, launching his *Afrika Korps* round the southern, desert end of the British line. For a few days he was held up by one well-fortified desert position at Bir Hakeim, which anchored one end of the British line; the Free French fought so bravely here that Churchill instructed 'Tommy' Thompson to put on his naval gold braid and deliver a message of congratulations to General de Gaulle.¹³

For a few days it seemed that General Auchinleck had things well in hand. Churchill displayed a carefree attitude. When Brooke phoned urgently on May 29 to discuss the latest telegram on the Middle East, he learned that the P.M. was at Chequers 'looking at a film and not likely to be out till one A.M.' Brooke had to wait up for Churchill to call him back.¹⁴ 'Fierce fighting is still proceeding,' General Auchinleck reported from Cairo on the first day of June, 'and the battle is by no means over.' Even this message spoke confidently of Rommel's plan having gone awry, and of what this 'failure' had cost Rommel in men and material.¹⁵

The fighting in the desert was losing its former chivalrous quality. Rommel's troops captured a British armoured brigade's order that German prisoners were not to be allowed 'to eat, drink, or sleep before their interrogation.' The intercepts on the last day of May revealed that Field-Marshal Albert Kesselring, commander-in-chief South, had ordered Rommel to do the same: 'Prisoners are to be informed of the reason for this measure.'¹⁶ A further intercept stated that the captured order was to be forwarded to Hitler 'immediately.'¹⁷

Churchill had these intercepts transmitted in code to Auchinleck without comment. Yet another showed that Hitler had ordered that any German émigrés captured in this fighting were to be liquidated forthwith. And there

was a mysterious message which Churchill read on June 2 which stated that a 'good source' had reported to Rommel that the British had 'altogether two hundred tanks left with the 4th, 22nd and 2nd brigades, and 160 with other units.'¹⁸ People wondered who this 'good source' might be.

CHURCHILL REFUSED to cast off his euphoria; it was all the more galling that his admirals were obstructing his plans to run the next Arctic convoy. Twice, on June 1 and 2, Churchill sent for the First Sea Lord, Admiral Pound. Pound reported that Tovey was strongly opposed to running PQ17 at this time. If the prime minister insisted on running such convoys during the months of perpetual Arctic daylight, Tovey warned, a disaster was bound to happen.¹⁹ The row continued at the admiralty – the minutes do not fully reflect the heat of Tovey's remarks, particularly at the meeting on the fourth.²⁰

On that day Churchill again proposed to his complaisant First Lord, A. V. Alexander, that Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham replace Tovey.²¹ Two days later he wrote again to Alexander, referring to Tovey's 'naturally negative and unenterprising attitude of mind.'²² He described Tovey as 'a stubborn and obstinate' man.²³ Admiral Pound would not hear of replacing him, writing on June 8 that to do so now would imperil the navy's confidence in the admiralty.²⁴ 'At times you could kiss his feet,' remarked Pound to the First Lord on the ninth: '– At others you feel you could kill him.' On the day after that, after lunching alone with Cunningham at Downing-street and getting nowhere, Churchill minuted ominously, 'I will see 1st L[ord] *alone* at No. 10.'²⁵ Alexander stood firm. 'Saw the P.M. for half an hour,' he recorded in his brief attempt at a diary, 'pressing for proper status & pay for Adml Cunningham if he goes to Washington. P.M. not receptive. He wishes C. to relieve Tovey, of whom he has poor opinion, whereas Pound considers T. has full confidence of the Fleet. . . . Crisis may loom ahead.'²⁶

Churchill failed to get his way. Tovey stayed with the Home Fleet, and Cunningham left on June 24 for Washington to head the naval mission.

THE TROUBLE with Tovey had been long building. He had become a determined opponent of Churchill's bombing policies, arguing that, despite the vociferous advocacy of the Prof. and of 'Butcher' Harris, bombing was unlikely to lead to victory, and it would denude the navy to the point where it might lose the Battle of the Atlantic. New bomber production was going to Bomber, not Coastal, Command; and the new and innovative centimetric radar devices were going to the squadrons operating over Germany, where

there was a real chance of their secrets being compromised, and not to the anti-submarine units operating over water. Like all great military commanders, Harris was wise however to the worth of good public relations; he kept an effective publicity staff at his headquarters, and he plied the prime minister and other visitors with impressive dossiers of statistics and damage photographs that seemed to prove the value of what he was doing.

His detractors were now legion, and opposed him for a variety of motives. Churchill came under renewed pressure that spring to review his bombing policies. In the third week of May 1942 Mr Justice Singleton completed his inquiry into the bombing offensive: while he was broadly optimistic, particularly if it managed to improve in accuracy, he did not regard it as being 'sufficient of itself to win the war or to produce decisive results.'²⁷ Admiral Pound submitted an annihilating critique.²⁸

Lord Hankey too wrote urging that the bombers be used for convoy escort duties instead of fruitlessly attacking German cities. There was word that a caustic telegram in the same sense had come from 'the other side,' meaning from Roosevelt.²⁹ Admiral King was demanding that the attack be switched to Hitler's submarine construction yards and bases.³⁰

The results of the bombing so far were certainly disappointing. Still doubtful, Churchill asked Harris for a statistical comparison of the German air force's attack on Coventry and his own recent raid on Essen – the first to use the GEE electronic device for navigation. Harris conceded in his reply that while he had dropped 657 tons on Essen in three night raids, the night photographs showed no worthwhile concentration on the actual target (the sprawling Krupps armaments plant). He was still enthusiastic about GEE, however.³¹ Resourceful as ever, he flew photographic reconnaissance sorties over the heavily bombed British city of Exeter, where two German raids had damaged six thousand houses in April, and he had the resulting photographs interpreted by unwitting damage experts. The experts reported merely forty houses destroyed and twenty severely damaged.

'The results of this very interesting experiment,' he wrote smugly to Churchill, 'have . . . stressed the vast difference between the damage which is visible from air photographs and that which actually occurs.'³²

Nonetheless, questions still overhung their bombing policy. The defence committee considered them on Friday May 29. Churchill said that Mr Justice Singleton had applied his judicial mind to the likely prospects if their bombing of Germany continued for six, twelve, and eighteen months. Singleton's response raised fundamental issues. 'The fact,' he admitted, 'that

Germany ceased bombing this country for a long period gives rise to much thought.' The Germans seemed to have deduced that it was doing them little good.³³

CHURCHILL DECIDED to devote special attention to the commander of the U.S. army air forces, General 'Hap' Arnold, who was visiting England. On the previous Tuesday he had sent for Arnold, along with Harriman and the air staff, and stated that he could not understand why, if America would be producing sixty thousand planes a year, they were quibbling over the five thousand that Britain needed. Arnold, called on to talk 'openly and frankly,' told Churchill that his country had many calls on its aircraft production.³⁴

Churchill now laid on a spectacular to impress the Americans. On Saturday May 30 Bomber Command dispatched for the first time over one thousand aircraft to attack a single German city, Cologne. Churchill invited a galaxy of Americans to Chequers for the weekend – the ambassadors Winant and Harriman, and the generals Arnold, Somervell, and Eisenhower.³⁵ Still more guests arrived after dinner – including Harris himself and his American counterpart General Ira C. Eaker.³⁶ Obviously in high spirits, Churchill telephoned Harry Hopkins in Washington at about midnight, regardless of the risk of eavesdropping, and boasted that he was sending twice as many bombers over Germany that night as ever before. He was optimistic, he said, and they were going to stay up all night waiting for the results. He added that the fighting in Libya was going well, and added, again incautiously: 'I may see you very soon.'³⁷ That said, he obliged his guests to watch a feature film, then harangued them until two A.M.

The house was asleep when Arnold rose next morning, Sunday – with only Ismay at breakfast with him. Ismay told him that the prime minister was dictating. The 868 planes which had actually found their target during the night had dropped nearly fifteen hundred tons of bombs on the ancient city of Cologne with its famous Gothic cathedral; we now know that they killed 474 people and injured five thousand. That was good going indeed. Churchill said offhandedly in Cadogan's hearing, 'We've had worse weekends.'³⁸ A trifle optimistically, the *New York Times* announced on June 2 that the bombers had left twenty thousand dead in this Cologne holocaust.

Harris had only a few days earlier revealed to Arnold that Bomber Command currently had 640 bombers, of which only 450 were in commission, and that he had only 380 crews for these.³⁹ Given this real operational strength, the Cologne operation had clearly been a major propaganda effort,

made possible only by scratching together planes from every available command including even the flying-training units. Arnold was very properly impressed. Strolling alone with Churchill for two hours in the gardens of Chequers they discussed again the allocation of American aircraft production. Before he left England the next day the general sent this message to President Roosevelt: 'England is [the] place to win the war. Get planes and troops over as soon as possible.' Churchill returned to London on Monday June 1. 'I hope you were pleased with our mass air attack on Cologne,' he cabled to President Roosevelt. 'There is plenty more to come.'⁴⁰ Bomber Command was planning another mass raid that night; of the 957 planes which took off to attack Essen, 726 eventually dropped 1,235 tons of bombs, but they were widely scattered on other towns across the Ruhr.

After Cologne, Churchill directed Portal, the chief of air staff, to stand by for 'a German retaliation.'⁴¹ The chief of air staff reassured him that he had sent special gun and barrage balloon units to 'the Bædeker towns,' and they were keeping a close watch on the blind bombing beams and code intercepts which would reveal the Luftwaffe targets.⁴²

For a time, the air ministry turned its baleful glare once more to the easier targets in France, including Hitler's submarine bases: but there was no guarantee that bombing would reduce U-boat activity, and Sinclair was still unwilling to incur the odium of ordering such operations. 'Unless,' he further wrote, 'the Air Staff is convinced that the military object can be achieved . . . it would be useless to ask the cabinet to embark upon a policy of ruthless attacks on French towns.'⁴³ Later in June there were similar proposals for night bombing raids against other friendly countries including Norway, Belgium, and Holland. Eden had to remind Sinclair that the Dutch government had been 'rather put out' when the R.A.F. bombed the docks at Rotterdam last year 'with some loss of life.' It was vital, he said, to secure the active encouragement of these little allies first.⁴⁴

This was easier than expected: their governments proved enthusiastic – from the relative safety of London – for such raids to be carried out against their countrymen. Eden accordingly gave his blessing, and the planning for the raids went ahead – Portal having promised the prime minister that only the best bomber crews would take part, and that they would be under orders to bring back their bombs if they could not identify their targets.⁴⁵

THE AMERICAN forces were starting to enjoy victories of their own. Rather eclipsing Churchill's 'thousand-bomber' feat at Cologne, in a three-day na-

val action fought from June 4 the U.S. Pacific Fleet inflicted a defeat on the Japanese navy from which it would never recover: in the Battle of Midway, the island on which the Japanese had hoped to land, the Americans sank all four Japanese aircraft-carriers for the loss of one of their own, *Yorktown*. 'I am sure we are inflicting some very severe losses on the Jap Fleet,' Churchill cabled to Roosevelt, with a trace of jealousy.⁴⁶ The use of 'we' was designed to remind the president that Britain had furnished the crucial Intelligence on the Japanese invasion fleet's movements.⁴⁷

Churchill still had little to show his own public other than the bombing. On June 2 he boasted to the House that 1,130 British aircraft had participated in the Cologne raid. 'Last night,' he continued,

1,036 machines of the Royal Air Force again visited the Continent. Nearly all of these operated on the Essen region. From this second large-scale air raid thirty-five of our bombers are missing. These two great night bombing raids mark the introduction of a new phase in the British air offensive against Germany, which will increase markedly in scale when we are joined, as we soon shall be, by the Air Force of the United States.⁴⁸

When he spoke on the third with Dr Wellington Koo, the Chinese ambassador, their talk again turned to the 'thousand-bomber' raids.

'The Germans,' said Churchill, 'had thought that they had a monopoly of the genie of air power.' Now this genie had defected to the other side. When the Chinaman asked for two bomber squadrons to be sent to defend China, however, he declined. Day and night, he claimed, he was racking his brains for ways to help China. The British were not decadent or defeatist, he insisted, despite what had sometimes been alleged in Chungking. They simply could not face one enemy in Europe and another in the Far East at the same time. They had always 'muddled through' from defeats and reverses to final victory, he added brightly.

The Chinese ambassador found this strategic philosophy, as espoused by the prime minister, hard to understand.⁴⁹

IN GENERAL the events at the end of May and beginning of June 1942 had infused Britain and the United States with optimism, even euphoria. The thousand-bomber raids and the announcement of an agreement with Russia as to 'the urgent task of creating a Second Front in Europe in 1942' had revived expectations of an early invasion of the Continent.

Addressing the House on June 2 Churchill delivered an unduly roseate report on the desert fighting. He quoted from Auchinleck's report of the previous day, which made plain that Rommel's attack had been expected. ('Air reconnaissance had clearly indicated enemy preparations for the attack. . .') So far the British seemed to be winning. 'Further heavy fighting is to be expected,' he stated, reading out more of Auchinleck's dispatch,

'but whatever may be the result, there is no shadow of doubt that Rommel's plans for his initial offensive have gone completely awry and this failure has cost him dear in men and material.'

To the commander-in-chief's confident words he added his own: 'From all the above it is clear that we have every reason to be satisfied, and more than satisfied, with the course which the battle has so far taken.'⁵⁰

Churchill's star was, it seemed, proudly in the ascendant.⁵¹ It was not, however. Over the next few days the *Afrika Korps* regained the initiative, liquidated the stronghold at Bir Hakeim, and reinforced its bridgehead through the minefields. By June 7 it was clear that things were going wrong. On the 'phone to Eden, Churchill lamented that Rommel seemed to retain the offensive. 'I fear that we have not very good generals,' Winston said.⁵²

In a tacit recognition of failure, he two days later wirelessly to Auchinleck that he had decided to commit to the Middle East the two divisions he was slowly moving around southern Africa as a strategic reserve: these were the 8th Armoured Division, at the Cape, and the 44th Division, nearing Freetown. The recent Japanese naval defeats at Coral Sea and Midway, so he reasoned, lessened the risk to Australia; nor did Japan seem likely to invade India at present.⁵³

On that Tuesday, June 9, 1942, Molotov arrived back from Washington. Churchill and Eden, who received him at No. 10, were dismayed to find that he had wangled out of Roosevelt a communiqué on the Second Front.⁵⁴ Roosevelt had assured him, Molotov disclosed, that he would be prepared to accept the loss of a hundred thousand troops in such an operation; since they would be largely British empire troops, Churchill was less willing.⁵⁵ 'Churchill,' cabled Molotov secretly to Stalin, 'became extremely agitated and highly excitable, interrupting at this point to declare that no way would he embark on a new Dunkirk or countenance the fruitless sacrifice of 100,000 men, whoever recommended him to do so.' The P.M. had added that he would leave the president in no doubt as to his opinion.

They moved to other topics, in particular Roosevelt's notion that only the three or four great powers should be allowed to retain arms in the post-war world. Churchill was more sympathetic to the president's plan for an international police force. He also squelched what Molotov told him of Roosevelt's ideas for a trusteeship of the great powers over the islands of the Dutch East Indies and the Japanese in the Pacific ('I did not mention Malaya,' Molotov told Stalin, 'but I did refer to Indo-China'). Churchill roundly said that all this merely demonstrated the need to defer such issues to a post-war Peace Conference. Before dividing up the bearskin, he lectured the Russian, one had to kill the bear.

Molotov referred to the dwindling rate of supplies reaching the Soviet Union. When in Moscow in October 1941, Lord Beaverbrook had promised to increase aeroplane and tank deliveries by fifty per cent in the second half of 1942. Churchill called his attention to the small print – there was a handy proviso about 'any change of circumstances'; the empire was now at war with Japan too, and the United States were diverting some war supplies from Britain to Australia. 'Rather a "sticky" meeting,' recorded Eden. 'We had also to make plain that we could do no more in supplies than keep up present rate. This they took very well.'⁵⁶

As for the Second Front, the prime minister told Molotov that he was preparing to 'mount a raid in France by six divisions' in August or September, 'in the hope that under certain pre-arranged conditions they might hold out on the European shore.' He mentioned too his project (IRON-CLAD) for a landing in the far north of Norway and (having found no support from his own chiefs of staff) he invited the Russians to take an interest in this project. As for 1943, the Allies intended to land forty to fifty divisions in Europe, possibly at five or six points at once; Roosevelt was sending over one million troops for the purpose. Churchill struggled for three hours to din all this into Molotov and finally invited him to send round Russian experts to audit his own calculations; Molotov crisply told the British government to 'double-check their figures for themselves.'⁵⁷ 'The upshot of all this,' he summarised to Stalin, 'is: the British are not holding themselves to their liability to stage a Second Front this year, but are declaring – and even this with reservations – that they are preparing an, as it were, experimental landing operation. I'll fill you in on the rest in Moscow.'⁵⁸

FORTUNATELY CHURCHILL repeated all these arguments in a written memorandum, drafted by the chiefs of staff at his dictation. It was quite categorical.

'We can, therefore, give no promises,' it said. He did however undertake to continue the bombing as well as air operations over France designed to force the Germans to withdraw squadrons from the eastern front.⁵⁹ Casually dressed in what Cadogan irreverently called his 'rompers,' and in 'quite good form,' the prime minister handed this document to Molotov at a farewell meeting on June 10.⁶⁰ The next day Churchill sent a telegram to the White House announcing his intention of 'phoning Harry Hopkins at seven p.m.'⁶¹ He had decided to pay another visit to Washington.

Air Marshal Harris now had to confront opposition in Whitehall scarcely less violent than his crews met in the skies over Germany. He fought back against the navy's criticisms using no uncertain language. He provided to Churchill a list of all the merchant ships known to have been sunk by the mines laid by his aircraft.⁶² He added that he had put in two raids on *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* where they now lay in Kiel. Naval Intelligence grudgingly admitted that his bombers had damaged *Gneisenau*. Harris reminded the prime minister that in the eyes of the public the Royal Air Force and especially Bomber Command had emerged badly from the escape of *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst* up the Channel. 'Yet the facts . . . are,' he wrote, 'that not only were these . . . kept out of action for over a year solely by the R.A.F. but the chances of one if not both of them ever coming into action again are now remote.' He remarked that despite this 'not so much as a thank-you' had yet reached his crews.⁶³

Harris's letter, addressed directly to Churchill (and not his own superiors) provoked outrage at the admiralty, where Alexander called it an 'extraordinary minute' for its complaint at the 'lack of recognition & publicity' for the damage which Bomber Command had inflicted on the warships. 'Prima donnas are nowhere in it with this kind of air officer,' noted the First Lord.⁶⁴

But Harris's influence was growing. 'Victory, speedy and complete, awaits the side which first employs air power as it should be employed.' So he wrote seductively to Churchill on June 17, setting out a lengthy plea for increasing the weight of bombing on Germany's cities.⁶⁵ Churchill was moved to conform. As Bomber Command planned a second round of thousand-bomber raids for the coming full-moon period, due at the end of June – the target would be the port city of Bremen – Churchill instructed the chiefs of staff: 'On the coming occasions it will be necessary that Coastal Command should participate, and I must ask definitely for compliance with this request.'⁶⁶

During June 1942 Churchill sent two relief convoys to Malta, both departing on the twelfth, though from opposite ends of the Mediterranean. The westbound convoy, of eleven merchantmen, had to return to Alexandria, under heavy air attack, after the escort's commander Rear-Admiral Philip L. Vian learned that an Italian fleet was at sea to intercept him; he lost one cruiser, three destroyers, and two merchant ships in this fruitless operation. Eight ships sailed from Gibraltar, but only two reached Malta, carrying fifteen thousand tons of cargo, after the convoy came under heavy German and Italian air and surface attack. Morale in Malta was now brittle, and aviation fuel for the island's fighter planes was running low.

That British spirits were flagging in the Western Desert was equally plain. Churchill was struck by a delicately worded report from Auchinleck indicating that of the Eighth Army's ten thousand losses since Rommel began his offensive, 'some eight thousand may be prisoners.' Against that the Eighth Army had taken four thousand enemy prisoners, including 1,660 Germans.⁶⁷ Clearly something 'of an unpleasant character,' as the prime minister no less delicately put it in his memoirs, 'must have happened.' He sent an appropriate message to the Eighth Army's commander General Ritchie.⁶⁸

Auchinleck replied encouragingly that Rommel's situation was 'not viable.'⁶⁹ But it was — it was. After overrunning Bir Hakeim on June 10, Rommel had punched his way out of the 'cauldron' in which his force had been temporarily contained and turned the battle violently against the British over the next three days; soon Ritchie's divisions were in retreat and the Germans and Italians were masters of a battlefield strewn with hundreds of damaged tanks and guns which the British could no longer hope to salvage. Things had gone so badly that Auchinleck himself left Cairo to oversee the rest of the battle. Throughout that Sunday June 14 Churchill clung to the scrambler telephone, badgering General Brooke to conjure up some better news for him. If Rommel destroyed the British garrison at Tobruk, it seemed that nothing could stop him charging on to Suez. Keeping to himself the cruelly obvious, the C.I.G.S. could only note that Ritchie seemed to have been out-generalled by Rommel, words which he wrote in his private diary and locked shut before anybody saw what he had written.⁷⁰

FORTUNATELY CHURCHILL had appointed a capable man on the spot in Cairo to replace Lyttelton as Minister Resident in the Middle East: the Australian

Dick Casey. Meeting him a few weeks earlier, Brooke had been impressed by his rapid grasp of essentials, though as an Australian he never really gained the P.M.'s confidence.⁷¹ It was from this minister that Churchill received on June 14 a message making plain that he had lost confidence in Ritchie.⁷² Alarmed, Churchill sent a vivid response to Auchinleck: 'Your decision to fight it out to the end [is] most cordially endorsed. We shall sustain you whatever the result. Retreat would be fatal. This is a business not only of armour but of will-power. God bless you all.'⁷³ And as an afterthought: 'Presume there is no question in any case of giving up Tobruk. As long as Tobruk is held no serious enemy advance into Egypt is possible.'⁷⁴ The general confirmed that he had no intention of giving up the fortress.

Soon after nine A.M. that day, June 15, Churchill phoned Eden to tell him that the news from Libya was bad. At cabinet he was glum.⁷⁵ There was discouraging news from Malta too. On the sixteenth he told the First Sea Lord, 'It will be necessary to make another attempt to run a convoy into Malta. This can only be from Gibraltar, though a feint from Alexandria will be useful. The fate of the island is at stake, and if the effort to relieve it is worth making, it is worth making on a great scale.' Lord Gort, he said, must be able to tell the islanders, 'The Navy will never abandon Malta.'⁷⁶

Churchill's mind reverted to Tobruk. He again signalled to Auchinleck, so that there should be no doubt, that he must order General Ritchie to pack as many troops into Tobruk as would be necessary to hold it.⁷⁷ A comforting reply came from Cairo, and he put Tobruk out of his mind.



Visiting Washington that June, Lord Mountbatten had warned President Roosevelt on the ninth that practical difficulties stood in the way of SLEDGEHAMMER, the cross-Channel operation which the Americans expected to occur in August or September. Mountbatten reported this conversation to Churchill at Chequers late on the twelfth; it seemed that the president was 'getting a little off the rails,' as General Brooke put it, and needed a good talking-to about the Second Front. Hearing Mountbatten's report, Churchill decided to invite himself over to Washington as soon as weather permitted. 'I feel it is my duty to come to see you,' he notified Roosevelt the next day, simultaneously instructing his secretary to ask the king's permission to make the journey.⁷⁸ He told Brooke to come to Washington too; it would be the general's first trip to America.⁷⁹

One thing was plain. Given the shortage of landing-craft there could be no operation to liberate France, code-named ROUND-UP, before the summer of 1943.

Churchill circulated a thought-provoking paper on June 15, just before his departure to Washington, in which he visualised six heavy disembarkations with at least half a dozen feints all along the enemy coast from Denmark to the Spanish frontier. Ten armoured brigades would land in France 'in the first wave.' Irrespective of losses – which he expected to be very high – there would be four hundred thousand men ashore 'and busy' in France by D-plus-7, and seven hundred thousand by D-plus-14. There were to be ten infantry brigades, specially trained in house-to-house fighting and furnished with pedal-cycles for mobility, with the task of capturing four important ports by D-plus-14.⁸⁰

Fleet-street immediately leaked word of Churchill's transatlantic trip.⁸¹ While America assumed that he was coming to discuss a Second Front, in Fleet-street it was uncharitably put about that he was 'running away' from the disaster looming in Libya.⁸² At their last luncheon before Churchill's departure, on Tuesday June 16, the king asked him whom he should call upon in the event of his death; Churchill named Eden, calling him 'in my mind the outstanding Minister . . . in the National government over which I have the honour to preside.'⁸³ He took the train north to Stranraer in Scotland on June 17, accompanied by generals Brooke and Ismay, as well as 'Tommy' Thompson, John Martin, his doctor, and a couple of others, and boarded the Boeing flying-boat 'Bristol,' piloted by Captain Kelly-Rogers, after dinner. He would be away from London for only eight days.⁸⁴

FOR A while he sat in the co-pilot's seat, marvelling at the ocean unfolding before him in the moonlight. This non-stop flight would take twenty-eight hours, during which he was out of contact by telephone – which more than one minister counted as a blessing. Unfamiliar with the problems caused by time-lag, he insisted on having all his drinks and meals at their usual times, which was not without effect on either his sobriety or stomach.⁸⁵

In Washington his impending arrival provoked foreboding. There was, his office had notified Washington, 'no specific agenda' for the visit – the two leaders would probably discuss offensives on the European Continent, in Burma, and in the Pacific, and 'perhaps some form of GYMNAST.'⁸⁶ The latter, GYMNAST, was the code-name for an Anglo-American descent on French North-West Africa. Hopkins predicted to Lord Halifax that the prime

minister obviously wanted to prevent the president from ‘getting too far out on a limb’ about launching a Second Front in 1942.⁸⁷

Talking Roosevelt around would prove easier than persuading the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. Learning that Churchill was bound for Washington again, he called a war cabinet on June 17 at Hyde Park, his New York estate – attended primarily by the army and navy secretaries and the chiefs of staff Marshall, Arnold, and King – and betrayed what seemed to them an alarming readiness to abandon the cross-Channel operation BOLERO in favour of the new North Africa plan, GYMNAST, as the only way to assist Russia. Marshall, forewarned, had brought along a paper arguing against GYMNAST. Admiral King was hesitant. Stimson dictated a note afterwards describing GYMNAST as a worrying proposition which had been ‘sprung on’ them, one which jeopardised everything they had done so far on BOLERO. ‘The only hope I have about it all,’ wrote Stimson, ‘is that I think he may be doing it in his foxy way to forestall trouble that is now on the ocean coming towards us in the shape of a new British visitor.’⁸⁸



After partaking of an ample airborne dinner, Churchill found Lord Halifax and General Marshall waiting as his flying-boat taxied to a halt at Anacostia on the Potomac river near Washington at seven P.M. on June 18.

The ambassador broke it to him that Roosevelt was away at Hyde Park; Churchill elected to stay the night in the Washington embassy. It had been an exhausting journey, though he tried not to show it. ‘No sooner had he arrived,’ Hopkins wrote to Clementine, ‘than he wanted to get you on the phone and tell you that all was well with him.’⁸⁹ It was a hot and stuffy evening; the prime minister downed several more drinks and a second full dinner on the open terrace behind the embassy without a murmur. The time-difference had little visible effect on him. The next day Halifax would remark to Stimson on ‘the difficult personal habits’ of their eminent visitor, saying that Churchill had kept him up until one or two in the morning.⁹⁰

Meeting the prime minister here the next morning, June 19, General Marshall found him disparaging about BOLERO and full of new proposals for diversions. Marshall urged on Stimson the importance of making a united American stand against this Englishman.⁹¹ He repeated this in a telegram at noon-thirty to the president, advising that ‘your guest’ was interested instead in carrying out GYMNAST during August, and ‘another similar movement

in Norway.'⁹² He asked that word be got to the president pleading with him not to enter into any serious discussions with Churchill without him.⁹³

The prospect of such secret conversations taking place evoked alarm in Washington – the word used in Stimson's diary was *crisis*. From a letter which Roosevelt had just received from Lord Mountbatten, Stimson rightly gathered that the president had talked out of turn with him, and that Mountbatten had repeated the president's language to his superiors in London and that they were now scared that Roosevelt was hell-bent on involving British forces in a possible 'sacrifice attack' across the Channel, whereas Churchill wanted an operation against French North-West Africa.

'Consequently,' deduced Stimson, and he was not far off the mark, 'Churchill's hurried visit.' Learning that their rumbustious visitor was even now flying up to Hyde Park, Stimson felt distinctly uneasy about the prime minister's baleful influence on the president: both men lacked, he noted, the steadiness of balance so vital in the conduct of wars.⁹⁴

He sent a warning letter to Roosevelt using what he called some pretty ripe language about the British intentions.⁹⁵

Nonchalantly wearing his 'siren suit,' and unaware of these alarms, Churchill followed Stimson's and Marshall's secret telegrams northward in a navy plane at 10:30 A.M. on June 19, making a bumpy landing at about midday at the little airstrip at New Hackensack, half an hour's drive from the presidential mansion at Hyde Park.⁹⁶

Roosevelt drove himself over to meet the plane in his special Ford V8 motor-car equipped with hand controls. The two men chatted as they drove around the estate, playfully trying to shake off their escort.

Roosevelt was taken aback to find that Churchill had five others in his party; he agreed to house and feed Thompson, Martin, and the valet, but had the Scotland-yard men billeted at the local Vanderbilt Inn with the P.M.'s stenographer.

'The president and the prime minister,' noted a secretary,

had a long conference after lunch, then at tea at [Miss] Laura Delano's – [and] dinner at the president's home. The president put on a black tie and white dinner coat. Winnie came down in the siren suit for which he apologised. Okay with the Boss.⁹⁷

Roosevelt's staff were accustomed to the easygoing ways of their chief, but Churchill's informality was something new. Early the next morning

they saw him walking barefoot on the lawn, and later crossing the passage, still barefoot, to Hopkins's room.⁹⁸

AMONG THE points which Churchill told Hopkins he wanted to discuss urgently with 'the Boss' was their atomic bomb project TUBE ALLOYS. He had sent out W. A. Akers, head of the British TUBE ALLOYS directorate, to America with three professors of physics once in February and again earlier this month, in June. They were however meeting with less than wholehearted co-operation from the Americans. Hopkins persuaded Churchill to postpone the atomic weapons discussion until the next day.

The situation was this: by the end of 1941 the United States had decided to go all out on atomic research; eminent scientists under Dr Vannevar Bush, director of the Office of Scientific Research and Development (OSRD), had reported on progress to Roosevelt, who without informing the British had appointed a General Policy Group to advise him, consisting of the vice-president Henry A. Wallace as well as Stimson, Marshall, Bush, and Conant; only a few days before Churchill's arrival this group had recommended transferring the project to the army's Corps of Engineers, since it was too costly for the Research Vote. The army's Major-General Leslie R. Groves, builder of the Pentagon, had been put in charge. None of these people favoured continuing the earlier collaboration with the British.

Nothing of this was known to Churchill when he tackled Roosevelt about TUBE ALLOYS. Roosevelt played his usual 'foxy' self. While according to the prime minister they did reach informal agreement, talking 'after luncheon, in a tiny little room which juts out on the ground floor,' as Churchill wrote, adding the necessary verisimilitude, there was later some dispute as to precisely what was agreed. General Ismay would recall his master mentioning the next day that they had reached some such agreement under which the two nations would jointly develop the atomic bomb.⁹⁹ Foolishly as it turned out, Churchill trusted the president enough not to commit anything of this to writing until eight months later. 'My whole understanding,' he would then write to Hopkins, asking him plaintively to jog the presidential memory, 'was that everything was on the basis of fully sharing the results as equal partners. I have no record, but I shall be very much surprised if the president's recollection does not square with this.'¹⁰⁰

There seemed good reason for Britain and America to develop the bomb. That same day Lord Cherwell received a tip from a Swedish professor that under Professor Werner Heisenberg, the Nobel prize winning physicist,

Nazi laboratories were experimenting with uranium-235 chain reactions and – underlined – ‘results must not be excluded.’¹⁰¹ Some weeks after Churchill’s return to London, Sir John Anderson advised him that according to their own experts any plant for producing enriched uranium-235 would be too big to erect in wartime Britain.¹⁰² The Americans were exploring four production methods. The British method (based on gaseous diffusion of uranium hexafluoride) was probably the best, but the unanimous advice, in which Lord Cherwell concurred, was that both the pilot plant and the full-scale factory should be erected in the United States. In consequence the British design team should also cross the Atlantic. The relative contribution that the British could make to a joint Anglo-American atomic effort was dwindling with each month that passed, Anderson astutely observed. Unaware that the corresponding American experts had already decided to freeze the British out of their own project, Churchill agreed, writing in the margin, ‘As proposed.’¹⁰³



It is certainly true that during Churchill’s visit the American president sparkled in his company. He found the prime minister a delightful companion, although Churchill virtually took over Hyde Park. Once Roosevelt’s staff found John Martin hogging the phone and speaking to the embassy; they had to take him off – it was the president’s only line to Washington.¹⁰⁴

Roosevelt’s staff believed that he was tough enough to keep the British in their place, and had good advisers in Marshall and King. ‘With a softie for president,’ wrote the president’s secretary, ‘Winnie would put rollers under the treasury and open Second, Third, or Fourth fronts with our fighting men. Britannia rules the waves! I do not think the British will pull wool over F.D.R.’s eyes now, nor when the peace comes either.’¹⁰⁵ Roosevelt’s prestige was high since the victories in the Pacific. He regarded Churchill as an equal, perhaps even secretly as his inferior, now that the news trickling in from the Libyan desert was discouraging. There were rumours that Tobruk was about to fall, and the gossips were saying that this might even bring down Churchill’s government. ‘The P.M.,’ noted Roosevelt’s secretary, wrongly, ‘must wish he were back in London to defend himself.’¹⁰⁶

Churchill was glad he was not, and he turned a deaf ear to the rumours about Tobruk. ‘Things that one cannot understand,’ philosophised Ismay a month later in this connection, ‘are so much more upsetting than even worse

things that are intelligible.’¹⁰⁷ He received ‘C’s’ daily summaries of the intercepts – the heading *BONIFACE* told him their source, Bletchley Park. The summary on the nineteenth gave an ugly picture of the relentless advance of Rommel’s Panzer divisions, with Gambut airfield and Bel Hamed already overrun; Field Marshal Albert Kesselring, commander-in-chief South, was to visit Rommel’s headquarters that day. The one ray of hope was that Rommel was running out of the heavier tank ammunition.¹⁰⁸ On the twentieth, the word was that Kesselring had ordered, ‘The fate of North Africa now depends on Tobruk. Every man must know this and act accordingly.’¹⁰⁹

Keeping his eye on the purpose of his visit, Churchill handed to the president a note on the strategic position. This discouraged any notion of staging *BOLERO* before 1943, and proposed that they land in French North-West Africa later in 1942, rather than allow their armies to stand idle.¹¹⁰

The two leaders set out on the night of June 20 by train for Washington. Roosevelt gave his guest the air-conditioned stateroom in the presidential train – the only bedroom that had a bathroom attached. The train left Highland on the New York Central Railroad at eleven p.m. and after chugging gently south through New Jersey and Maryland all night pulled into the Arlington cantonment at Washington at nine a.m. next morning.

DURING THE previous day Churchill’s chiefs of staff had conferred in his absence with their American counterparts in Washington, all happily oblivious to the decisions being reached at Hyde Park by their masters. Marshall had boasted to an admiring and envious General Brooke that his president accepted whatever he advised; Brooke often had to deploy superhuman efforts to wean Churchill away from his wilder plans.¹¹¹ In their benighted leaders’ absence now, the generals easily agreed that whatever happened on the Russian front, *BOLERO*, the full-scale cross-Channel operation, was vital. Admiral King, the U.S. navy’s bluff and difficult commander-in-chief, displayed unconcealed hostility to *GYMNAST*, describing an invasion of French North-West Africa as a ‘Ninth Front with all the increase in overheads and escort and transportation problems involved therein.’

When Brooke mentioned the idea for a ‘sacrifice’ operation on the Continent designed to relieve Nazi pressure on Russia, the Combined Chiefs of Staff disliked the idea. The Germans had twenty-five divisions in France, while the Allies could transport at best six divisions across the Channel with the available landing-craft; this would hardly present a serious diversion to the Germans. General Dwight D. Eisenhower, whom Marshall had

just appointed to command the U.S. Army's new European Theater of Operations, expressed qualified support for the project, comparing such a Channel coast bridgehead with Malta and Tobruk; but a drawback in Eisenhower's view was that most of the bombers in Britain were night bombers, which could not provide effective support for an amphibious operation.¹¹²

The day of Churchill's arrival in Washington, Sunday June 21, was another boiling hot day with the thermometer climbing into the nineties. The president installed him in the same air-conditioned suite in the White House as before. 'We felt,' wrote John Martin, 'as if we were coming home.'¹¹³ Soon after he arrived there, 'Pug' Ismay came up to the White House to see him, followed by Brooke. The word from BONIFACE was that Rommel's 15th Panzer Division had claimed on the previous afternoon to be bearing down on Tobruk harbour on a broad front, and that the Luftwaffe had dropped three hundred tons of bombs on the beleaguered port during the day.¹¹⁴ Sir Charles Moran came in to administer a check-up at three P.M. The prime minister pottered around reading telegrams, and visited Harry Hopkins across the corridor. Hopkins had just become engaged to Mrs Louise Macy – the Englishman was among the first to be told of this and meet the prospective bride, a very toothsome young lady indeed.¹¹⁵

Churchill and his generals went in to see the president, and continued their meeting after lunch.

Shortly after he strolled into Roosevelt's study a secretary brought in a telegram. The president glanced at it and handed it wordlessly to his guest.

'Tobruk has surrendered,' it read, 'with 25,000 men taken prisoners.'



'No one,' wrote Hopkins to Clementine, 'knows better than you that Tobruk was a great shock to him. There was nothing that any of us could do or say that could temper the blow. He seemed to take the whole overpowering blow on his own shoulders.'¹¹⁶ It was the first time that Ismay ever saw his master wince. Staggered, even reeling with a sense of disgrace, Churchill sent him off to phone London.¹¹⁷

The general returned with a telegram from Admiral Sir Henry H. Harwood, commander-in-chief of the Mediterranean at Alexandria: 'Tobruk has fallen,' this confirmed, 'and situation [has] deteriorated so much that there is a possibility of heavy air attack on Alexandria in near future, and in view of approaching full moon period I am sending all Eastern Fleet units

south of [Suez] Canal to await events.' He hoped to get the damaged *Queen Elizabeth* out of the dock in time.¹¹⁸

'What can we do to help?' asked Roosevelt.

'Give us as many Sherman tanks as you can spare,' was the prime minister's reply, 'and ship them to the Middle East as quickly as possible.'

Roosevelt agreed to send to Egypt the three hundred tanks, the first to come off the production lines, that he had earmarked for his own First Armored Division. It was an act of unparalleled generosity but he was worried that the British might now develop a crippling inferiority complex – a sense that Hitler had the better generals and troops.¹¹⁹ General Marshall, who shortly arrived with General Brooke, undertook to throw in one hundred 105-millimetre self-propelled guns as well.¹²⁰

HOPKINS NOW joined these four, Churchill, Roosevelt, Brooke, and Marshall, for a conference on their next strategic operation.

Stimson found that he had been overlooked, but from what Marshall told him later they all went at each other hammer and tongs, with the prime minister delivering the expected verbal onslaught on BOLERO (due doubtless to the 'fairy stories' – as Stimson infelicitously termed them – that Mountbatten had carried back to England from the president). Roosevelt, according to Marshall at least, stood 'pretty firm.'¹²¹ Toward the end of this meeting, said Marshall, all present agreed to go along with BOLERO until the first of September; at that time Churchill would be given a résumé of the situation from which he could see whether it would be the disaster that he feared. Churchill, reported Marshall, had then taken up GYMNAST, the operation against French North-West Africa, knowing that this was Roosevelt's 'great secret baby' and that for political reasons the brunt of it would be borne by American rather than British troops; for the time being, Marshall hoped that he had stifled this baby at birth.¹²² (Ismay made a rather muddled note indicating that besides BOLERO and GYMNAST they were to look into operations in Norway and Spain as well).¹²³

The awful news from Tobruk spoilt everything for the prime minister. During the afternoon Eden telephoned from London and urged him to return home immediately to face the music. Peevish and truculent, the P.M. retorted that he was doing more important work here in Washington, but he soon sent a private message to Attlee announcing his return by Saturday the twenty-seventh: 'Kindly tell Mrs C. and Anthony but otherwise the fewest possible.'¹²⁴ At five-thirty P.M. Hopkins brought Eisenhower and

his assistant, Major-General Mark Clark, up to his suite to talk about ROUND-UP, the 1943 cross-Channel operation. Churchill could not fail to be impressed by Mark Clark, whom he dubbed 'the American eagle' because of his stature. Eisenhower left no impression.¹²⁵ He and Clark would depart later that month for London to set up their headquarters in a large former apartment building on Grosvenor-square. Their job would be to prepare England to accommodate two million American fighting men.

Churchill had two more conferences in Washington that evening, at nine-thirty with the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, and two hours later with his own generals present.¹²⁶ The nine-thirty meeting discussed sinkings off the American east coast, joint naval operations in the Pacific, and Britain's request for the American carrier *Ranger* to help escort the next Malta convoy.¹²⁷ At the second evening session, at eleven-thirty P.M., the prime minister invited the Americans to consider sending troops to the Middle East, starting with the Second Armored Division under General George S. Patton, Jr., which had allegedly 'been specially trained in desert warfare' in California (although Colonel Jacob heard rumours that it had never left Fort Benning).¹²⁸

Roosevelt indicated assent to Churchill's demands, and suddenly suggested throwing in a large American force to cover the whole front between Alexandria, in Egypt, and Teheran, in Iran. Marshall was stunned and left the room, refusing to discuss it.¹²⁹ Churchill, eager to clinch the deal, cabled to Auchinleck that this American armoured division would arrive during August. 'Special intelligence,' he said, 'has shown stresses which enemy has undergone.' He added, 'The main thing now is . . . not to accept the freak decisions produced by Rommel's handful of heavy armour.'¹³⁰

The president's staff were aghast. 'These English,' his secretary privately assessed, 'are too aggressive except on the battlefield. As assertive as the Jews, always asking for a little more and then still more after that.'¹³¹

GENERAL MARSHALL indignantly wrote to Roosevelt protesting at sending any Americans to the Middle East, stating that his reasons were both logistical and strategic, 'further complicated,' as he admitted, 'by strong racial and religious prejudices.' He questioned the importance of the Middle East as a base for striking at Hitler. North Africa and even Italy were far from Germany, he pointed out, and there were 'extremely difficult natural intervening obstacles.' 'You are familiar with my view,' he wrote to the president,

that the decisive theater is Western Europe. That is the only place where

the concerted effort of our own and the British forces can be brought to bear on the Germans. 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.¹³²

As Marshall had boasted, the president tended to heed his advice. That was the last that was heard of American troops going into the Middle East.

OVER THE next few days – the last week in June – Britain’s humiliation in Tobruk filled the columns of American newspapers. Half of the East Coast newspapers condemned Britain’s poor leaders and bad generals. The New York *Daily Mirror* charitably pointed out that it was American tanks, like the General Grant, which had fought and failed there. ‘We nurtured the phoney optimism prevalent both in America and Britain,’ it said.

Further west, editors struck an uglier note. ‘Those responsible cannot be permitted to retain their commands, political or military, if the purpose of these operations is to win the war,’ wrote the Cleveland *Plain Dealer*.¹³³ Magazines like *U.S. News*, *Newsweek*, and *Time* emphasised the weakness of Britain’s leadership. The Saint Louis *Post-Dispatch* printed stories reporting the crowds of British officers dancing gaily in Alexandria as Rommel’s tanks swept toward the city. The class system, it was said, would have prevented any Rommel from rising above the rank of private in the British Army.

Two-fifths of the Americans now blamed Britain for getting them into the Great War. Gallup, polling the Americans, found that most considered that Stalin had the wholehearted support of his entire people, with Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek coming only second. ‘All the old animosities against the British have been revived,’ wrote one analyst: ‘She didn’t pay her war debts after the last war. She refuses to grant India the very freedom she claims to be fighting for. She is holding a vast army in England to protect the homeland while her outposts are lost to the enemy.’¹³⁴ The damnable thing about this, as Churchill himself would have admitted, was that most of it was true.

FROM BEHIND the shadows of the disaster at Tobruk, just as they had lurked behind every other milestone of misfortune in Churchill’s premiership, the Zionists now sprang forward hoping to profit from his embarrassment.

Churchill had just appointed Lord Moyne as his deputy minister of state in the Middle East. Before departing to Cairo, Moyne had drawn unflatter-

ing comparisons between the Jews with their territorial claims on Palestine, and the Nazis. 'If a comparison is to be made with the Nazis,' he stated in the House of Lords, 'it is surely those who wish to force an imported regime upon the Arab population who are guilty of the spirit of aggression and domination.' The Gentile Zionist Lord Wedgwood had proposed in that debate that the Arabs should be subjugated to a Jewish regime; Moyne pointed out that this was inconsistent with the Atlantic Charter. Adding insult to injury, he further suggested that the world's Jews might look elsewhere for a territory to settle. 'It is to canalise all the sympathy of the world for the martyrdom of the Jews,' he declared, 'that the Zionists reject all schemes to re-settle these victims elsewhere – in Germany, or Poland, or in sparsely populated regions such as Madagascar.'¹³⁵

Settling the Jews in Madagascar was the 'final solution,' which Hitler had wistfully counselled in his Table Talk as late as July 1942. Deeply insulted, the London Zionists recalled that as Colonial Secretary the same Lord Moyne had prevented the Jews raising military units in Palestine. Now as their telegraphic agency stated he 'did not hesitate to align to Hitler's proposals for a settlement of Jews in Madagascar rather than in Palestine.'¹³⁶

If Churchill, now in Washington, had believed himself well out of this fresh squabble, he was wrong. A telegram arrived at the White House from that familiar supplicant, Dr Chaim Weizmann. The Zionist leader was now living in a New York hotel. The telegram was followed by an argumentative letter. Both messages cried out for the organisation of a Jewish army to fight in the Middle East under British command. The Zionist accused Churchill of having secretly endorsed this plan in September 1940 but doing nothing since, although the very existence of the six hundred thousand Jews in Palestine was at stake should the German armies arrive. Fourteen thousand Jews had enrolled in the British armed forces, he said, scattered mostly amongst the ground crews of the air force. Weizmann's letter claimed for Jews the right to fight as a Jewish army under their own flag, the Star of David. 'I say that the refusal to grant this right will never be understood,' he wrote.¹³⁷ No reply appears to have been sent.¹³⁸

Well aware of the deeper game which the Zionists were playing, the colonial office led the resistance to their agitation for a Jewish army. Britain still bore the responsibility for the well-being of all the inhabitants of the mandated territories of Palestine, Jew and Arab alike. Nor could she afford to upset two hundred million Moslems. This was why she had refused to regard Jews as having a distinct nationality, as claimed by the Zionist or-

rganisations. For the British Home Office there were ‘German and Austrian’ internees in Britain, but no Jews; very few had avoided internment.¹³⁹ Every public Jewish pronouncement – including their claims about extermination – was reviewed in the light of this agitation. Frank Roberts of the foreign office minuted that there was more than enough evidence of this ‘extreme Zionist campaign’ for recognition of a Jewish nationality: ‘It is part of the propaganda for a Jewish sovereign state in Palestine,’ he warned. The campaign for a Jewish Army was only one facet of this campaign.¹⁴⁰

At this time the clandestine telegrams passing between the Jewish Agency in London and its officials in New York and Palestine were using cypher channels provided by the S.O.E. At the end of October 1942, having just learned of this secret channel, the colonial office and the foreign office refused to continue transmitting the Zionists’ messages, pleading that the lines were overburdened with the traffic of war. The real reason, John Martin would remind the prime minister a few months later, was that the activities of the Jewish Agency in Palestine in such matters as illicit arms made it intolerable to grant them special quasi-diplomatic facilities.¹⁴¹ Months of pleading produced no change of heart. Oliver Stanley and Anthony Eden remained implacable. In 1943 Churchill’s secretary had to inform Sir Louis Namier, a leading Polish-born Jew, that there could be no question of restoring these special facilities.¹⁴² The Jews’ war within a war continued.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT’S policy toward the Zionists was similar to the British. In official America there was an even more powerful and institutionalised anti-Semitism than in wartime Britain. Even Dr Chaim Weizmann would find that most of the better hotels in upstate New York and in Vermont refused him accommodation. ‘These people are barbarians,’ he generalised.¹⁴³ Roosevelt took active steps to prevent Jews taking over more state or federal government posts than he felt they were entitled to. ‘You can’t get a disproportionate amount of any one religion,’ he had lectured Morgenthau. Concerned at the thirty per cent of Jews hogging the entering class at Harvard, Roosevelt advised the university to trim the Jewish intake to a less blatant fifteen per cent.¹⁴⁴ He would remark in 1943 that he found ‘understandable’ the Germans’ grudge against the Jews, that a fraction of the population swamped over fifty per cent of the lucrative professions.¹⁴⁵

It serves no purpose to ignore the archival evidence of how strongly wartime sentiment ran against the Jews.¹⁴⁶ Like Eden, Beaverbrook, and

other ministers including even Amery (of Jew origin himself), Lord Halifax cluttered his secret diary with familiar stereotypes. A Mrs Ryan had struck him as 'quite pleasant but . . . evidently a Jewess.' He had two visitors who were 'both very Semitic.' He rejoiced that Jews were not encouraged to hunt in Virginia: 'If a Jew were to come out hunting, it would be intimated to him that he had better go home!'¹⁴⁷ In January 1943 he would attend 'an awful luncheon' at the Jewish Hospital 'with all the Jews, who were terribly Jewish.' Recording an evening at the Jewish centre in Washington he lamented, 'It was a very complete collection of Semites, but they were all very kind.' Few people in official circles had much sympathy with these afflicted people.¹⁴⁸

Lunching with Morgenthau on July 3, 1942 Dr Weizmann would urge him to prevail on the president to telephone Churchill – who had by then returned to London – and insist that he recall Colonel Orde Wingate from India to command a force of forty thousand Jews from Palestine who would 'fight to the last ditch.' 'Every Jew in Palestine is a commando,' rasped Morgenthau down the phone, reporting this to Roosevelt's private secretary. 'And they would follow Wingate to the last man.'¹⁴⁹ When Dr Weizmann came, however, the president pounded the desk and told the Zionists to stop badgering him: this was no time to bring up the matter, he said, with the British already terrified of being 'stabbed in the back' by the Arabs.¹⁵⁰ 'Quite frankly,' explained his secretary, refusing an appointment for David Ben-Gurion, 'in the present situation in Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and Arabia, he feels that the less said by everybody of all creeds, the better.'¹⁵¹

On January 19, 1943 Weizmann told American officials that Churchill never concealed his view that, despite the May 1939 British White Paper, one day would see Palestine transformed into a Jewish state. When Lord Halifax reported this to London, Eden expressed anger that Weizmann was stirring up feelings against Britain. 'I know well your personal feeling on this,' he reproached Churchill, 'but there has, I think, been no discussion suggesting that the United States Government should be approached as regards the possibility of modifying it.'¹⁵² Churchill confirmed that Weizmann had no authority to speak in his name: 'At the same time I expressed these views to him when we met some time ago, and you have often heard them from me yourself.' He himself was irrevocably opposed to the White Paper, he agreed, which he regarded as 'a breach of solemn undertaking to which I was a party.'¹⁵³ He was in their debt, and he knew it.

22: *The Blame for Tobruk*

ON THE DAY after hearing of the fall of Tobruk, President Roosevelt called a meeting of Stimson, Knox, and Hopkins, with Winston Churchill at the White House to review their strategic options.

Henry Stimson felt sorry for the prime minister: 'He was evidently staggered by the blow of Tobruk,' he dictated, 'and showed it in his speech and manner, although he bore up bravely.' Offering no excuses, Churchill admitted that Rommel had out-generalled them and had the better weapons.

As they again raked over all the arguments for and against the cross-Channel operation BOLERO Stimson found himself under attack from both statesmen; but he remained hostile to GYMNAST, citing the shortage of shipping and aircraft-carriers, and the lack of air cover over Casablanca, the landing area. Churchill countered that he had not found one soldier who thought BOLERO possible in 1942. 'The Germans,' he said, 'have spent all their time in digging defences on the northern coast and it is well nigh impregnable.' Landing six divisions of troops here in 1942 would be just sending his troops in to 'another Dunkirk.' Stimson pointed out that BOLERO, renamed ROUND-UP, was currently planned for 1943, not 1942. He urged them to agree to prepare the operation for 1943, and to launch it earlier if conditions allowed. He left the morning meeting soured, having found the president in a most irresponsible mood. 'He was talking of a most critical situation,' he noted, 'and in the presence of the head of another government, with the frivolity and lack of responsibility of a child.'¹

The most damnable thing about Rommel's triumph at Tobruk was that Churchill knew that the Americans were more than a little to blame. In September 1941 Italian agents had broken into the United States embassy in Rome and photographed the code BLACK. Late in April 1942 when the question arose of keeping General Sir John Dill abreast of Middle East de-

velopments, the war office had informed the cabinet that the U.S. liaison officer in Cairo, a Colonel Bonner Fellers, cabled a daily summary of the Middle East situation report to General Marshall in Washington.² It now turned out that Rommel's codebreakers were reading this summary as well as Marshall. On December 17, 1941 the *Afrika Korps* war diary had referred to one such intercept. Rommel called them the 'little Fellers.' Even Hitler knew about it. On June 28, 1942 he would say to Hermann Göring over lunch, 'Let's hope that the U.S. legation in Cairo keeps us well posted about Britain's military planning, thanks to their poorly encoded telegrams.'³

CHURCHILL HAD initially not noticed this sinister aspect revealed by the British intercepts, despite the evident precision of Rommel's source. On May 30, a message sent the day before to the *Fliegerführer Afrika*, Lieutenant-General Hoffmann von Waldau, was shown to him, referring to a report by 'a particularly reliable source' dated April 16 on R.A.F. technical shortcomings in Egypt; Churchill's interest went more to the shortcomings than to the evidence of a security failure. He sent a mild query to the chief of air staff, asking: 'What action?'⁴ Sir Charles Portal also missed the point, stating to Churchill (through 'C') on June 2 that views of this sort – about maintenance problems with the newer American aircraft types – had been freely expressed by Britain's critics in the Middle East some time ago; dissatisfied, Churchill pressed him, 'Please call for a report on the position without of course referring to the stuff' – meaning the ULTRAS.⁵

It was not long before it dawned on the codebreakers that Rommel was somehow getting detailed Intelligence – and that they would do well to investigate what the Nazi field marshal was now calling 'the good source.'

On June 2 'C' sent over to Churchill a new intercept. This read:

A good source reports: Situation at 30/5 at 1200 hours. The Free French have moved north from Bir Hakeim and maintain that they have control of the area as far as N. or 40 E.–W.–grid. The British have altogether 200 tanks (*Panz.Kampfwagen*) left with the 4th, 22nd and 2nd brigades, 160 tanks with other units.⁶

On June 10, Churchill read another revealing intercept: a German Intelligence summary described a visit by the 'good source' to units of the British Army's Thirteenth and Thirtieth Corps and to divisional headquarters in North Africa:

Battle morale of officers and men excellent, training inferior according to American ideas. Although the decision to attack at the beginning of June has been made, the performance of duties is taken very easily.

On May 11 the same source had noted that the probable date for the opening of a British offensive in Cyrenaica was June 1.⁷ By comparing these intercepts with other materials – probably Bletchley Park’s deciphering of American signals from the Middle East – Brigadier Menzies concluded that the American cyphers had been compromised. On June 10 he alerted Churchill; given the urgency he also warned President Roosevelt, using their private and secret link, and he inked this note to the prime minister. ‘I am satisfied that the American cyphers in Cairo are compromised. I am taking action. C.’ Churchill scrawled back, in red ink, ‘Say what action? & let me know what happens. wsc, 11.vi.’⁸

Now the investigation began in earnest. Portal wrote to Churchill that he had had the intercepted message to the *Fliegerführer* shown to Auchinleck. Auchinleck had confirmed that on April 17 the American colonel Bonner Fellers had received from General Arnold a message containing words ‘practically identical’ to those quoted by Rommel from his ‘secret source.’

This [*stated Portal*] together with another message from Washington to Cairo quoted by the Germans, has satisfied the Cypher Security Board that the Germans are reading an American cypher in use between Washington and Egypt.

Churchill now challenged his secret service chief: ‘C. Report what steps you have taken about the cypher. wsc 13.vi.’⁹ It was clear that there had been a major American security breach, but they did nothing to plug it. On June 13 he found on top of his dispatch box another intercept of a message from Rommel, retailing more news from his ‘good source.’¹⁰ The Americans still refused to act. National pride seems to have come into it. When ‘C’ himself took it up with them, as he told Portal on June 12, the Americans cast ‘an element of doubt’ on whether the Germans really could read BLACK – they preferred an alternative version, that ‘a traitor’ – by implication, British – was providing the Germans with the American messages.¹¹

In the desert, the battle was reaching its climax. The Americans still dithered. The leak remained unplugged. ‘C’ had to tell the prime minister on June 14 that the joint British–American investigation was still not com-

plete. Until the Americans informed him which of three cyphers had been used by Fellers, it was impossible to say whether the Germans had broken it, or there was a traitor.¹² Reading the latest report from 'C,' Churchill told him on the fifteenth to wire Washington again – using the special secret link – and say that unless the Americans provided a report on the leak within twenty-four hours, Churchill would complain to the president.¹³ On June 16, Washington finally conceded that the colonel's cypher had been compromised. 'I have asked,' Brigadier Menzies notified the P.M.,

that this should be changed immediately to a cypher providing the highest security, but without furnishing any reason for the change-over. Should the Germans obtain any information despatched on the new cypher, we shall then know for certain that there is a traitor in Cairo.¹⁴

For a while, even after Churchill flew to the United States, the leak continued. On June 21, he arrived back in Washington with Roosevelt. That was the day that Tobruk was overrun.

On June 23 Rommel's Panzer Army reported, 'On June 19 "good source" describes the tactics of a German reinforced armoured *Abteilung* in an attack on enemy positions as follows. . .'

Churchill read this intercept on the twenty-seventh. Furious, he wrote on the document, 'C. Is this still going on? wsc, 27.vi.'¹⁵

Only now did the Americans recall Colonel Fellers to Washington. On June 29 – the day after Hitler's mocking remark to Hermann Göring – Brigadier Menzies advised the prime minister that the Americans had also changed their cypher: provided therefore that there was no traitor in Cairo with access to the American telegrams, 'no further leakage should occur as from 25th July, 1942.'¹⁶ On that same day, June 29, Hitler's Intelligence branch, Foreign Armies West, closed the chapter with a memo in its files:

We will not be able to count on these intercepts for a long time to come, which is unfortunate as they told us all we needed to know, immediately, about virtually every action.¹⁷

It was no coincidence that from this day onwards, Rommel's fortunes declined. Except for one occasion, when Mr Churchill's Oracle emitted an uncertain sound (in February 1943), the Desert Fox would never again win a victory. From now on he was fighting blind. On September 23, he would

return to Germany for a rest cure, exhausted. Benito Mussolini, whom he saw the next day, decided that the exhaustion was psychological.

Shown the ULTRA intercept reporting this diagnosis, Roosevelt mocked that the general must have taken quite a knock: 'Up to now he has been accustomed to a diet of victories based on intelligence from inside the British camp which, thank God, we have now terminated.'¹⁸

The damage done by the American security lapse was vast, and it occurred at a crucial pass in Britain's fortunes. The public files in London are reticent about it even now. It was not the last time that the question of American security-worthiness arose. On June 28 the R.A.F.'s deputy commander-in-chief Middle East signalled to Bletchley Park that the American Major-General Lewis Hyde Brereton had arrived from India, to command the U.S. army's Middle East Air Force. After much agonising, Cairo saw no option but to allow his indoctrination in ULTRA.¹⁹ Brigadier Menzies reluctantly approved, but he applied the most stringent conditions; Brereton was to be advised that only one American officer in the entire United States was aware of this secret source, General Marshall himself, and he was to be told that the American cypher in Cairo had recently been changed 'because of suspected leakage, and that position is not yet finally cleared up.'²⁰

THROUGHOUT THIS time Churchill had languished in Washington. He could hardly proclaim in public his rage about the Fellers scandal, and how a loud-mouthed American colonel had nearly destroyed the British Eighth Army. He had to swallow the newspapers' mockery of his failure. Typical of the local headlines was 'TOBRUK FALL MAY BRING CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT.' For a day on June 23 he barely showed himself. With the skies lowering on his fortunes once again, he would not have been human if he did not feel the need to hide.²¹ Among those whom Winston phoned privately that morning of June 23 was Doris Lady Castlerosse at her Park-avenue hotel in New York; he was godfather to her son Winston. She wrote him a note about her homesickness and her desire to fly back to England by Clipper after she had settled her debts. 'Could you ring me up again?' she asked. At four P.M. the Duke of Windsor was smuggled in to see him, but no record of their talk has survived.²²

That afternoon he met with Roosevelt and the generals again to examine how to reinforce the Middle East; there was an unreal flavour to the decisions that were taken.²³

GENERAL MARSHALL had invited the prime minister to see Mark Clark's training camp in South Carolina, where infantry divisions were being 'mass produced' along typically American lines. Churchill welcomed the chance to escape from Washington. Their train left Arlington at 10:30 P.M., steamed south by the Southern Railroad and arrived at Fort Jackson, with its arid open parade ground shimmering in the summer heat, at 10:45 next morning. Churchill watched as six hundred parachutists made a descent. The Americans let him hold a walkie-talkie radio for the first time too. The afternoon was taken up with a live-ammunition infantry exercise. 'To put these troops against German troops would be murder,' General Ismay murmured to him, unimpressed. More politely, Churchill told Mark Clark only that it took two years' training to make a real soldier.²⁴

The British party must have concealed their disdain well. Henry Stimson wrote: 'Churchill and his comrades were astounded that such progress could have been made in so short a time.' The P.M. congratulated Stimson afterwards: 'I have had considerable experience of such inspections and I can say that I have never been more impressed than I was with the bearing of the men whom I saw. The undemonstrative, therefore grim, determination which was everywhere manifest, not only in the seasoned troops but in the newly drafted, bodes ill for our enemies.'²⁵ They flew back to Washington that evening in Stimson's plane, after a hot and wearying day. Churchill took a nap in Stimson's bunk. 'His doctor watched over him the whole day like a hen over a chicken,' the secretary of war wrote, 'but the little man came along in good shape.'²⁶

In the American capital city a minor problem awaited: King Peter of Yugoslavia and his foreign minister Dr Nincic had come to the White House to tackle Roosevelt and Churchill about the plans for post-war Europe. Churchill had other fish to fry, and he rasped a short-tempered warning at the two Yugoslavs: 'You are beginning to tire your friends.' Stung, the king and minister told the Americans that they hoped that their armies, rather than the British, would be staying in Europe after the war. British prestige was not high after Tobruk. Dr Nincic recited a litany of grievances, revolving around intrigues within the Middle East command in Cairo. British generals were already at odds with the foreign office over the future of Yugoslavia; the foreign office was hindering the king and his government from communicating with General Draža Mihailovic, the monarchist leader, and his Cetnik guerrillas in Yugoslavia; they were forwarding some messages to him, but withholding others.²⁷

Probably on instructions from Eden, Churchill asked Lord Halifax to stage a family dinner to avoid attending the state dinner given by King Peter that evening, June 24, at the White House. This shuffling-aside of the Yugoslav problem was to become emblematic of his Balkan policies.*

THE AMBASSADOR'S dinner was diversion enough. Hopkins brought along his likeable fiancée Mrs Macy; the Harrimans and Tommy Thompson made up the rest of the dinner party. 'After dinner,' Halifax tells us, 'there was an entertaining scene arising out of Winston's desire to take a dressing gown back for Clemmy. Various dressing gowns had been brought down from New York, which Mrs Macy and Mrs Harriman showed off as mannequins. I wouldn't have missed it for the world!'²⁸

The curvaceous Mrs Macy was the kind of woman on whom gossip columnists thrive. After Bernard Baruch threw a dinner for her at the Carlton costing forty dollars a plate, the *journalle* went into a frenzy, publishing details of the lavish unrationed menu and the guest list. Upon her marriage to Hopkins, they alleged that Lord Beaverbrook had given her a million-dollar set of emeralds, and added that Hopkins's importance as Lend-Lease administrator had not been lost on London; and there were wholly untrue allegations of gifts from their Majesties and even Churchill.²⁹ In fact Beaverbrook had given her only an antique brooch (so there was no question of Customs duty, which the newspapers had also raised).³⁰



General Auchinleck sent a cable to Churchill regretting the loss of Tobruk, and looking forward to the arrival of the U.S. Second Armored Division.³¹ In reply the prime minister admitted that there was a snag: 'We find that the shipping of this division within the next month presents very grave difficulties.' Accordingly, he was rushing to Egypt three hundred Sherman (M4) tanks and one hundred self-propelled 105 millimetre howitzers instead. Marshall had made this attractive offer to the British chiefs of staff that very morning; they would arrive in Suez in the fourth week of August.³² Churchill also assured Auchinleck: 'Do not have the slightest anxiety about course of affairs at home. Whatever views I may have about how the battle was fought or whether it should have been fought a good deal earlier,

* This issue is examined in more detail in vol. iii.

you have my entire confidence, and I share your responsibilities to the full.' He drew attention however to the 700,000 men on the ration strength of Auchinleck's command, and told the general that he expected that 'every fit male should be made to fight and die for victory.' 'You are in the same kind of situation as we should be if England were invaded,' dictated the prime minister from his suite in Washington, 'and the same intense, drastic spirit should reign.'³³ He drafted an instruction to Auchinleck to relieve Ritchie at Eighth Army and replace him by Gott or Montgomery; but it was folded into a sealed envelope and never sent.

TELEPHONING WITH London after Halifax's dinner he learned that Parliament was to debate a resolution criticising him. Backbenchers from all parties, led by the Conservative Sir John Wardlaw-Milne, were tabling a motion of no confidence in the central direction of the war. The criticism this time was of Winston himself, and no longer of his colleagues. Too old a hand to be worried by this, he decided to smoke out his opponents by demanding a full-scale vote of confidence. 'Parliamentary government can not be carried on by mere debate,' he lectured the Canadian prime minister, who came down on the overnight train from Ottawa, 'but by counting heads.' It was necessary, he said, to fix responsibility.

It was the day of his departure for London, June 25, and he had summoned a conference of Dominion representatives at eleven-thirty. To Mackenzie King he looked 'remarkably fresh, almost like a cherub' although he had been up until one or two that morning.³⁴ (He had also just spent an hour with a Mr Walton of G.P. Putnam's, his New York publisher). The empire's forces were overextended, he told these representatives – they were in the position of a fat man with a small blanket. In 1940, he boasted, Britain had 'stood alone' after the fall of France (an unfortunate solecism to offer to the very Dominions which had come to the mother country's aid in 1939). 'Now we have allies,' he said, 'and one ally which is greater than Russia, greater even than the United States.' He paused for effect, then said: 'It is air power.' He spoke then of the ruin visited already on Essen and Cologne, and the demoralisation caused to an enemy forced to evacuate entire cities and rebuild roads and factories. He admitted that while their bomber pilots would continue to attack only military targets, 'sometimes the airmen might go a little wide.'

He assured them that they could hold on to Egypt; he would prefer to lose the Middle East rather than Australia – this remark was probably for

the benefit of Australia's Sir Owen Dixon, who faced him at the far end of the oblong table. (Alarming reports had come to him of Canberra's growing infatuation with all that was American – the Australian Government 'strangely forget what they owe to Britain.') Scattering his glowing embers of oratory around to illuminate the war's dark horizons, Churchill predicted that if the Russians could hold out to the autumn the Germans would lose this war. In the Far East too the tide was turning: that April, nothing had stood between India and the Japanese fleet; 'the air force,' he said, had then detected the fleet – to Mackenzie King's disappointment he failed to mention that it was a Canadian squadron – and heavy damage had been inflicted in the resulting naval battle. As for India, he remarked, while Sir Girja S. Bajpai, India's agent-general in Washington, nodded vigorously, it was a continent with many different races and religions.

By such devices, and wrapping them in such platitudes, he tiptoed across the stepping-stones to the question of a Second Front, displaying unconcealed antipathy to the very notion. 'By God,' he swore to general approval, 'nothing will ever induce me to have an attack made upon Europe without sufficient strength and unless I am positively certain that we can win.' To do otherwise would be to court another disaster like Dunkirk, he said. A year later he had an even grimmer cautionary example to offer, Dieppe.

BEFORE GOING downstairs to a formal meeting of the Pacific War Council in the White House's cabinet room – Churchill would descend the stairs clutching Mackenzie King's arm – they all went outside to be photographed with Roosevelt on the veranda. 'One does not know how to look these days,' muttered Churchill, an old hand at this. 'If we smile, the public will think we're taking things too lightly. If we look serious, they will think there is a crisis.' The Pacific War Council meeting itself, set down for the half-hour before luncheon, was almost farcical. Roosevelt sat Churchill on one side and the Canadian on the other, then talked briefly about how the Japanese had now lost five of their twelve aircraft carriers. After cocktails and lunch, Churchill and Roosevelt bade them all farewell.

Churchill now invited the congressional leaders to meet him 'in secret,' a stage-managed affair calculated to draw on their prestige. President Roosevelt himself kept silent while the prime minister, purposefully sipping only water, talked for twenty-five minutes; he looked as fat as a cherub (again that simile), in the words of one participant, and confident too – in fact 'radiating confidence like a pot-bellied stove flushing off heat.' 'The

Right Hon. Winston Churchill,' this American politician wrote cynically that day, 'backed by his great and good friend, President Roosevelt, today gave Congressional leaders a preview of the war to come, an explanation of the war developments of the past few weeks, and what he said seemed to make them feel better.'

Churchill said nonchalantly that he was not at all worried by the hullabaloo in London. It had been the same after the fall of Singapore. He predicted that he would get a thundering parliamentary vote of confidence, with 450 Members for him and not more than twenty against. He refused to commit himself on the Second Front, but promised that R.A.F. Bomber Command would soon begin to 'pulverise' Germany. It was his usual powerful performance. One Senator remarked to newsmen outside that they were encouraged by what they had heard. 'The picture, which in some spots might look bad,' said Speaker Sam Rayburn, 'in general doesn't look bad.'³⁶

HOW BAD the situation looked depended on how far down Pennsylvania-avenue one travelled. Further down that majestic boulevard the *Washington News* billboards read 'NEW BRITISH LINE CRACKS — AXIS FIFTY-FIVE MILES INSIDE EGYPT,' while the *Star* placards shrilled 'AXIS TANKS ADVANCE SIXTY MILES IN EGYPT.'

With this frightful cacophony ringing about his ears Churchill left Washington late that day, Thursday June 25, for Baltimore, where the Boeing flying-boat was waiting. He was returning to a dubious welcome in England — and he had yet to win the hearts of most Americans, as many letters intercepted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation showed. 'Tell that Churchill,' wrote a man from Ohio, 'to go home where he belongs. . . All he wants is our money.' 'Every time you appear on our shores,' wrote an anonymous Mother of Three from California, in a letter addressed to the P.M., 'it means something very terrible for us. Why not stay at home and fight your own battles instead of always pulling us into them to save your rotten necks? You are taking foul advantage of our blithering idiot of a president.'³⁷ British Intelligence intercepted equally rude letters: 'I knew when I saw your fat-headed prime minister was over here that there was another disaster in the offing,' wrote a New York man to a friend in Yeovil, Somerset. 'His war record,' a writer in Warren, Ohio, dismally informed a friend in Stornoway, Scotland, 'is studded with one failure after another.'³⁸

'We left Washington for Baltimore at 8:30 P.M.,' recorded Ian Jacob that day, 'in the usual atmosphere of secret service men, powerful automobiles,

doubt & uncertainty about the luggage.’ At Baltimore there was an armed guard on the gangway and an air of agitation – an agent on guard duty had just been arrested after being overheard muttering that he intended to ‘do him in’ and slapping his pistol as he said it. The flying-boat *Bristol* was airborne before midnight. Churchill spent several hours in the co-pilot’s seat, surveying the shimmering moonlit quilt of clouds beneath, until they crossed the Irish coast; after a two-hour stopover at Botwood for a meal of fresh lobster, they reached Stranraer on the Clyde at five A.M. on June 27.

Eden and other ministers came to Euston station. They found their prime minister looking well. ‘Cabinet [at] 5:30,’ recorded the foreign secretary, ‘when he told us of his trip which seems to have been successful within its somewhat limited sphere.’³⁹

In the prime minister’s pocket there now nestled an autographed dollar bill. Having flown the Atlantic, he had qualified for admission to an exclusive club, called the ‘Short Snorters,’ by the pilots who had flown him. The club had only one rule: members had to carry about their person at all times this selfsame one-dollar bill signed by the Short Snorters who had admitted them and any others who might be added. If another Short Snorter met him and he could not produce that bill when challenged, he had to pay a further dollar to each Short Snorter present. Churchill would challenge his transatlantic friends on several occasions to show their Short Snorters. Nobody knew where the quaint custom had begun.^{40*}

IN ICELAND that Saturday, the ships of convoy PQ17, the war’s worst disaster convoy, were readying to go to sea. Heedless of the experts’ warnings that they faced disaster, Churchill had refused to brook further delay. Stalin needed those cargoes. At four P.M., ‘like so many dirty ducks,’ as Douglas Fairbanks Jr., one of the American naval officers, wrote, the thirty-five freighters slipped in single file out of Hvalfjord, waddling out past the torpedo nets while every man watching them offered up a silent prayer.

The prime minister spent the quietest of weekends, inviting only the commanders-in-chief of Bomber and Fighter Commands to dine with him at No. 10 that Sunday, June 28. The political situation was grim. In a by-election at Maldon in Essex on the previous Thursday Tom Driberg, a

* We include this detail for little other purpose than to put out of their misery fellow-historians who must also have puzzled over the phrase ‘Short Snorter’ upon finding it countless times in the private records of World War Two.

Beaverbrook Newspapers journalist, had stood as an independent and defeated Churchill's candidate. The military situation which had greeted the prime minister's eyes in the map room was unquestionably darker. On the eastern front Hitler's Field-Marshal Erich von Manstein had captured Sebastopol, crowning his campaign in the Crimea. In Libya, Rommel had captured thirty-five thousand of the empire's finest troops in Tobruk and been rewarded by Hitler with a battlefield promotion to field-marshal. There were rumours that the fortress's South African commander was a 'Fifth Columnist' – a traitor.⁴¹ From South Africa came a suggestion from General Smuts that Churchill send his entire bomber force – every single available aircraft – to Egypt, to destroy Rommel and pound his army and supply ports to pieces – failing which Smuts feared that they would face the same fiasco as at Singapore.⁴²

Britain's military reputation had hit bottom. On June 24 Auchinleck drew attention to Palestine, Syria, and Iran, warning of German infiltration and the fact that these countries were still anything but sure of Britain's ultimate victory. He had taken over command of the Eighth Army himself on the twenty-fifth, and had halted its retreat at El Alamein, a desert milestone – little more – some forty miles to the west of Alexandria, but he left no doubt that if this line were lost he would withdraw to the Nile Delta and to Cairo. In Cairo the air was thick with the burning embers of confidential files being destroyed. The British ambassador Sir Miles Lampson telegraphed to ask whether he should stay if the Germans arrived in the city. Churchill did not reply. 'He refuses to contemplate the worst,' concluded Eden's secretary Oliver Harvey.⁴³

WHEN EDEN saw Churchill on Monday June 29 he found him in inexplicably high spirits. The challenge of this crisis was pumping the adrenaline.⁴⁴

He did not attend the cabinet later that day; he had gone down to Chequers – his colleagues assumed that he was resting, perhaps brooding on what to say on Thursday in the big debate. Churchill sifted through a sheaf of ULTRAS which 'C' had saved for him while he was away: these revealed that Hitler had visited a new headquarters in Poltava, in the Ukraine, whither three fighter aces had been ordered to report to him on June 24. Buried in the heap of intercepts too was Rommel's triumphant report on his capture of Tobruk – with the *Afrika Korps*, and half the 90th Light Division on the right and Twenty Corps on the left, supported by massed bombers and dive bombers. 'After only two hours of violent fighting,' boasted Rommel, 'the

German divisions succeeded in forcing a wide salient into the strongly consolidated double-line of enemy pill-boxes.' By afternoon the two strongest forts, Solaro and Pilastrino, had been taken. 'Such was the impression caused by the penetration of the strongly defended south-eastern front of the Fortress that elements of the Tobruk garrison on the west capitulated when the attack was resumed on the morning of June 21.' Five British generals including the commander of the 2nd South African Division had been brought in. Seventy tanks were put out of action, thirty more were surrendered undamaged, and 'an incalculable amount' of guns and heavy weapons captured. 'Large stores of rations and ammunition, in part also fuel dumps, fell into our hands.'

These raw intercepts made sickening reading for Churchill. In an order of the day on June 21, Rommel had announced, 'We shall not rest until we have annihilated the last remaining portions of the British Eighth Army.' Yes, Colonel Fellers and the Americans had a lot to answer for. Rommel claimed to have destroyed more than 1,000 tanks and taken 45,000 prisoners since the battle began. The intercepts also revealed Kesselring reporting to Berlin on his conference with Rommel that evening, June 21, on what to do next – basically they would mount a feint attack on the main British front, while the Panzer and light divisions outflanked the British by night. The remaining intercepts showed that Rommel depended on fuel and ammunition supplies reaching him across the Mediterranean, for which purpose even Italian submarines would be pressed into service.⁴⁵

Churchill made his statement to the Commons at midday on June 30, then had his Tuesday lunch with the king. He was reaching certain decisions about how to extricate himself, and the empire, from the current mess.⁴⁶



There had been planning for a full-scale amphibious raid on the French coastal town of Dieppe on and off ever since early April. As commander-in-chief of the army's South-Eastern Command, Lieutenant-General Sir Bernard Montgomery had initially taken charge, but tactical disputes had emerged. He had dismissed Mountbatten's plan to take the town by flank assaults as amateurish, given the shortness of the operation (only fifteen hours from start to finish) and he had called for a bold frontal assault on Dieppe itself; Mountbatten had accepted, provided that a heavy bombing raid would precede it. The chiefs of staff had approved this on May 13. The

plan had however passed through several hands and undergone many changes since then, until it became both a frontal assault over the town's beaches and attacks on the cliffs on either side half an hour before the main landings. On June 5, with Mountbatten away in Washington and Montgomery taking the chair, Major-General J. H. Roberts had cancelled the air-bombardment phase, arguing that the ruins would block the streets to his tanks – his 2nd Canadian Division would be providing most of the assault troops.⁴⁷ Heavy warships could not provide artillery support, as that would bring them within range of the Luftwaffe.

By mid-June Mountbatten's original plan had been changed to an assault by raw Canadian troops, unsupported by any kind of bombardment. Driven by ambition, he had not however disowned the enterprise. The truth was that his master Churchill was ensnared in his own imperatives – trapped by the need to be seen to do something, somewhere; and Mountbatten was just the man to do it. All sorts of justifications were both then and later advanced for executing such a raid. One, which surfaced only after the Dieppe disaster, was the need to have an experience, however ghastly, to learn from. Another was to force the German air force into combat – Fighter Command's Spitfires had long been sweeping the Channel coast five hundred at a time in this vain hope.

On June 1, with *BOLERO* virtually abandoned and the likelihood that the Russian front might soon collapse, Mountbatten had persuaded the chiefs of staff to authorise 'at least one more big raid.' They had put him in charge of planning such a 'desperate venture' under the code-name *IMPERATOR*. Nobody on that occasion had mentioned Dieppe. Brooke had talked of seizing Boulogne, Abbeville, or Amiens for long enough to bring about a large scale air battle; he thought of maintaining two divisions on the enemy shore for a week or more, but Churchill had discouraged that idea.⁴⁸ 'Certainly it would not help Russia,' he had advised the chiefs of staff, 'if we launched such an enterprise, no doubt with world publicity, and came out a few days later with heavy losses.' It would not help the Soviet Union if Britain came 'a nasty cropper' on her own. On Churchill's recommendation therefore on June 8 *IMPERATOR* was abandoned.⁴⁹

In its place Churchill had begun talking of an entirely different operation, code-named *RUTTER* – what he called a 'butcher and bolt' raid against the Channel coast executed by six or seven thousand troops and designed to last only twenty-four hours. They were to do as much damage as possible before being taken off – those who survived – by sea. Hearing of this 'butcher

and bolt' scheme, Cecil King noted scornfully: 'It is an old man's idea to send out a lot of young men on a forlorn hope to do a lot of damage (of no military importance, because it cannot be followed up).'⁵⁰

THERE IS a parallelism in the history of these events. While the chiefs of staff and prime minister had been debating what to do and where, Lord Mountbatten's wilful planning for the raid on Dieppe proceeded, with fits and starts, and seemingly independent of these higher decisions. After a discouraging rehearsal at Bridport on June 13 the Dieppe raid had however twice been postponed.⁵¹ Churchill's surprise absence from London (in Washington) had followed; and now these turbulent parliamentary events following the loss of Tobruk. The Dieppe raid had been shelved temporarily, to await the first favourable day after June 24. A spectacular raid, the prime minister may have calculated, would enhance his standing with Parliament and people.

On the last day of June he had the C.I.G.S. summoned urgently to No. 10 from the studio where the general was about to sit for a painting, to review with Lord Mountbatten 'the large raid which is to be carried out next Saturday morning [July 4] on Dieppe' (that being the currently planned date). Brooke trooped into the cabinet room at No. 10 at three P.M. with generals Ismay and Hollis. Mountbatten brought his chief naval planner Captain Jock Hughes-Hallett. As the discussion progressed Churchill asked the latter whether he could guarantee the raid's success, but Brooke instructed him not to reply. 'If he, or anyone else, could guarantee success,' Mountbatten would recall Brooke as saying, 'there would indeed be no object in doing the operation.' Churchill snorted that this was not a time at which he wished to be learning from adversity. In that case, Brooke supposedly replied, the P.M. must abandon the idea of launching any later full-scale invasion of France, as no responsible general would go along with it unless a Dieppe-size operation had gone first. According once again to Mountbatten, Churchill agreed to let the operation go ahead.⁵²

HAVING PROVIDED for this distraction, the Dieppe raid, his mind turned to other things, though not to PQ17, now three days out on its ill-fated passage to north Russia; the disaster convoy had slipped from his view. Leading General Brooke out into the garden behind No. 10 he revealed that he proposed to fly out to Cairo on Sunday July the fifth; he wanted the C.I.G.S. to go with him. Brooke was appalled; to descend on Auchinleck in the mid-

dle of a battle, he suggested, was a bit unfair, with the fate of the Nile Delta and Cairo itself in the balance.⁵³

Churchill waved aside his objections, and sent Brooke away. He worked on his speech for the Commons until late that night.⁵⁴ The next morning, July 1, he wired to Auchinleck an anxious inquiry whether he was receiving in good time the priceless ULTRAS revealing Rommel's intention, namely 'after feinting at your southern flank' to attack the centre of the British position and thereafter 'turn northwards to cut off [the] El Alamein strong point.' The Germans were inquiring whether the British had carried out any defensive flooding operations, he added: 'Should be glad to have your opinion at leisure about how Rommel's tanks would get on among canals and irrigation of [the Nile] Delta.' He concluded, 'Whole idea here is that Egypt should be defended just as drastically as if it were Kent or Sussex, without regard to any other consideration than destruction of the enemy.'

Over in the House, the first day's debate had simultaneously continued in his absence until the early hours of July 2. It degenerated into farce when Sir John Wardlaw-Milne, sponsor of the no-confidence motion, suggested that the Duke of Gloucester be made commander-in-chief of the army. In the forenoon, Churchill stomped theatrically into the Commons chamber, as one Member wrote, 'glowering, weighed down with the burden of the war.' He sat at his accustomed place with 'a look of sullen foreboding,' and 'his face from time to time flickering into a smile.'

He rose at three-thirty P.M. and spoke for ninety minutes, his hands thrust cheekily into his trouser pockets although, as one Member wrote, his long statement amounted to little more than the fact that Britain had more men, tanks, and guns than Rommel and he could not understand why they had been so badly beaten.⁵⁵ One observer summed up his message as resentment at his critics and damaging admissions about the failure in Libya, while offering 'no promise of better men or different methods' in the future.⁵⁶ It was however, in Eden's view, one of his most effective speeches, beautifully adjusted to the temper of the House.⁵⁷ He finished knowing that he had carried the House with him. Almost exactly as he had predicted in Washington, the voting was 475 to twenty-five in his favour, with a score of malcontents deliberately abstaining. He left the chamber to an ovation. His last gesture was that of the triumphant schoolboy: at the side of the Speaker's chair, he faced the Members again and flashed to them a V-sign expressive of his defiance and triumph, while his face beamed at them in sheer goodwill. 'That,' reflected one M.P., 'is how a man governs men.'⁵⁸

‘The P.M. is in great form,’ wrote General Ismay soon after. ‘I cannot imagine how he manages to sustain his tremendous responsibilities and work 14–16 hours a day without wilting. A number of disgruntled, discarded and ill-informed people,’ he added, ‘made the most vicious attack on him while we were away. He dealt with them faithfully as soon as he got back.’⁵⁹ The Spanish ambassador was heard reporting to Madrid that as expected the debate had ended in a triumph, but that the speeches had reflected ‘uneasiness’ in face of the military disasters. The Duke of Alba told Madrid that, despite Tobruk, Churchill considered the loss of Egypt unlikely.⁶⁰

THE PRIME minister dined with his brother John and with Eden, who found him ‘in the greatest heart.’ He kept saying that their soldiers had not done as well as they should have; he lamented the paucity of talent in the Army and its ‘trade union’ outlook. To Eden’s dismay, he then began talking of undertaking another journey – of flying out to Cairo – saying that neither Clement Attlee nor Ernest Bevin had disagreed, and he had already secured the king’s permission. Like Brooke before him, Eden was distraught at the prospective journey. Churchill at first refused to listen to reason. He teased Eden by talking of the political testament which he had left with the king’s secretary before leaving for Washington, hinting: ‘It is in your favour.’

They argued for two hours about the Cairo trip, with Eden suggesting that a visit from Winston now, much as it might inspire the troops, would hamper General Auchinleck. ‘You mean,’ Churchill said, finally conceding defeat, ‘like a great bluebottle buzzing over a large cowpat?’⁶¹

He had merely postponed the idea of the trip, although he gathered that the immediate crisis was past. From an ULTRA shown to him late on July 2, it seemed that Auchinleck was regaining the upper hand. Rommel had signalled in code to Berlin that he was going to make ‘one more attempt the next day.’ Even so, the chiefs of staff ordered Admiral Harwood to invite the Vichy Admiral René Godfroy to remove the French fleet from Alexandria through the Canal just in case – Harwood was to allow them just enough fuel for this movement. If Godfroy refused to comply, this would be classed as ‘a hostile act’ and the British would feel entitled to destroy the ships.⁶²

An aura of impending disaster hung in Cairo air. After the cabinet on the third, and before going down to Chequers for the weekend, Churchill considered it prudent to examine with General Brooke a worst-case scenario, of the demolitions necessary if Rommel did indeed drive on to Cairo.⁶³

THERE FOLLOWED an episode which shows what Brooke had to put up with. That midday Amery had phoned and asked Winston to see his son urgently. Julian Amery had just arrived back by Liberator bomber from Egypt, and was keen to report on the mood in Cairo. Churchill sent word back to Amery that the boy ought to put any suggestions he had in writing. At five P.M. however Amery got hold of him on the phone, and talked him round.

Young Captain Amery arrived in the cabinet room as Churchill was in conference with General Brooke. While the Chief of the Imperial General Staff blackened with rage, Amery, 'a most objectionable young pup' in his words, spoke his piece, saying that the Middle East needed better morale, and that this could be achieved only by the P.M. flying out there at once; the troops needed to see and hear him — they had hardly seen Auchinleck at all. They lacked confidence in any officer ranking higher than major, said Amery; their generals like Sir Frank Messervy and Sir Willoughby Norrie were frittering their tanks away; in a regular Charge of the Light Brigade, Norrie had lost one hundred tanks in fifteen minutes to Rommel's guns on June 12. The army was not defeated; it was defeatist.⁶⁴

Brooke swooned with fury. ('The cheek of the little brute,' he wrote that evening, 'was almost more than I could bear.') He questioned Amery closely on the basis for his deductions, and gathered that this was not far from the wine-bar of Shephard's Hotel in Cairo, Randolph Churchill's old stamping-ground. As the bumptious young officer was shown out, Churchill remarked: 'That is a wonderful message that young man has brought back for me from the Middle East.' 'Yes,' Brooke snapped, 'if you are prepared to listen to a bar-lounger.' Churchill raised his eyebrows in query, and the C.I.G.S. repeated: 'A *bar-lounger*.'⁶⁵ For three-quarters of an hour after that Brooke argued with him, pleading against risking the long and hazardous flight through the Mediterranean.⁶⁶ Unconvinced, Churchill saw his doctor the next day to inquire about the medical feasibility of his making the long flight in a Liberator to Cairo.⁶⁷

OVER THE next few days the alarums from Cairo subsided. While we must now revert to other theatres of the war, notably that in the Arctic waters east of Jan Mayen Island, it will suffice to say that the much-maligned General Auchinleck had already fought the decisive battle against Rommel and effectively thwarted his last push. Obedient to the military dynamics and the remorseless dictate of desert warfare, Field-Marshal Rommel's offensive swing had now reached its maximum extent.

23: *The Knight's Move*

THE ALLIES had lost 830,000 tons of shipping during June 1942. With the disaster about to befall PQ17 in the Arctic, the July figure would be worse – far worse.

The decision to go ahead with this convoy had been political, to appease Stalin; the ships carried seven hundred million dollars' worth of aircraft, tanks, trucks, and gun carriers. On the last day of June the convoy had rendezvoused off Iceland with its thin Royal Navy escort of anti-submarine destroyers, anti-aircraft ships, corvettes, and minesweepers.

As they all moved off toward Murmansk and Archangel, no fewer than three rescue ships trailed along aft of this smoke-streaked cavalcade, ready to pick up the fractured remnants of man and ship that the coming battles might produce. That a great naval action was in prospect now seemed beyond hazard. On June 18 the British naval attaché in Stockholm had cabled to London a German naval signal intercepted by Swedish Intelligence on the landline from Berlin to northern Norway, from which it was clear that Hitler had ordered an all-out attack, code-named THE KNIGHT'S MOVE, on this next Arctic convoy. The Germans would throw every available bomber, U-boat, and destroyer as well as *Tirpitz*, *Hipper* and the pocket battleships *Admiral Scheer* and *Lützow* at PQ17 as soon as it passed Jan Mayen Island.¹ There was little that Tovey's fleet could do to protect the convoy. There could be no replay of the famous 1916 fleet action at Jutland.

Several days passed, with each side shadowing the other – the Germans using floatplanes, direction-finding, and radio-monitoring, the British their skilled codebreakers, agents, and air reconnaissance. Late on July 2 'C' brought over to No. 10 a summary of the latest Intelligence. The enemy had now sighted thirty-eight merchant vessels and was planning to attack them at four P.M. The prime minister was clearly worried. The Intelligence chief

stayed with him until after two A.M. on July 3, while the phone relayed fresh intercepts from S.I.S. headquarters. There had been further sightings: the enemy lost contact with the convoy.² Then the picture turned ugly: an ULTRA intercept decoded later that day, backed up as usual by aerial photographs, revealed that at 2:20 P.M. the berths of *Tirpitz* and *Hipper* at Trondheim were empty. Another intercept revealed that *Scheer* and *Lützow* had already dropped anchor at Altenfjord in the far north, ready for the attack. Thus the greater part of Hitler's battle fleet could be striking out at the convoy, east of Bear Island, in the early hours after midnight of July 4–5.³ If the Nazi battleships arrived on the scene, the freighters would have to break convoy formation and scatter. That would be their only salvation.

The prime minister had retired to Chequers for the weekend. In his view, PQ17 was doing well. It lost one freighter that Saturday morning, July 4, to a lone air attacker. But as Admiral Sir Dudley Pound watched the convoy come within range of the enemy air bases, he knew that its worst hours were coming: 'I am all against putting out battleships and carriers within range of enemy shore-based aircraft,' he would write a few weeks later, 'and have resisted it in the case of the PQ convoys. . .'⁴ So when the admiralty transmitted a signal to the cruiser force's Rear-Admiral Sir Louis 'Turtle' Hamilton at 12:30 P.M., authorising his force to proceed east of 25° East, it had certainly been drafted by Churchill himself since this would expose the four cruisers to air attack as well as to destruction by *Tirpitz*.

The commander-in-chief, Admiral Tovey, overrode this authorisation, signalling a categorical order directly to Hamilton to leave the area once the convoy was east of 25° East unless the admiralty could assure him there was no risk whatsoever of his running into *Tirpitz*. Churchill fumed at his commander-in-chief's disobedient spirit, but there was nothing he could do (though he did later protest yet again about Tovey to the First Sea Lord).⁵ During the evening the convoy came under determined bombing attack and lost two more ships, but stayed in formation. The Luftwaffe's attack order, already decoded, was telexed to London soon after.⁶

SOME TIME that Saturday afternoon, in other words on July 4, more intercepts reached Churchill. The latest naval section Intelligence summary reported indications, decoded since Thursday midnight, July 2–3, that Hitler's biggest warships, under his Admiral Commanding Battleships at Trondheim and Admiral Commanding Cruisers at Narvik, intended to put to sea.⁷ Early that July 4 evening, regular as clockwork, the codebreakers

broke the cypher settings for the twenty-four hours of enemy naval signals transmitted prior to midday. These now confirmed that *Tirpitz* and *Hipper* had already moved to Altenfjord; one signal, made by the German fleet commander in *Tirpitz* at 7:40 A.M. to his cruiser commander, estimated his time of arrival at nine A.M. and ordered all destroyers and torpedo boats there to 'complete with fuel at once.' It was simple to calculate that those warships could attack the convoy around two A.M. on Sunday the fifth.

Soon after seven P.M. the admiralty – or was it again Churchill? – signalled to the cruiser squadron: 'Further information may be available shortly.'

The members of Admiral Pound's staff have described how he convened an emergency conference in the admiralty boardroom which remained in session through most of this Saturday, July 4.⁸ Years later the prime minister would deny all knowledge of the decisions reached by the First Sea Lord; the admiral was approaching the last year of his life, with an as yet undiagnosed tumour gnawing at his brain – he often seemed inexplicably drowsy. Halifax, when foreign secretary, remembered him slumbering right through one of Winston's 1940 cabinets; the admiral had told him, 'I really don't know what I should do without these cabinet meetings to sleep in.'⁹ By the summer of 1942 those slumbers were becoming longer and more profound, and on the day that PQ17 sailed A. V. Alexander had recommended the appointment of a 'Deputy First Sea Lord' to share some of the burden.¹⁰ Churchill would not hear of it; he liked things as they were – he wanted the real conduct of naval operations left to his final dictate.

At about eighty-thirty P.M. Admiral Pound went down into the Operational Intelligence Centre, in the bowels of The Citadel, a deep bunker behind the admiralty, and asked whether *Tirpitz* had actually sailed. Nobody could say for certain that she had not. One thing seemed certain: if she had sailed, the Anglo-American cruiser force covering the convoy was in mortal danger and must be recalled immediately. Probably Pound telephoned Churchill at Chequers; returning to the admiralty boardroom, he polled the others on their views, then leaned back, screwed his eyes tightly shut, and meditated for so long that one admiral whispered, 'Look, Father's fallen asleep.' At 9:11 P.M. he reached for a message pad and drafted in neat green-ink handwriting a 'most immediate' signal to the cruiser force's commander, Hamilton. It read: 'Cruiser force to withdraw to westward at high speed.'

Thus, if *Tirpitz* was about to attack, Pound would at least have saved the cruisers. What about the freighters, however? Waddling slowly eastwards at

eight knots in convoy formation they would be sitting ducks for the enemy battleship's big guns. Twelve minutes after the first signal, the admiralty therefore sent a second, addressed this time directly to the convoy's close escort commander and to Tovey too: 'IMMEDIATE. Owing to threat from surface ships convoy is to disperse and proceed to Russian ports.' This signal was almost immediately followed by a third: 'MOST IMMEDIATE. . . . Convoy is to scatter.' The latter was merely a correction of the former – 'scatter' had a more precise tactical meaning than 'disperse' – but its very terseness sounded a knell of imminent doom to those in peril on the sea.

Throughout this, Pound was on the phone to Chequers. Despite his other preoccupations the prime minister was certainly focused on the Arctic that evening: 'Our battle news continues better,' Eden recorded in his diary the next morning, referring to the Egyptian desert, 'but both Russian front & our convoy operations sound grim. Winston rang me up late last night about latter, much displeased with Tovey's attitude.'¹¹

Admiral Tovey however did not share Churchill's enthusiasm for risking his ships in a fleet action in the Arctic, knowing that it would inevitably be fought on the Germans' terms.

IN ALL its sub-zero horror the Arctic tragedy now began to unfold. The admiralty alarm proved within a few hours to have been unfounded. *Tirpitz* had not put to sea. Hamstrung by orders from Hitler himself, the German battle fleet was still straining impatiently at anchor in northern Norway.

An hour or two later, the British codebreakers had proof of this. They read an 'all-clear' signal sent by the German naval Commander-in-Chief Arctic at 11:30 A.M. that Saturday morning to his U-boats, informing them that there was 'none of our own naval forces in the operational area.' At 3:22 A.M. on Sunday Churchill's admiralty transmitted a new, laconic message to the now-withdrawing cruiser force, to the effect that 'reconnaissance' had showed that the enemy had moved his warships up from Trondheim and Narvik, and they were 'believed' to be in the Altenfjord area.

The bell could not be unrung however; the admiralty's earlier signals could not be unmade; the convoy could not be unscattered. Within minutes of receiving the 'scatter' signal on the previous evening, the ill-armed freighters had broken their tight formation, and had been told by the local escort commander to make their own lonely ways across the Arctic to North Russia. Unescorted, proceeding one by one, they would fall an easy prey to the U-boats and bombing planes which roamed the icy Arctic waters. Twenty-

three, many of them American, would plunge to the Arctic ocean floor during the next week.

THE SHIPPING crisis was now assuming nightmarish proportions. Quite rightly, on July 6 Churchill told the cabinet that he refused to reveal Britain's true shipping losses, even if the House insisted on a secret debate.¹²



The American public were already disillusioned with Britain and her declining military prestige. Less than twenty per cent of Americans wanted closer collaboration with Britain after the war. 'England's power,' they pointed out, 'will be gone.'¹³

The casualties among the American ships were the more unfortunate as an historic impasse had been reached between London and Washington on future strategy. The British preferred an invasion of North-West Africa, while the Americans were eager for SLEDGEHAMMER – landing eight to ten divisions near Brest or Cherbourg only two months from now as a bridgehead for a later invasion; Churchill hated the whole idea. It depended on the proper conditions of tide, moon, wind, and visibility all coinciding in the right week of September. There would be a total lack of air cover. The British would have nothing to do with SLEDGEHAMMER, as 'Pug' Ismay later put it; the Americans would have nothing to do with anything else.¹⁴

On Sunday July 5, even as disaster was enveloping Convoy PQ17 in the Barents Sea, the prime minister warned the chiefs of staff that they could no longer postpone a decision. 'No responsible British general, admiral, or air marshal,' he reminded them, 'is prepared to recommend SLEDGEHAMMER as a desirable or even as a practicable operation in 1942.'

The United States had said nothing about providing the additional landing craft that would be necessary, nor would the three American divisions arrive in the U.K. in time to be trained. 'On the other hand,' Churchill sagely reminded the chiefs of staff, 'there is a price to be paid.' If they gained a bridgehead, they would have to nourish it and divert bombing effort from Germany to defend it. This piecemeal squandering of their efforts would 'rule out' or delay any major operation such as ROUND-UP, the projected full-scale invasion of France in 1943. Churchill argued that they must break this bad news squarely to Roosevelt and the Russians; they must urge GYM-NAST, the invasion of North-West Africa, upon the president.¹⁵

In a message to Roosevelt three days later he repeated the key sentence of this advice: 'No responsible British general, admiral or air marshal is prepared to recommend SLEDGEHAMMER as a practicable operation in 1942.'

THE OUTCOME was the most serious dispute yet between Washington and London. Marshall and Stimson were dismayed to see the British welching on the agreement reached only two weeks earlier in Washington, to launch a cross-Channel assault during 1942. General Marshall advised Roosevelt on July 10, that the Americans should turn their backs on the British and take up the war with Japan instead. The U.S. navy (Admiral King) agreed, as did secretly Sir John Dill and the British military mission in Washington.¹⁶ Unsure of this advice, Roosevelt asked them to draft a memorandum on what such a switch to the Pacific theatre would entail.¹⁷ Stimson hoped that this threat would jolt the British to their senses and force them to abandon what he called their 'fatuous defeatist position.' Dill shortly assured Marshall that he had sent a telegram warning Churchill of the danger that the Americans would turn their backs on Europe.¹⁸ At a council of war early on July 13 the American military leaders endorsed this threat.¹⁹

Unimpressed by all this, Churchill again lectured Roosevelt by telegram that nobody in London regarded SLEDGEHAMMER as possible. He therefore proposed once more that the Americans rapidly execute GYMNAST, the descent on French North-West Africa, and that Britain 'in concert with the Russians' try to clear the Germans out of northern Norway in order to open up the only viable supply route to the Soviet Union. Meanwhile they should continue preparations for ROUND-UP, the invasion of France in 1943. 'All this seems to me as clear as noon day,' he admonished the president.²⁰

President Roosevelt was alarmed by all this, seeing it as a symptom of a deeper disarray produced by Britain's reverses. He had 'a thumping row' with Marshall. The general remained unshakeable in his new conviction that they should resolve the Pacific war first. Roosevelt, to his credit, stood firm. While he professed to be as sound as ever on BOLERO, his name for the cross-Channel operation, he chided Stimson that Marshall's memorandum about switching everything to the Pacific instead was a bit like 'taking up your dishes and going away,' as he put it. Maybe, responded Stimson, but it was the only way to get through the thick hides of the British.

Roosevelt however saw another option – he would send General Marshall and Harry Hopkins over to London with Admiral King, right away, to thrash the whole thing out with Churchill face to face.²¹

Before turning them loose on the British, he instructed them to re-examine the prospects of SLEDGEHAMMER. The document used the words: 'Grave risks are justified,' and urged that the operation be executed before September 15 'on the basis of our remaining in France if that is in any way practicable.' The document did however identify one advantage in GYMNAST (the North Africa landing) – namely that, since it would be a purely American enterprise, no doubt 'resistance on the part of the French would not be severe.' (This was to prove a cruel illusion). On a darker note, the emissaries were also instructed to discuss in London what was to be done if Soviet resistance collapsed that summer.²²

In the final version of these instructions, which he issued the next day, Roosevelt added that, if SLEDGEHAMMER was indeed 'finally and definitely out of the picture,' they were authorised to find a site where a landing was possible, particularly in North Africa and the Middle East. In contrast to Marshall, Roosevelt remained opposed to concentrating American effort against Japan since this would not defeat Germany; on the contrary, to concentrate on Japan would enhance Germany's chances of securing domination of Europe and Africa. 'Defeat of Germany,' he reasoned, 'means the defeat of Japan, probably without firing a shot or losing a life.' He expected them to reach agreement with the British within a week of arriving in England.²³

STIMSON HAD drawn Roosevelt's attention to the book *Soldiers and Statesmen*, which appeared to show that Churchill had prevaricated in just the same way before the Dardanelles campaign twenty-five years before.* General Marshall also drew Field-Marshal Dill's attention to the unfortunate similarities, and Dill learned that Admiral King had read the book too. He wired a lengthy warning to Churchill that the Americans strongly opposed the North African adventure, fearing that it would become such a major commitment as to destroy any possibility of crossing the Channel in 1943. 'There is no doubt,' summarised Dill, scarcely bothering to mince his language, 'that Marshall is true to his first love [defeating Germany first] but he is convinced that there has been no real drive behind the European project.' Meetings were held, discussions took place, and time slipped by. They would never again find a Germany so preoccupied with her campaign in the east as now. The two countries could go on 'pummeling each other by

* Field Marshal Sir William Robertson, *Soldiers and Statesmen 1914–1918* (London, 1926) vol. i, chapter iii.

air,' but the decisive chance would soon have gone. Dill had a hunch that certain 'highly placed Americans' believed that they could hope for no better than a stalemate with Germany. Therefore, suggested Dill, Churchill had to convince Marshall that he remained wedded to a cross-Channel invasion. Bridling at the unconcealed criticisms, Churchill responded only that he was glad that 'our friends' were coming over. 'Soldiers and statesmen here,' he mocked, with greater asperity than accuracy, 'are in complete agreement.'²⁴

As Marshall, King, and Hopkins set out for London at midday on July 16, the secretary of war dictated an angry note for his files, recording that if only their president had been firmer with Prime Minister Churchill in June, all this could have been avoided.²⁵



Churchill still hankered after an Allied invasion of northern Norway, 'unroll[ing] Hitler's map of Europe from the top.'²⁶ On June 13, 1942 he had suggested to his chiefs of staff that if the cross-Channel assault did not go ahead that year, they should send twenty-five thousand fighting men to Norway instead.²⁷ He ordered them to give the job to General Andrew McNaughton, Canadian army commander in England. The chiefs of staff hated the idea. It seemed to Winston that they opposed every plan he put; he was heard to growl on July 7, 'We'd better put an advertisement in the papers – asking for ideas!'²⁸

Bad weather continued to delay the amphibious raid on Dieppe, scheduled for July 4, on which he was banking to restore morale and reputation; shortly, two of the vessels earmarked for the operation were disabled by bombing, and on the seventh the decision was taken to scrub this operation altogether. There was silent relief in several quarters. On the ninth, the chiefs of staff invited in McNaughton to brief him about the Norway project; at Attlee's suggestion, Brooke took the Canadian general aside and privately explained that they wanted him to use his fertile brain to work out all the reasons why it was *not* a feasible operation of war.²⁹

FROM ALL around Churchill was conscious of a nervous twittering beginning against him. Visiting the palace on July 7 he described his opponents contemptuously as 'the weaker brethren.'³⁰ Among people unaware of his secret 'testament' letter to the king, there was much idle speculation as to

who might succeed Churchill. Some thought that Sir John Anderson would see them through; most, including Lloyd George, put their money on Eden.³¹ On the ninth, the Churchills dined Lord Halifax, back in London on furlough from Washington, at the Savoy with the Edens, Ambassador Winant, and Bracken; the prime minister was perceptibly tired, and small wonder. 'He is greatly irritated with the few people who make trouble in the House of Commons,' remarked Halifax in one diary; and in the other, more secret, record he described that Winston struck him as being edgy, disposed to exaggerate his minor difficulties with the press and Commons, complaining that he lacked sufficient power, and generally, in Halifax's view, displaying 'symptoms of nervous fatigue.' After they climbed into their respective cars at one A.M., Halifax reflected sympathetically, 'I can't conceive how anybody can live that life and retain reasonable sanity.'³²

General Eisenhower, who was to command the European Theatre for Roosevelt, had now reached London. He found morale at its worst ever.³³ Together with Mark Clark he paid a courtesy visit on No. 10. After a while Churchill decided to compose a telegram to Roosevelt, and sent for Miss Layton – the stenographer had gone up to Mrs Hill's bedroom for a nap. She appeared with her hair awry and her dress dishevelled; the Americans had yet to learn about the odd hours that the P.M. inflicted on his staff.

One after another his plans for a military comeback had gone adrift – the bombing campaign, Dieppe, the Auchinleck offensive, the Arctic convoys. The criticism of Sir Arthur Harris and Bomber Command was mounting. In a brilliant letter of self-defence, Harris drew sarcastic comparisons between the daily victories of his young airmen and the ponderous achievements of the navy at sea and the army in Libya. After immobilising the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* for months at Brest his squadrons had disabled them, perhaps permanently, with the mines they had laid during the warships' withdrawal through the Channel in February.

It took 7,000 flying hours, said Harris, to destroy just one enemy U-boat at sea – and the same number of hours for his aircrews to destroy one-third of Cologne, Germany's third biggest city. By destroying the Renault factory in Paris, he claimed, his bombers had permanently deprived Hitler of armoured fighting vehicles for ten to eleven motorised divisions – 'More than our Libyan operations have destroyed in the whole course of the war,' he said and, he reminded the prime minister, 'Almost as much as we lost at Dunkirk.' In short, naval air power might peck at the periphery of this war: 'Butcher' Harris, with Bomber Command, was striking at its

heart. 'What shout of victory would arise,' he argued, 'if a Commando wrecked the entire Renault factory in a night with a loss of seven men! What credible assumptions of an early end to the war would follow upon the destruction of one-third of Cologne in an hour and a half by some swift-moving mechanised force which, with but 30 casualties, withdrew and was ready to repeat the operation 24 hours later!'³⁴

The army had no such spectacular feats to brag about. Despite General Auchinleck's solid military success in halting Rommel's advance into Egypt, Churchill was merciless in his criticism. The C.I.G.S. stolidly defended the general and reminded Winston in cabinet on the eighth that one rash move at this juncture could still lose them Egypt.

Churchill was however in 'one of his unpleasant moods.' The P.M. raked over all the old embers of his discontent, asking yet again where precisely *were* the 750,000 men that Auchinleck had in the Middle East command. After this cabinet ended, Churchill went over to him and apologised. 'I am sorry, Brooke, if I had to be unpleasant about Auchinleck and the Middle East.' For Churchill to apologise was rare if not unique.³⁵ On July 10 however he reverted to the same theme. 'Pray explain, C.I.G.S.,' he intoned, 'how it is that in the Middle East 750,000 men always turn up for their pay and rations, but when it comes to fighting only one hundred thousand turn up!' It was, Brooke found, not easy to answer sarcasm like that in the middle of a cabinet meeting. He attributed the prime minister's bad mood to the Convoy PQ17 disaster.³⁶

THE TROOPS for the Dieppe operation had dispersed, and Montgomery was one of several who felt that no attempt should be made to remount it. Admiral Mountbatten later claimed that he talked it over with Churchill and the chiefs of staff; and that all agreed that executing some such raid was an essential prerequisite to crossing the Channel in 1943. 'But time simply did not permit of finding a new target,' maintained Mountbatten later.

The chiefs of staff minutes do not record such a discussion, but they do show him demanding in July to be vested with 'executive responsibility' for launching the next large raid. Pound and Portal were hostile to the idea and the C.I.G.S., equally unhappy, adopted instead a sorry compromise making Mountbatten responsible for 'marshalling and launching' such raids, while denying him the authority to sign the operation orders.³⁷ If any lesson would be learned from the fiasco that lay ahead, it was the importance of appointing one overall task force commander from start to finish.

To revert to Lord Mountbatten's own narrative on the operation against Dieppe, which unfortunately lacks both precision and dates, his staff held a post-mortem on the situation. It was here that, to use his own words, Mountbatten made the 'unusual and I suggest rather bold' proposal to mount it again; that would surely be the last thing that the Germans, who had probably learned of all the preparations, rehearsals, and cancellations, would expect.³⁸ He told this version of events many times, and it lost nothing in the re-telling. 'Then we had a brainwave,' he would recount on another occasion, 'so unusual and daring that I decided that nothing should be put on paper. This was to remount the same operation and carry it out in mid-August.' He claimed to have put it first to the chiefs of staff and then to the P.M. 'All were startled and at first argued against it on security grounds.' There is, as he said, no trace of this in the official papers.

Mountbatten would claim to have assured Churchill and his chiefs of staff that the Nazis 'would never for a moment think we should be so idiotic as to remount the operation on the same target.'³⁹ He certainly did not inform the defence committee, nor did Admiral Pound inform his minister, the First Lord of the Admiralty. A furious General Nye, Vice C.I.G.S., learned of all this only after the troops had gone into the assault.⁴⁰



On July 8, 1942, the prime minister received from Brigadier Menzies, the head of the secret service, a folder containing Bletchley Park's latest naval headlines. He put it aside for a day, unread; it made sickening reading. At 11:50 A.M. on the sixth, the German naval command had been heard signalling in cypher that 'as twenty-seven out of the total of thirty-eight ships [of Convoy PQ17] appear to have been sunk, and the rest are widely dispersed, there is no worth-while operation target.'

The naval codebreakers commented that the claim was in advance of the actual losses at the time – around twenty, of which eight were to U-boats; but as of early this day, July 8, six more had been reported sunk.⁴¹

Presiding over the first defence committee he had held since late April, on July 10, Churchill now had to accept that few if any of PQ17's freighters would survive. Of the thirty-six ships sixteen, he admitted, were already lost. The *Tirpitz* battle group had put to sea for a few hours on the fifth, then turned back, its intervention no longer needed. The radio waves were filled with cries for help from the shipwrecked merchant seamen, cast onto rafts

and lifeboats in the middle of the Arctic. Immersion in these icy waters brought death within minutes. Churchill now faced the problem of when to run the next Arctic convoy for Stalin, and how to fit it in with the forthcoming operation to supply British Malta. That they had no choice but to run another Arctic convoy, he was convinced. 'We could not,' he insisted to his colleagues, 'afford to abandon the running of the next Russian convoy when the great battle was raging on the Russian front.'⁴²

The fate of PQ17 caused many of his ministers to search their souls. Later that month A. V. Alexander used blunt language to Lord Halifax about their prime minister, and 'the futility of people trying to alter his methods.'⁴³ Casting around for somebody to blame, Churchill sent a note over to Admiral Pound objecting to one signal which the commander-in-chief of the Home Fleet had made – evidently that on July 4, already referred to* – and pointed out that it 'might well read in the sense that Admiral Tovey is not prepared to obey the orders he might receive from the admiralty.'⁴⁴ Pound made plain that he would not be a party to any hunt for scapegoats.

The cabinet now learned that Britain had lost 364,000 tons of shipping in the last week. The chiefs of staff recommended calling off PQ18 – at ten P.M. that day, July 13, Admiral Pound told the defence committee that there was no guarantee that even one ship would get through.

Churchill was distraught, and still felt that they should go ahead. 'The prime minister,' the defence committee minutes read, 'said that he had taken the view that if fifty per cent of the ships of a convoy got through it would be justifiable to sail the next.'

Eden too said that it was 'very worrying' to have to 'give negatives' to the Russians at this critical time – firstly about the Second Front, then on sending them the six R.A.F. squadrons, and now on sailing PQ18.

These purely political considerations failed to convince their colleagues. They were unanimous that PQ18 should not sail. Stricken by a sense of guilt towards those who had already died cruel deaths during PQ17, the prime minister asked for 'a liberal distribution of George Medals' among those who had survived – merchant seamen were eligible only for civilian medals.⁴⁵ He harped on the need to seize northern Norway and to 'provide assistance for Russia.' For this, he informed his colleagues with unwarranted optimism, General McNaughton was preparing a plan. Meanwhile, he suggested they offer twenty R.A.F. squadrons to Stalin for his southern front.⁴⁶

* Page 484.

The Soviet government was furious at the way PQ17 had gone. Soviet ambassador Ivan Maisky came to dinner with Churchill and Pound late on July 14. Pound again opposed running any more Arctic convoys. Churchill suggested that since so many American ships were involved the final decision would rest with Washington.⁴⁷ Unwilling to let down the hard-pressed Russians, Churchill examined every means of fighting the next convoy through. He suggested to Pound and A. V. Alexander on the fifteenth that if all went well with the current Malta supply operation they could bring together a force comprising *Indomitable*, *Victorious*, *Argus*, and *Eagle* with at least five auxiliary aircraft-carriers, every available *Dido* and at least twenty-five destroyers and then fight the two sixteen-inch battleships right through to North Russia under the carriers' air umbrella and destroyer screen. Instead of hugging the northern ice pack this force should cruise to the southward seeking the clearest weather and 'fight it out with the enemy.' With ancient visions of the Battle of Jutland still glowing in his head, Churchill suggested: 'If we can move our armada in convoy under an umbrella of at least 100 fighter aircraft we ought to be able to fight our way through and out again, and if a Fleet action results, so much the better.'⁴⁸

THE TELEGRAM from Sir John Dill in Washington announcing that General Marshall, Harry Hopkins, and Admiral King were to descend on London at once – in two days' time – arrived in Whitehall early on July 15. It inspired mixed feelings. Churchill already harboured a powerful dislike of Dill, having been poisoned against him by Beaverbrook.⁴⁹ It was, as General Brooke brooded in his diary, likely to be a queer party, as Hopkins broadly agreed with Churchill on invading French North-West Africa, Marshall wanted to invade Europe, and Admiral King was determined to concentrate on the Pacific war from now on.⁵⁰

The British chiefs of staff expected great difficulties with 'our American friends,' since only the invasion of North-West Africa made any sense to the British at this time. Talking with Halifax, the chief of air staff predicted that *GYMNAST* would open up the Mediterranean and hasten the defeat of Italy. The 'nigger in the woodpile' was General Franco: what would he do? Portal wondered whether they might bribe Spain with a slice of French Morocco – rather as Hitler had tried in both 1940 and 1941.⁵¹

Seeing Lord Halifax for ten minutes before luncheon, Churchill made plain that the threatening sounds from Washington about abandoning their strategy of 'Germany First' did not frighten him. 'Just because the Ameri-

cans can't have a massacre in France this year,' he snorted, 'they want to sulk and bathe in the Pacific!'⁵² This was much the same as Roosevelt's view, of course.

Neither disasters in the field nor the mounting criticism in the media and in Parliament had shaken the prime minister's vanity and conceit. Wearing his trade-mark blue rompers he received about forty British newspaper editors at five-thirty P.M. that day, July 15, to talk about the shipping crisis. It was the first time he had briefed them since September 1941. From his breezy manner it was plain that he still regarded his hold on No. 10 as unassailable; with the United States in the war he seemed to regard victory as inevitable.⁵³

Addressing the House of Commons in secret session the next day he airily explained that it was because of America's poor showing that they were having to hold this debate in secret; he regretted that the Americans were making it so easy for the U-boats in the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean, as it gave the enemy submariners priceless training for use against the case-hardened British convoys. Speaking of Stalin and the eastern front, he called the outlook 'ominous.' Of Egypt, he claimed that Britain was 'holding her own.'⁵⁴

THIS WAS true, but only just. Now dug in at El Alamein, Auchinleck had still to throw his long-awaited punch at Rommel's line. Churchill badly wanted to send yet another telegram to the general, but he was anxious not to be seen to hustle him. On the seventeenth Eden found him going over the file of recent Cairo telegrams with his war office experts, the directors of Military Operations and Military Intelligence. The former, Major-General John Kennedy, said that Auchinleck now stood a good chance of getting in a damaging blow at Rommel, and he added that even General Brooke was worried at its postponement.⁵⁵ Churchill studied the latest decoded messages. Later that day 'C' radioed to the Middle East headquarters: 'Panzer Army is suffering from acute shortage of fuel and artillery ammunition resulting from supply difficulties.' Rommel was now 'absolutely dependent' on three supply vessels, *Menes*, *Trapani*, and *Apuania* which were expected to reach Tobruk in two days' time carrying nearly three thousand tons of ammunition.⁵⁶ First-rate Intelligence alone was not enough, however. General Auchinleck's offensive, begun five days later, soon ground to a halt.

Benefiting from the solid backing of Churchill, the British codebreakers were advancing on the biggest challenge yet, the code messages generated by a new generation of automatic German code-machines.

The latest of these was the *Geheimschreiber* ('secret writer'). By early 1942 it had become clear that the enemy had begun supplementing the lower level ENIGMA traffic with this new system, which carried messages of far higher grade. Using radio circuits between Berlin, the Führer's headquarters, and all commands higher than armies, the messages were passed using high-speed teleprinters with special automatic encyphering devices made either by Lorenz (the *Schlüsselzusatz*, or SZ-40, later the SZ-42) or by Siemens (the *Geheimschreiber T-52*); the latter device was codenamed SÄGEFISCH by the Germans, and STURGEON by Bletchley Park – or FISH for short.⁵⁷ Bletchley Park devoted enormous effort to intercepting FISH traffic and solving the codebreaking problems. Britain was already skilled in intercepting such high-speed transmissions. The Metropolitan Police had been working on them since 1926 and they had joined forces with the foreign office codebreakers in 1930. In March 1942, apart from the Japanese military-attaché cypher (for which it was suspected that the Americans possessed the basic book), and the Japanese and Spanish naval cyphers, the main problem being tackled at Bletchley Park's research section was FISH.⁵⁸

Since the FISH traffic was passed by radio, not landline, it could be intercepted and this, for the British, was its attraction. In May 1942 the foreign office requisitioned a converted farmhouse with thirty acres at Knockholt for a special listening post for FISH; by July they had added 160 acres of surrounding land for the necessary 'rhombic' aerial arrays. The government also built a workshop to manufacture the special wide-band receivers, as FISH was transmitted over a range of frequencies. Soon the output, in the form of punched paper tape, was pouring into Bletchley Park. The codebreakers concentrated their attack on the German army version, known as TUNNY, ignoring the Luftwaffe one; they devoted much ingenuity to solving the cypher settings, still using old-fashioned hand methods (the famous COLOSSUS computer designed by British engineers for the purpose will not be met until the end of 1943, in the next volume of this biography).

By late 1942 the first dramatic products were reaching Churchill's desk. As each new FISH link was set up by the German High Command (O.K.W.), its keys were methodically broken. On November 1, Berlin's FISH link with the German Army Group 'E' in Salonica began operations; Bletchley Park broke into it almost at once, and read its messages until it closed down in

the following summer. In December 1942, the O.K.W. instituted a FISH link between Army Group 'C' in Rome and Rommel's Panzer Army, now fighting rearguard actions in Tunisia. From January 1943 to the end of May, the codebreakers read this FISH link too, almost without a break.

WE MUST now return to London in July 1942. President Roosevelt's three emissaries reached London early on Saturday the eighteenth. Their clear intention was to get Churchill to put SLEDGEHAMMER – the occupation of Cherbourg by six divisions in 1942 – above everything else, and to execute it as soon as possible.

Without waiting for these visitors to arrive, Churchill had gone down to Chequers for the weekend. He had told Roosevelt that he proposed to convey 'our friends' to the usual 'weekend-resort' where the British chiefs of staff would await them. The American chiefs of staff panicked at the prospect of exposure alone to Churchill's oratory, and Roosevelt speedily informed the prime minister that his men would stay at first in London, 'and not go to [the] resort for a couple of days.'⁵⁹ Thus Marshall, Hopkins, and King went into a huddle with their own American army, navy, and air force representatives at Grosvenor-square.⁶⁰ 'KEURAN, DEPEW, and ROBERT [Eisenhower, Spaatz, and Clark] anxious go ahead with SLEDGEHAMMER,' reported Harry Hopkins to Washington, using pre-arranged code-names. 'DRAISS [Admiral Stark] lukewarm. PLOG [Marshall] had his men working all night on details.'⁶¹

On Sunday July 19 Hopkins came down to Chequers, but without the other two, to spend the night. He found Winston annoyed that the Americans 'had not all immediately flocked to Chequers' – the prime minister had 'taken this very much amiss,' as Hopkins told Halifax weeks later. Churchill ventilated his annoyance on Hopkins, to which, according to his own account, the latter replied in the same coin.⁶² Hopkins reported this to the president after the weekend was over. 'I spent Sunday and last night with MOSES SMITH. He [was] pretty restless and quite unhappy at not seeing us. . . . MOSES SMITH threw the British Constitution at me yesterday with some vehemence, but it did no serious damage. As you know it is an unwritten document. MOSES is his old self and full of battle.'⁶³

It was not until Monday July 20 that the rest of the American party called on Churchill at No. 10 Downing-street. At noon-thirty they held there a preliminary meeting of the Combined Chiefs of Staff. Even though it was strictly speaking a meeting of the British and American chiefs of staff,

Churchill insisted on being present – he was apprehensive, in Brooke's view, that Marshall might secure a tactical advantage and settle matters of importance behind his back.⁶⁴ Churchill turned his glare on SLEDGEHAMMER.

The British, he said with exaggerated courtesy, had failed to devise a satisfactory plan, but 'we would give the most earnest and sympathetic attention to any American plan.' He and his staff were ardently in favour of the larger operation, ROUND-UP, but they had some reservations about where to target it: did it have to be the western seaboard of France? He felt on the other hand that French North-West Africa (the GYMNAST operation) was worth examining from every possible angle. After that he dilated upon his plan to offer twenty R.A.F. squadrons to help Stalin to defend the Caucasus, and he wandered off onto ANAKIM, the projected recapture of Burma, and the Pacific theatre. 'This was,' he volunteered, 'almost exclusively an American sphere, but we should naturally desire to make a contribution.'⁶⁵

The Americans did not like the widening drift of his remarks at all. After lunch, Marshall and King both urged SLEDGEHAMMER upon the British chiefs of staff. The British were unanimously against it, saying that the operation would be too small to help the Russians, and that Hitler's land and air power would wipe out the resulting bridgehead during the coming winter.⁶⁶

Before dining with the prime minister at No. 10, Hopkins sent a report to the president on these unsatisfactory talks. Churchill had also invited Harriman and his friend Lord Beaverbrook to the dinner. Hopkins was much embarrassed and found the conversation somewhat strained, as he told Halifax months later, 'because Winston said nothing, and Harry didn't know what Max knew, and therefore said nothing too.'⁶⁷

WHAT WAS immediately evident to the Americans was that there was little prospect of getting the 'whole-hearted, enthusiastic support' from Churchill that was essential for SLEDGEHAMMER.⁶⁸

Nonetheless they doggedly submitted a memorandum demanding the execution of such an operation by October 15 at the latest.⁶⁹ They also wanted an American general designated as task force commander now. By general consent the choice fell on General Marshall himself. (Roosevelt subsequently vetoed this, as that would probably bring the national hero General Douglas MacArthur to Washington as Marshall's successor, which the president wanted to avoid.)⁷⁰

It seems probable that there was a secret communication between Churchill and Roosevelt at this time, because on July 22 the Americans in

London suddenly received explicit instructions from the president to work out some other offensive operation for American ground forces in 1942 after all. He suggested an attack on Algiers and Morocco, or failing that the old GYMNAST operation, but confined initially to American troops only; or even northern Norway, or Egypt, or Iran to the Caucasus.⁷¹

It is perhaps a coincidence that on this date, July 22, 1942 the Nazis unscrambled a transatlantic radio telephone conversation between Churchill in London and a 'Butcher' in New York who had 'phoned him. The transcript – which was at once rushed by S.S. teleprinter to Hitler – did not make much sense. Churchill may well have been using pre-arranged code phrases, like Hopkins to Roosevelt.

CHURCHILL: Give my regards to Berdy please.

BUTCHER: Yes I will. Did you see the picture in *London Review* ?

CHURCHILL: Yes.

BUTCHER: I heard she's much better and looks ten years younger.

CHURCHILL: I find her looking very good too. In her feelings [*Gefühlen*] too. So now come back quickly and I wish you a lot of luck.

BUTCHER: Thank you. Same to you.⁷²

It is not improbable that Churchill's M.I. 5 was also wiretapping the private conversations of the American generals. He certainly knew that he held the winning hand in this contest of will-powers. At their closing discussion at three P.M. on July 22 he solidly backed his chiefs of staff against the Americans, and refused to endorse SLEDGEHAMMER or indeed to consider any invasion operation directed against the French coastline in 1942.⁷³ It was always easy, he conceded, to assemble arguments against any scheme of daring, and he himself disliked adopting such a negative attitude; nevertheless he felt that SLEDGEHAMMER would be unlikely to provoke the Germans into drawing strength off the eastern front. The Germans, he remarked, 'had the knack of calculating these things to a nicety.' The time had now come, he felt, to report to his own cabinet and to President Roosevelt that they had failed to reach agreement.

In effect he had called the Americans' bluff about throwing all they had into the Pacific war. Realising this, Hopkins urged that it was imperative 'that no breath of this disagreement should get noised abroad.' The bull-headed Admiral King, still fighting, suggested that the misgivings about SLEDGEHAMMER were equally valid against Britain's other cross-Channel

proposal, ROUND-UP. Churchill however, declared himself as ardent a believer in ROUND-UP as he was an opponent of SLEDGEHAMMER. The latter endeavour would, he felt, devour what he called 'the seed corn' of the larger, later operation.⁷⁴ He warned that if the Americans clung to their plan it might well develop into a serious bone of contention between them. This was a difficult argument to set aside. He would report to the war cabinet that afternoon, he continued, and would obtain their reactions by seven P.M.; in all probability, he confidently predicted, the cabinet would confirm his views, as indeed its members shortly did.⁷⁵

Overnight, a telegram went from Marshall to Washington reporting that the British cabinet was flatly refusing to go along with SLEDGEHAMMER. When Stimson, a determined advocate of frontal cross-Channel assault, took this into Roosevelt's bedroom, the president feigned disappointment; Stimson sneered that Churchill's government was fatigued and defeatist – it was now blocking the help offered by a young and vigorous nation whose strength had not yet been sapped. In a letter written later that day he reminded the president that the British were thus breaking the promise they had given in June to go along at least until mid-September with planning for a cross-Channel invasion.⁷⁶ He even wanted the president to instruct Marshall to rope in General de Gaulle to put pressure on Churchill, but that less than productive idea was soon abandoned. A few days later Henry Stimson finally gathered from Fleet Admiral William D. Leahy, who had become the president's chief of staff, that their master, the president, was now paying only lip service to BOLERO OR SLEDGEHAMMER: like Churchill's, his heart was already set on French North-West Africa.⁷⁷

AS THE French say, *faute de mieux on couche avec sa femme*. Making a virtue out of necessity, but with bad grace, on the evening of July 24 General George C. Marshall telegraphed from London to Washington advising that he and Hopkins now agreed that the main 1942 operation should be a descent on French North-West Africa, not France itself.⁷⁸

Marshall's staff drafted a note to the British accepting that SLEDGEHAMMER was off, except as might be necessary for the purposes of deception; that preparations for a 1943 ROUND-UP invasion of France should go ahead; that the bombing of Germany should continue; and that if the eastern front should seem likely to collapse, they should stage an invasion of North and North-West Africa, now code-named TORCH, before December 1942, instead of ROUND-UP.

Roosevelt cabled back accepting their advice, stipulating however that TORCH was to take place no later than October 30. (He wanted to have a military victory to influence the mid-term U.S. elections a few days later.) 'Tell Former Naval Person I am delighted that decision is made. We will go ahead full speed. Emphasise absolute necessity secrecy.'⁷⁹ Churchill responded, 'Hurrah! Full speed ahead.' Marshall called Eisenhower up to his suite at Claridge's that afternoon and sourly told him about TORCH, adding that as the Americans were to supply most of the assault troops the task force must have an American task force commander.⁸⁰

Military Washington remained in uproar for several weeks at this fresh victory by the perfidious English. Stimson felt that it was an 'evil' decision, and that they were now heading for a disaster in North Africa. Marshall's deputy, General Joseph McNarney, Henry Stimson, and General 'Hap' Arnold continued to argue in favour of switching all effort to the Pacific instead.⁸¹

IN LONDON a very stuffy reply arrived from Stalin to Churchill's wordy explanation of the PQ17 disaster. Maisky brought it round to him late on the twenty-third; hearing of their stormy interview from Churchill the next day, Eden explained that this was only to be expected. The prime minister asked him to see Maisky and the American ambassador.

'Gil' Winant was particularly critical of Britain's failure to open a Second Front. Eden reminded him that, since even the visiting Americans were not suggesting undertaking any cross-Channel operation before October, it would be too little and too late to help Russia. Although he could offer no counter-arguments, Winant remained obstinate. Eden had never seen him so put out. 'I told him,' he privately recorded, '[that] we both knew American contribution must be of the smallest this year.' Winant made no secret of his dislike of the proposed descent on French North-West Africa.⁸²

At five P.M. Churchill briefed the cabinet on the Anglo-American talks. 'They seem to be going well,' wrote Eden, 'tho' the report is an obscure document.'⁸³ The cabinet considered Stalin's rude message to be unworthy of reply.

OUTWARDLY STILL the best of allies, the Americans and their hosts cruised down the River Thames by barge in the soft evening light that Friday July 24 – past the bomb-damaged, gap-toothed skyline of the City and East End to Greenwich, proprietor of the world's meridian, for a dinner held in the

centuries-old Painted Hall in honour of Admiral King. They ended with a sing-song in the officers' gunroom with the First Lord of the Admiralty strumming at the piano. For an hour A. V. Alexander conducted the singing, surrounded by the Royal Navy's 'snotties' (midshipmen), admirals, and Wrens. Knowing that he had outwitted his transatlantic visitors, Churchill joined in lustily; in fact it was the most cheerful party that Martin had seen for a long time. As the former U.S. chief of naval operations – now commander of U.S. naval forces in Europe – Admiral 'Betty' Stark entertained the assembled company to a rendering of *Annie Laurie*, in the words of the prime minister's private secretary 'even the grim Admiral King thawed.'⁸⁴

The bonhomie was but a mask. Three days later, back in Washington DC, General Marshall and Brigadier-General Walter Bedell Smith, shortly to become Eisenhower's chief of staff, gave to Henry Stimson a résumé on all that they had seen: 'The British leaders,' sneered Bedell Smith, 'have lost their nerve.'⁸⁵ In Marshall's bemedalled breast there still flickered a faint hope that public opinion would force Churchill to abandon the disastrous idea of TORCH, and launch a 'real' Second Front in France.⁸⁶ Admiral King's contempt for the British was now complete. He gave Admiral Cunningham, now head of the British naval delegation in Washington, a very stormy ride on Britain's request for American submarines for the Mediterranean – 'he was abominably rude,' reported Cunningham privately, 'and I had to be quite firm to him.' The American chiefs of staff had returned from their talks in London with a feeling of exasperation, particularly on the army side. None of them was keen on TORCH. 'I am quite sure,' wrote Cunningham, 'that [Admiral] King is dead against it.'⁸⁷



With his bothersome visitors now departed, Churchill rang up Eden on Sunday July 26 to boast that he had ultimately sold them on TORCH. There was to be no cross-Channel operation for the time being. The decision, he triumphed, had been unanimous, even enthusiastic.

'I only hope it is right,' noted Eden dubiously in his diary. 'W[inston] maintains that our staffs are really keen. I hope so, they have a habit of running out at the last.' They discussed the deception tactics necessary to safeguard TORCH, and Eden urged his master not to say anything about it to the 'Grand Parade,' as he superciliously called the rest of the cabinet, when it met the next day.⁸⁸

They had to do something somewhere. Auchinleck's attack, which had begun on July 22, had failed to penetrate Rommel's still unsteady line facing him at Alamein. After a ten P.M. meeting of the chiefs of staff on July 28 to discuss all their worries – Madagascar, Rangoon, the PQ convoys – Brooke recorded with much sympathy:

P.M. in very depressed mood as result of Auk's second attack being repulsed. Pouring out questions as to why Auk could not have done this or that and never giving him the least credit for doing the right thing. He is quite heart-breaking to work for. It is very trying having to fight battles to defend the Auk, when I am myself doubtful at times why on earth he does not act differently.⁸⁹

It was at this time that the prime minister's son Randolph arrived back in England to convalesce from his car crash injuries, having flown a seventeen-thousand mile roundabout route from Cairo in a B-24 Liberator; he had passed through Washington a couple of days earlier, made contact there with Roosevelt and Stimson, then flown on via Montréal to Prestwick.⁹⁰ He had written a useful memorandum on the need for the Eighth Army's next commander to be a tank man – Churchill had lunched with the failed commander General Ritchie on the eighteenth – and gave his father a vivid verbal account of the confusion and incompetence in Cairo which matched much of what young Julian Amery had already said.⁹¹

Randolph's report was surely what finally decided his father to fly out to Cairo himself. He had certainly reached that decision by late on the twenty-ninth. He had invited the cabinet to dine with the king at eight-thirty P.M. that evening in the garden room, its roof propped up against air raids by steel stanchions. He had even conjured up for his guests a Jeroboam of champagne. ('In the course of dinner,' Lord Halifax informed his diary, 'Winston told us that he had drunk a pint of champagne on the average every night since he was twenty-one. This seems a wonderful record.')

Eden, sitting next to the prime minister, was dismayed when Churchill now once again started talking of flying out to Cairo; at first he paid little heed, since he and Bracken had already once talked the P.M. out of the idea.⁹² After His Majesty had left, however, at midnight the prime minister jovially announced, 'Well, now that we're all together we might just settle one or two things in cabinet.' He revealed that he had obtained the king's permission to fly to Egypt on Friday night – in two days' time. Eden now

realised that he was one of the last to know. He saw Attlee sagely nod 'as usual.' Bevin also agreed. Mainly to hold the position Eden raised the question of a physician to accompany Churchill. Churchill claimed that Sir Charles Wilson was already in agreement. His mind was made up: he announced that General Brooke would also have to accompany him, as they would conduct an on-the-spot examination of the Middle East command.

Winston had bowled his cabinet a googly.⁹³ Lord Halifax did not much mind either way; he retired to the Dorchester until one-thirty A.M., and was still doing paperwork when the sirens sounded an air raid warning and the guns in Hyde Park began to fire around two o'clock – the Luftwaffe was raiding the Midlands.⁹⁴ Winston's several heirs apparent were however thunderstruck. As Cripps, Eden, and Anderson left No. 10, they put their heads together on the famous doorstep. All agreed that they didn't much like the plan, noted Eden: 'Stafford undertook to go back to W. to talk Yellow Fever & we agreed to return to the charge at cabinet tomorrow.'⁹⁵

DURING THE night however a personal telegram arrived from Sir Archibald Clark-Kerr, their ambassador in Moscow. Perhaps it was no coincidence; at any rate, it urged the prime minister to pay an early visit to Stalin to discuss the Second Front.

Eden saw that this changed things completely and brought it over to No. 10 the next morning; at noon the P.M. sent for the C.I.G.S. and told him they would be flying on from Cairo to see Stalin too. At 12:45 P.M. he informed the cabinet: he assured his colleagues, even before sending off the telegram inviting himself to Russia, that he was to meet Stalin at Astrakhan on the Caspian Sea, and that there were no grounds to worry on account of his health.⁹⁶ Faced with this new *fait accompli* Eden told himself that while he would have argued sternly against flying out to Cairo, a visit to Stalin 'put a different complexion' on things.⁹⁷

Appropriate telegrams were drafted to Roosevelt and Stalin. 'Back at F.O. & in bed,' wrote the long-suffering foreign secretary, 'when summons came from Winston about midnight. Found him with chiefs of staff.' At one A.M. an impassive Soviet ambassador, who had become accustomed to these eccentric hours, was brought in to receive the message to Stalin. Maisky seemed taken aback when he read it. After he had bowed out, the prime minister told Eden once more that he had made his political testament; and this time he revealed that he had told the king that if anything befell him Eden was to carry on.⁹⁸

SUCH A flight under wartime conditions would be a severe test for even a young and healthy person, but Churchill was approaching sixty-eight. Since the 'planes were not pressurised, he had to go to Farnborough to be tested for high altitudes; he sat in a pressure chamber while air was pumped out to simulate flying at fifteen thousand feet. He felt slight pain, but otherwise passed the test. One of the Farnborough scientists even designed for him a special oxygen mask which would enable him to keep smoking his cigar. It would have burned like a Roman candle if he had ever tried it, of course, but as he had once said, 'Never forget your trademark.' He was ever-conscious of the need to preserve image.

Despite the urgent preparations for this new mission, he made time on the eve of his departure to see the editor of *The New York Herald Tribune*, Geoffrey Parsons. It struck Parsons that while the prime minister cared nothing for public opinion – he expressed disdain at 'the noisy clamour of the communists' for a Second Front – he was deeply concerned about his popularity, which was something else. He brought out bulging albums with all the press clippings about him.⁹⁹ According to another newspaperman, there was even a chart displayed at No. 10 recording the levels of applause when newsreels of him were shown in cinemas; this had fallen off in recent months.¹⁰⁰ (After the Atlantic conference American military Intelligence noted an increase in 'a rather promiscuous booing and hissing' by army audiences when newsreels showed Roosevelt, Churchill, and General Marshall together.¹⁰¹)

Something of this public cynicism had rubbed off on his colleagues. Sir Archibald Sinclair, one of his oldest friends, remarked in private that Churchill was trying to be both warlord and war historian, both Marlborough and Macaulay.¹⁰² None of them could understand the lingering friendship with Lord Beaverbrook either; Ernest Bevin warned repeatedly that he would resign if Churchill made any attempt to bring Max back into the government.¹⁰³ Eden noted similar fears expressed by many M.P.s. Churchill however confessed to the young foreign secretary, 'That man stimulates me.'¹⁰⁴ It was as though Beaverbrook were a narcotic, a habit he could not kick, and the addiction was mutual. 'Churchill remains predominant,' Beaverbrook would admit, a trifle wistfully, that summer. 'He has no critics, he has no rivals. . . His critics serve only, in the main, to fortify him in the affection of the public. For when the people compare the critics with the object of their criticism they have no doubt which they prefer.'¹⁰⁵

THERE WERE important messages to be sent before they left. Perplexed that he had still not received a reply to his 'former naval person' message to Roosevelt, Churchill cabled to Field-Marshal Dill that he was sure that the president's wish was 'full steam ahead' on TORCH at the earliest possible moment. 'We regard this as decided absolutely with over-riding priority. No-one here is thinking of anything else. You should ask to see President urgently.'¹⁰⁶ He impatiently phoned the embassy in Grosvenor-square, and when the Americans could not help he put a phone call through to his own embassy in Washington. Sir Ronald Campbell assured him he had sent the telegram straight over to Sumner Welles. Winston choked. 'Why the state department?' he snapped. 'I am not at all sure that I want them to know about it.' And, 'What has Mr Welles got to do with it?' He hung on to the instrument while Washington delved deeper. Eventually Campbell came back on the line and explained that the President had 'not been up' when the envelope reached Hyde Park, his country home, and his secretaries had not liked to disturb him. This did not please Churchill at all. 'Well you won't do it again, will you,' he barked.¹⁰⁷ He then 'phoned Roosevelt himself. It was only now that the president bothered to read the telegram.

The whole episode highlighted the unorthodox manner of Winston's contacts with his great American friend. Had the telegram been sent through the U.S. ambassador, it would not have touched the state department, Winant pointed out, and would have been delivered within four hours; but it seemed that Winston did not want to send every message through Winant either.¹⁰⁸ When Eden volunteered that the White House might have a secure phone line between Washington and Hyde Park, Churchill did not like the idea either: 'It is very dangerous,' he noted to the foreign secretary. 'I always try to use the American embassy in London as the channel. But sometimes it is necessary to use the British Embassy, Washington. They must do the best they can.'¹⁰⁹ The president now told Campbell that he thought Churchill's plans were 'quite exciting' and 'a good thing,' which sounded a bit *1066 and All That*; he also added that the Russians needed it.¹¹⁰

This time Stalin replied to Churchill with greater alacrity, insisting however that they meet in Moscow, not Astrakhan.¹¹¹ Churchill radioed ahead to General Auchinleck advising of his forthcoming visit, with Smuts and Wavell coming to Cairo too. His draft said, 'I am suggesting to Gort that he should also come for a day or two;' that was blue-pencilled, but not the closing sentence: 'Let nothing take your eye off the ball.'¹¹² In his reply

Auchinleck revealed that Rommel had now consolidated his line at Alamein, and no British attack would be possible before mid-September. This signal was unfortunately timed; Churchill read it to his cabinet on August 1, the day of his departure, and added that the moment had come for changes in the Middle East and particularly in the command of the Eighth Army.¹¹³

For a while after that cabinet meeting they sat around, lunching in the sunlit garden of No. 10 – Winston and Clementine, with Beaverbrook and Brendan Bracken, the ‘terrible Bs,’ and the prime minister’s brother Jack too. When Winston teasingly revealed his coming odyssey to Beaverbrook, the press lord suggested that he might travel as far as Cairo and investigate what was wrong with the ‘muscle-bound’ British army there. It was not a bad idea; Churchill drew Eden aside after luncheon to discuss it with him. Eden, already stricken with envy at his master’s journey, advised against it. Winston agreed that the generals would probably not endure Max in Cairo but – and this says much about their relationship – he still felt he might be of help in Russia. ‘I like to have a pal with me,’ was how he put it.

Eden sniffed that Russia wasn’t likely to be all that difficult, and anyway the prime minister would have their ambassador Archie Clark-Kerr out there, and Sir Alexander Cadogan too. Max, he reminded Churchill, was an object of suspicion and downright hatred to many; it might be wiser in times like these not to flout the opinions of colleagues and friends. Churchill was not easily convinced. ‘Let me know when you want M.,’ Eden mocked resignedly, ‘and I will pack him off after you.’

Brendan Bracken hinted that he wanted to go as well as Max.

Churchill replied ‘I may yet wire for M&B!’ – a witty allusion to a May & Baker sulphonamide drug on which he was heavily dependent. There was much laughter, on which note they parted.¹¹⁴

A letter now came by messenger from the king, wishing his first minister Godspeed on his arduous journey, and signing himself ‘your very sincere and grateful friend.’¹¹⁵ Churchill replied in his own hand, conscious that fate might determine that this was his last letter to his monarch. ‘I wish indeed,’ he apologised in this letter, ‘that it had been in my power to bring about earlier & more decisive success. But the ultimate result is sure.’

Preparing the king for what was to come, he confessed himself shocked by Auchinleck’s latest cable. ‘In Russia too the materials for a joyous meeting are meagre indeed.’¹¹⁶

Part III: **GIVING THE
DEVIL HIS DUE**

1942–1943

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24: *A Visit to the Ogre in His Den*

ON THE FIRST day of August 1942, a Saturday, the prime minister left on his great adventure. Flying a long and hazardous route which skirted around enemy-occupied Europe to Cairo and then on to Moscow, he would be away from Downing-street for twenty-four days. This time he was taking Leslie Rowan as his personal private secretary. As he was helped into his car he made a friendly V-sign to the devoted female secretaries crowding the upper windows of No. 10; each was sure he had waved just to her.¹ 'I admire his courage and determination more than I could ever tell you,' wrote one of them in a letter to her parents.²

At Lyneham in Wiltshire, the R.A.F. airfield of embarkation, a message awaited him, 'phoned through from London: Sir John Dill reported that the Americans were now saying that by accepting TORCH for 1942 the Allies were ruling out all possibility of executing ROUND-UP, the cross-Channel invasion, until not just 1943 but 1944.³ Nor were the Americans happy that he had arranged to see Stalin without them. They rapidly arranged for Averell Harriman to fly out to join him in Cairo. In fact Churchill had urged this on Roosevelt a few days earlier, explaining: 'I feel things would be easier if we all seemed to be together. I have a somewhat raw job.'⁴

Churchill was helped up the ladder into the B-24 Liberator. This plane, named 'Commando,' would be piloted by an American, Captain William J. Vanderkloot. It was draughty and uncomfortable, neither heated nor sound-proofed, and its passenger facilities were primitive. A couple of mattresses with heaps of blankets were laid on shelves above the bomb bay. Churchill took one shelf, his doctor the other. His staff were assigned to various seats affixed along the fuselage of this Liberator and a second plane. They ate picnic meals and drank from Thermos flasks, then Churchill took a sleeping potion and settled down for the night.

As they landed at Gibraltar next morning an Andalusian heatwave was baking the Rock's airstrip, R.A.F. North Front. At the Convent – the Crown Colony's picturesque, white-painted Government House – the prime minister lay on a bed in his undershorts and declaimed for a while to Cadogan and Brooke. The latest *BONIFACE* supplied by Bletchley Park revealed Rommel's worsening supply plight; the Nazi field-marshal had received fifty anti-tank guns during July, and seventy-five more were on their way, but the *Afrika Korps* was down to 130 tanks, of which only ninety were serviceable.⁵ Churchill cursed Auchinleck for his timidity.

They took off again at six P.M., and flew on over North Africa for fourteen hours, skirting the desert battlefields, before heading north-east toward Cairo. As was many an old man's custom, he went forward into the second pilot's seat to watch the sun rise for one more time. Seeing its rays glittering on the uneven ribbon of the Nile brought home to him that he himself was now the 'man on the spot.' Instead of fretting at Downing-street, waiting for telegrams, he would be sending home those telegrams himself.⁶

They landed at eight A.M. – it was now August 3 and a hot but breezy day – and found the British ambassador Sir Miles Lampson and the principal Cairo officers paraded to meet them.⁷ Churchill moved into Lampson's embassy, taking over the only two air-conditioned rooms, including the ambassador's study. He had no pity on the diplomats; he did not think too highly of these local English, expressing profound contempt (from the safety of No. 10) for their panic when Rommel had been advancing. Even Dick Casey had blotted his copybook, by advising people to flee and sending Mrs Casey off by plane; Lady Lampson had indignantly refused to leave with her, but one trained foreign office eye noticed that even so her husband had put most of his Chinese treasures into safe storage.⁸

For a day Churchill recovered from the flight, sitting for many hours in the cool shade of a flame-flowered tree in the British embassy garden. Fortunately, Field-Marshal Smuts arrived from Pretoria – one of the few men on earth whom the prime minister really respected, as Cadogan wrote in a letter home, and one to whom he would listen.⁹ The C.I.G.S. did not always come into that category: from the moment they arrived here General Brooke found his attempts to clear his own mind as to what changes were necessary hampered by 'Winston's impetuosity.'¹⁰ At five-thirty P.M. General Auchinleck, unaware that the axe was about to fall, came to confer with them, apologising that he could not stay for dinner as he had to get back to the battle down the road. Field-Marshal Wavell flew in from India.

Before Churchill told them all in confidence about TORCH, General Brooke explored the possibility that Hitler's armies might reach the Persian Gulf, the source of Britain's oil; the chiefs of staff had concluded, he advised, that they might have to evacuate Egypt and all North Africa, because without oil they could not continue the war there. In Moscow therefore they would have to find out how strong the Russians were in the Caucasus. There was no hint in Churchill's conference with Smuts and Wavell on this day, August 4, of any coming operation against Dieppe: indeed, Brooke set out all the reasons for rejecting any plan for operations in Northern France in 1942 – they would neither oblige Hitler to withdraw forces from the east, nor 'serve as a preliminary to the invasion,' since in his view they could not maintain a landing force in France during the winter.¹¹

Dinner was quiet, dominated if not enlivened by Churchill's monologues.¹² He found the rare combination of fierce desert sunshine and cool breeze so invigorating that he needed less sleep than usual. He went to bed at one-thirty and was up again at five on August 5. A Douglas DC-3 flew him to the Alamein front – it was significant how far American-built planes like this Dakota were already taking over these transport duties.

Churchill and Brooke followed different routes to the front. 'Both came back,' reported one of the P.M.'s staff, 'with faces like boots.'¹³ From Randolph's report and young Amery too he had already formed a mental picture of what to expect – of poor troop morale and army officers lingering far behind the lines (the 'gabardine swine,' as one wit had termed them).

General Auchinleck lived a spartan life, and his forward headquarters could not provide Churchill with his accustomed morning meal but only a snack of canned beef and biscuits eaten in 'a wire-netted cube, full of flies and important military personages,' and washed down with, of all things, tea.¹⁴ Glowering with the silent rage that speaks of lack of oral gratification, the prime minister drove off with Lieutenant-General Gott to visit the headquarters of Air Vice-Marshal 'Mary' Coningham's Desert Air Force.*

The car bringing their packed lunches from the Shepherd's Hotel became lost in the desert; when it was eventually found Churchill's spirits rose. Writing four years later he still recalled the picnic meal that ensued as 'a gay occasion in the midst of care – a real oasis in a very large desert.'¹⁵

A letter came out to Cairo from Clementine. Written on the fourth, it revealed her worries about this long journey on which her husband had

* The name was an affectionate corruption of 'Maori.'

embarked. She was thinking of him always, she wrote, and was praying that he could solve the Middle East problem of 'stultification or frustration or what is it?' Soon, Mrs Churchill reminded him, he would be embarking on the more dramatic and sensational part, 'your visit to the Ogre in his Den.'¹⁶

HE HAD already fixed in his mind the forty-three-year-old Gott as the new commander for the Eighth Army; perhaps facing a general called 'Gott' would give Rommel's soldiers something extra to fear. Brooke opposed the choice, murmuring to Winston that this general was already exhausted, but he did not press the point.¹⁷ 'I convinced myself,' the P.M. wrote, replying to Clementine a few days later, 'of his high ability [and] charming simple personality and that he was in no way tired, as was alleged.'¹⁸

The real rat-heap was the Middle East command itself. It seemed that General Auchinleck had lost confidence, particularly in himself. His officers were constantly looking over their shoulders toward prepared positions to which to retreat, as one of Churchill's staff stated a few days later.

The units at the front were hopelessly mixed up. The Auk had 180 generals on his staff. . . We should, of course, have hit Rommel hard when he reached his furthest point of advance.¹⁹

Churchill's first instinct had been to turn over command of the Middle East, 'the whole of this vast but baffled and somewhat unhinged organisation,' to General Brooke himself; perhaps this was why he had insisted on the C.I.G.S. coming out with him. Brooke agonised over the offer, then turned it down; he was happy where he was, he said. 'I knew nothing about desert warfare,' he wrote that day, 'and could never have time to grip hold of the show to my satisfaction before the necessity to attack became imperative.'²⁰ (Of course the same held true for men like Montgomery.)

Churchill cabled his final proposals to London late on Thursday the sixth – it amounted to a purge, indeed a massacre, of the Middle East generals, beginning with Auchinleck himself. He wanted him replaced as commander-in-chief by General Sir Harold Alexander, currently commanding the First Army in England, whose headquarters was working under Eisenhower on TORCH.²¹ 'A decision has now become most urgent,' he cabled to London the next day, not having had a reply, 'since Alexander has already started [from England] and Auchinleck has, of course, no inkling of what is in prospect.'²² Gott would take over the Eighth Army. Characteristically unwilling

to look the condemned man in the eye, he told Colonel Jacob to fly out the next day to Auchinleck's desert headquarters taking the letter of dismissal; in this letter he offered the general a new command comprising Iraq and Iran, with headquarters in Basra or Baghdad.²³ 'I felt as if I were just going to murder an unsuspecting friend' wrote Jacob in his diary, but he plunged the hand-written dagger into Auchinleck as he had been bidden.²⁴

Auchinleck came in to Cairo on the ninth and had a showdown with General Brooke. He demanded to know why he was being sacked. Brooke said that it was 'mainly lack of confidence.'²⁵ It is not surprising that Auchinleck turned down the new position offered to him.

Not everybody liked his replacement, Alexander. He had had little chance to display his finer qualities as a soldier. He had presided over the British withdrawals from both France and Burma, which might not augur well for Egypt.²⁶ Some regarded him as a typical 'brave, brainless Guardsman with beautifully burnished boots.'²⁷ London agreed however that the Cairo officers had become corrupted by the atmosphere out there. 'The trade union of generals is very strong,' remarked Eden's secretary. 'It has taken three major defeats and a personal visit of the P.M. to break it.'²⁸

THERE WERE other minor affairs to attend to in Egypt, including an audience of the young King Faroukh on August 6. On the next day an Indian prince called to pay respects, feeling perhaps a trifle outlandish in his high turban with the attached panache of gauze; he registered, as Cadogan wrote to his wife, 'practically no surprise at all' when he encountered the prime minister dressed in his rompers and a ten-gallon Mexican style sun-hat.²⁹

Churchill went down to a secluded local beach for a quick splash in the surf dressed in rather less than this. No sooner had he returned than Colonel Jacob stopped him in the hotel and froze him with the blunt message, 'This is bad about Gott.' German fighter planes had shot down the general's humble Bombay troop-carrier plane, flying in from the battlefield to Cairo that afternoon, and he had burned to death in the crash.³⁰ Churchill went into dinner half an hour late with thunder on his brow. It was, wrote one guest, such rotten luck, meaning for the prime minister; Churchill wondered if it did not mean there had been some treachery – a half-echo of the Colonel Fellers incident – since he had made no secret of the general's forthcoming appointment.³¹ He sat speechless with dismay throughout the meal, leaving the unwitting American general sitting at his left baffled by his own seeming unpopularity.³² Eventually Churchill remarked cryptically

to Colonel Jacob: 'Tragic as the death of Gott may be, it may well be to our advantage in the long run.'³³

His first instinct that evening was to give the Eighth Army command to the paunchy, slothful General Sir Maitland 'Jumbo' Wilson; backed by Smuts, Brooke spoke out for the appointment of Lieutenant-General Sir Bernard Montgomery instead.³⁴ Up to this moment, Montgomery had been earmarked to replace Alexander at First Army in England. Only that day he was being briefed by a brigadier in London on the need to bludgeon General Eisenhower into drawing up an operational plan for TORCH, as the chiefs of staff had failed to impress him with its urgency. At seven A.M. on the eighth however the war office instructed Montgomery to proceed post-haste to Egypt instead.³⁵ He would arrive in the heat of mid-summer Cairo, a few days later, still wearing a heavy British serge battledress uniform.

Like Alexander, Montgomery had been at Dunkirk; indeed, as Eden's secretary wrote when this choice was notified to London, 'Monty' had the reputation of being not only a ruthless soldier – but 'an unspeakable cad.'³⁶ It was a widely held view. Churchill would sum him up a year later as 'unforgettable in defeat, and insufferable in victory.'³⁷ 'If he is disagreeable to those about him,' he wrote privately, clearly echoing the whispered comments all around, 'he is also disagreeable to the enemy.'³⁸ He cabled to the war cabinet: 'Pray send him by special plane at earliest moment.'³⁹

WITH HIS OWN bloody deeds thus done, Churchill stayed on in Cairo for a few more days, visiting units and inspiring them for the somewhat bloodier tasks to come. 'Rommel, Rommel, Rommel!' he cried to Colonel Jacob, walking up and down. 'What else matters but beating him! Instead of which, C.-in-C. Middle East sits in Cairo attending to things which a Minister, or a Quartermaster, could deal with.'⁴⁰ Before flying on he dictated a long letter to Clementine, rehearsing why it had been so necessary for him to come out here.* 'This splendid army,' he wrote, 'about double as strong as the enemy, is baffled and bewildered by its defeats.' Rommel was living from hand to mouth, his army's life hanging by a thread; yet the British troops facing him were beset by a mental apathy and exhaustion, which only strong new hands could dispel. Fortunately he had been able to draw upon the magnificent counsel of Smuts. 'He fortified me where I am inclined to be tender-hearted, namely in using severe measures against people I like.'

*Sir Martin Gilbert reproduces this letter in full on pages 167–9 of his vol. vii.

He described the inspection by himself and Averell Harriman of the British soldiers training on their handful of battle-scarred tanks while waiting for the Grants and Shermans which were promised to arrive from America.⁴¹ ‘Yesterday I spent six hours with the four armoured brigades that are all preparing, and are a magnificent well-trained resolute body of men thirsting for action,’ he related to Clementine. ‘I told them (in seven speeches) how the president had given me Shermans;* how the Navy were bringing them as fast as possible and how in a few weeks they would be the most powerful and best equipped armoured force of its size in the world.’⁴²

Casting his mind forward to the unquestionably fraught meetings awaiting him at the Kremlin, on August 10 he telegraphed to Attlee about how important it was to run more PQ convoys in September; he must be able to hold out this prospect to Stalin.⁴³ Then he penned a famous directive to General Sir Harold Alexander, instructing the new commander-in-chief: ‘Yr. prime and main duty will be to take or destroy at the earliest opportunity the German–Italian Army commanded by Field-Marshal Rommel.’⁴⁴



He concluded his long typescript letter to Clementine with the handwritten message, ‘Tender love my dearest. This should reach you in 48 hours. I hope then to be in Moscow. As always, your ever loving husband. W.’

His R.A.F. Liberator took off for Teheran after midnight on August 11. His party had swollen to include Wavell, who spoke Russian, and Air Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder, for whose presence there was less real purpose; General Brooke was probably right in deducing that Churchill felt it increased his dignity to be surrounded by generals, admirals, and air marshals.⁴⁵

Unfortunately, without Winston’s being asked, Commander Thompson had delayed the take-off by an hour, to enable them to see the sun rise over Baghdad, and they arrived too late in the Iranian capital to fly straight on to Moscow that same morning, as they would have to fly through the gap in the mountains and traverse the central plains of Iran in daylight. Annoyed at this upset to his plans, Churchill went into Teheran and lunched with the Shah. The young and evidently intelligent ruler professed undying allegiance to the Allied cause.⁴⁶ A conference followed with the Americans on their demand to take over the running of the Iranian railway system from the

* See page 459.

British. Churchill saw only the friction that this would cause, but according to one member of his party 'the atmosphere of deck chairs and whisky and soda in the garden was not very conducive to taking decisions, and the Prime Minister's brain was not working at its best on account of the continuous hooting of the Iranian motor-cars on the road outside.' The Iranian prime minister shortly arrived for an audience, but the 'main topic of conversation was the hooting' – Churchill urging an immediate ban on hooting in the capital. After it emerged that British railway trains could not be driven by any man with less than fifteen years' experience, Churchill spent some time ribbing Harriman – heir to a railroad fortune – and suggested that nobody improved at their own job after two years.⁴⁷

He fled the noisy building that night, and moved to the summer legation at Gul Hek a thousand feet higher up in the hills. He cabled from here to Mrs Churchill to say that 'MR GREEN' was recuperating in a delightful Persian garden. Even as he rested, word arrived that the latest convoy to Malta, operation PEDESTAL, had come under air and submarine attack. Escorted by two battleships, three aircraft-carriers, seven cruisers and thirty-two destroyers, the fourteen merchantmen were attempting to reach Malta from the west. Admiral Pound shortly signalled him: 'PEDESTAL according to plan except that [aircraft-carrier] *Eagle* was sunk by U-boat south of Balearic islands. Tomorrow Wednesday is the crucial day.' Worries never left him.

He resumed his flight to Moscow at six-thirty A.M. Russian wireless operators had joined the Liberator crews. The countryside beneath his plane gradually changed from desert to a verdant jungle green. Their route took them far to the east, well away from the leading German units hammering south-eastwards into the Caucasus, and then northward toward Moscow.

A welcoming committee of Soviet functionaries had gathered with a luncheon spread out in a marquee on the airfield at Kuibyshev; but having lost its way the R.A.F. Liberator thundered on without stopping. It landed at five P.M. somewhere west of Moscow on an airfield where Churchill found Molotov waiting with a supporting cast of commissars and generals including Marshal B. M. Shaposhnikov, chief of the Soviet general staff. On the drive into the Soviet capital he could not help noticing that the window glass of Molotov's armour-plated limousine was two inches thick, which was certainly thicker than he or Eden had so far found necessary.

HE WAS to be housed at a dacha half an hour's drive outside the capital, along the road to Smolensk; it sounded delightful, but it was in fact State

Villa Number Seven, a new, flat-roofed concrete bungalow, painted green, with several acres of gardens and lavish appointments including a vulgarly furnished bunker a hundred yards from the main building, with marbled walls and light-coloured wood panelling, refrigerators, and two elevators to convey its occupants the seventy or eighty feet below ground. The bungalow itself was surrounded by a double stockade fifteen feet high and had a goldfish pond that took the P.M. back to Chartwell in his mind's eye.⁴⁸

The security guards were provided by the N.K.V.D., the Soviet secret police, while the waiters were ancient English-speaking relics of Tsarist hotels. In the dining-room Churchill found various sideboards laden with every delicacy and liquid stimulant that supreme power could command. He would have fond memories of this room. 'I was conducted,' he described, 'through a spacious reception room to a bedroom and bathroom of almost equal size.' He longed for a hot bath after the ten-hour flight but announced that he would pay an immediate courtesy call on Stalin. Curiosity had seized him. A chauffeur drove him along almost deserted roads and over a bridge into the darkened Kremlin building; Churchill took the British ambassador along with him as well as Harriman, and a Major Dunlop as interpreter. He made no attempt to bring in the local American ambassador, Admiral William H. Standley; the admiral, as he later wrote, 'sat vacuously' at his embassy that evening waiting for the call and listening to the dinner-table chatter of four American army generals.⁴⁹

As guards conducted the British party through the Kremlin corridors to the conference chamber, Churchill's eyes swivelled, taking in the scarlet and gold furnishings and the other trappings of Tsarist days. Stalin, suddenly standing before them, was smaller than he had imagined, no taller in fact than Beaverbrook.⁵⁰ Eden had described his movements as being rather cat-like. He appeared a benign old man, with more years on him than the pictures had indicated, soft spoken and often distant in manner; he smelt of scent and his skin had a curious hue, a cadaverous greenish-blue.⁵¹

Those present at this first session – it began around midnight of August 12/13 – were Stalin, Molotov, Marshal K. E. Voroshilov and Ambassador Clark-Kerr, as well as Harriman and the interpreters. The Russians, like the British, took a record which is now available.⁵² Churchill described the first two hours, in a report cabled to London the next day, as 'bleak and sombre.'⁵³ The British record leaves little doubt on this score.⁵⁴ After professing to be not at all tired, he spoke of the changes he had just made in Cairo; he expected the Eighth Army now to win the coming battle, as they had better

equipment and communications than Rommel. They would attack later that month or in September. 'We are confident that we shall conquer the Germans where they stand at the present time' – the Alamein line.⁵⁵

Looking grave at times, as the British notes described, Stalin admitted that things were going badly: 'The enemy is making a tremendous effort to get to Baku and Stalingrad.' He did not understand how the Germans could be gathering together so many troops and tanks 'from all over Europe.'

This was a clear allusion to the need for a Second Front, the part of their meeting that Churchill had been dreading. The prime minister now said that he had come to talk about realities – 'He wished to speak frankly and would like to invite complete frankness from Stalin.' 'Let us,' he said, according to the Russian transcript, 'chat together, like friends.' During Molotov's visit to London, he recalled, he had assured the Russian that he would try to find a means of staging a diversion by attacking the Germans in France, but he had also made it clear to Molotov that he could make no promises for 1942. They had exhaustively examined the problem since then, he said, and they were preparing major operations in 1943.

SO THERE was nothing planned for 1942? As Stalin's face crumpled into a frown, Churchill doggedly added the good news. One million American soldiers were to arrive in England during 1943; but so far there were only two-and-a-half American divisions on British soil. The Allies had enough transport to lift six divisions for an assault on the French coast; but they lacked the shipping to maintain a permanent bridgehead. 'We've gone into the details,' he said. 'Two sites have been reconnoitred. The first operation – on the sector between Dunkirk and Dieppe – would have as its purpose attracting toward France and away from the eastern front the enemy air forces in sufficient strength to make very violent battles possible.' Such air battles, he suggested, were the only benefit expected to accrue from such a raid. This advantage would be purchased however only at the cost of the total destruction of the expeditionary force – 'the enemy would overwhelm us and . . . we would suffer a catastrophe.'

Furthermore, continued Churchill, if he were to make this attack on the Pas de Calais this year he would have to interfere with the great preparations for 1943, taking away key men and using up large numbers of landing-craft and other equipment which he was holding in readiness for 1943. 'Therefore we do not think it would be wise to make any attempt on the Pas de Calais region this year.'

Stalin, the record tells us, now began to look ‘very glum’; he asked if they could not invade the Cherbourg peninsula. Churchill explained that this operation had been ruled out because they could not obtain air superiority at that distance from British bases. The discussion became heated. Once when Stalin said, ‘After all, this is a war,’ the British text shows that Churchill retorted: ‘War is war, but not folly; and it would be folly to invite a disaster which will help nobody.’⁵⁶

Stalin took stock. He wanted to ask Churchill, he said, whether there was to be no Second Front this year, and whether the British government was also declining to land six to eight divisions in France this year.⁵⁷ Churchill quibbled about what Stalin understood by the words Second Front, then admitted that Stalin’s summary was correct. ‘He went on to say,’ reads the British record of this increasingly restless meeting,

that he feared the news he brought was not good news, but he could assure M Stalin that if, by throwing in 150,000 to 200,000 men* we could render him aid by drawing away from the Russian front appreciable German forces, we would not shrink from this course on the grounds of casualties. But if it drew no men away and spoiled the prospects for 1943, it would be a great error.’

He appealed to Harriman to back him up. The American took refuge in the formula that ‘he had nothing to add.’

It irked Churchill that his customary eloquence soon became mired in the stop-go interruptions of the interpreters Pavlov and Major Dunlop: he was listening to Pavlov’s English, while Stalin had to content himself with Dunlop’s Russian; neither interpreter was able to capture their master’s nuances. The interpreters argued between themselves over shades of meaning. Stalin resorted to language that was undiplomatic, tactless, and then insulting. At one point he said: ‘A man who is not prepared to take risks can not win a war.’

Had he known, said Stalin, that Churchill would welsh on the British offer of a 1942 invasion by six divisions, he would have suggested other operations. ‘To make your troops real, they need to pass through fire and cross fire. Until your troops are tested in war no one can say what they are

* The Russian text here is substantially the same, but states that Churchill used figures ten times larger, ‘one-and-a-half to two million men.’⁵⁸

worth.' He, Stalin, would have acted differently in Churchill's place. 'There's no need to be frightened of the Germans.'⁵⁹

Stung by this remark, Churchill retorted that British troops weren't afraid of the Germans. 'If the British can not invade,' Stalin said, 'I shall not insist. I do not agree with your arguments,' he continued, 'but I cannot force you.'

HAVING GOT over the worst, Churchill turned to what he had to offer. Unfurling a map of the Mediterranean, he hinted that there were other theatres where the Allies were preparing new fronts. He talked too of the bombing of Germany. (On this there is no word in the Soviet transcript). What was happening now, he said, was as nothing compared with the offensives beginning in three and six months' time. Stalin showed enthusiasm: 'Yes,' he said, 'and homes as well as factories should be destroyed.' 'Between the two of them,' reported Harriman, writing a few hours later, 'they soon destroyed most of the important industrial cities of Germany.'⁶⁰ Churchill assured the Soviet dictator that he looked upon the morale of the German civil population as 'a military target.' 'We seek no mercy,' he intoned, 'and we shall show no mercy.' Stalin chimed in: 'That is the only way.'

Churchill said that he hoped to wipe out twenty more German cities as he had already shattered Cologne, Lübeck, and Düsseldorf. They had now begun to use four-ton bombs. As he uttered the words, 'We hope to shatter almost every dwelling in almost every German city,' the British noticed that this had a stimulating effect and the atmosphere became more cordial.

'We do not think,' the prime minister now disclosed, preparing to reveal his trump card, 'that France is the only place where a Second Front can be opened.' He had President Roosevelt's authority, he said, to reveal that there was to be a major operation elsewhere, codenamed TORCH, for the seizure of the northern coast of French Africa – 'the whole of it' – from Casablanca and Algiers to Bizerta. Stalin immediately grasped the whole implications of this; he sat bolt upright, began to grin, and eagerly discussed the date of TORCH, its political implications, whether it would force Vichy France and Spain to make common cause with Germany, and the likelihood that the Vichy French forces would offer serious opposition. He also expressed curiosity as to whether they had informed General de Gaulle.

The prime minister said that they had not. The general and his coterie talked too much, he explained. Stalin did not entirely agree, feeling that de Gaulle 'or one of the other French generals' must be brought in. Churchill spelt out the likely outcome of TORCH, including the further oppression by

the Nazis of the Vichy French, which he described as highly desirable. He sketched for Stalin a crocodile, and explained that the snout and armoured head and shoulders were Northern France and Western Europe. 'It would be much easier,' he lisped, 'to strike at the soft underbelly.'⁶¹

'Excellent,' exclaimed Stalin. 'May God prosper this operation.'⁶²

ENCOURAGED BY this display of religious fervour – or was it a mere resort to 'Godstuff' of a Churchillian hue? – Churchill asked Stalin how he would receive the idea of sending an Allied air force to the southern Russian front. 'I would gratefully accept it,' said Stalin, though with less enthusiasm. After talking about deception tactics for TORCH, Churchill revealed – again a passage not included in the Russian minutes – that depending on the weather he intended to spring a surprise raid on the French coast this same month 'in order to seek information and to test the German resistance.' 'We might lose as many as 10,000 men on this operation,' he declared grandly, according to the English transcript; but it 'would be no more than a reconnaissance.'

After nearly four hours' tough talk they went their ways – Stalin still somewhat dismayed, Harriman impressed, Churchill oddly optimistic. 'He knows the worst,' he informed London, 'and we parted in an atmosphere of goodwill.'⁶³ They all drove back to the dacha around five A.M. 'The prime minister,' Harriman telegraphed to President Roosevelt, 'was at his best and could not have handled the discussion with greater brilliance.'⁶⁴

Over the next twenty-four hours the war situation worsened. Hitler's armies swept victoriously onward, thrusting ever deeper into the Caucasus. In the Mediterranean the naval escort battling the PEDESTAL CONVOY through to Malta lost an anti-aircraft ship, a destroyer, and the cruiser *Manchester*, as well as eight of the convoy's freighters, to punishing air attacks. In Moscow, Churchill visited Molotov at midday – it was now August 13 – and briefed him on his talk of the previous evening. Molotov expressed doubts that TORCH would ever take place.⁶⁵ 'He listened affably,' Churchill reported, 'but contributed nothing.'⁶⁶ According to his memoirs, he warned this inscrutable diplomatist: 'Stalin will make a great mistake to treat us roughly when we have come so far.'⁶⁷

Cadogan's party had only just arrived in Moscow, a day late, at 7:30 P.M.; with their original plane forced back by an engine fault, Cadogan and General Brooke had spent an extra day at Teheran. Their Russian Lend-Lease Dakota had first put them down at Kuibyshev, where they had been obliged to eat the day-old banquet missed by Winston the day before. Over

dinner with them now, Churchill told them how the Russians had taken the news that there was to be NO SLEDGEHAMMER. 'Stalin is a peasant, whom I can handle,' he boasted. Air Chief Marshal Tedder was horrified, pointed at the walls, and scrawled a silent warning note in French: '*Méfiez-vous!*' (When General Anders uttered the same warning about hidden microphones the next day, the prime minister would declaim: 'We'll soon deal with that.' Removing the cigar from his mouth to speak more clearly, he said: 'The Russians, I have been told, are not human beings at all. They are lower in the scale of nature than the orang-outang.' He grunted: 'Now let them take that down and translate it into Russian.')

AT THE rather more crowded second meeting with Stalin, which began at eleven P.M. that night, the air was distinctly frostier. The scene this time was a much more sparsely furnished room at the Kremlin.⁶⁹ Two long tables ran down each side of this room, with Stalin's desk at the far end; three paintings graced the walls above the light-coloured half-panelling – Lenin speaking, Lenin sitting, and Karl Marx. Through an open door at the far end they could see a map room, dominated by an enormous globe. Lounging in his chair, and puffing at a large, curly pipe, Stalin handed over a memorandum which he had prepared, summarising in writing the British (and American) refusal to launch a cross-Channel invasion in 1942, and his own inability to change their mind.⁷⁰

Churchill set this document aside and said he would reply in writing; Stalin must however understand that 'reproaches were vain.'⁷¹ After Harriman had discreetly backed him up, Stalin then turned to TORCH. The operation as such, he said, was militarily correct. 'The difference between us,' he said, 'is that the British and Americans regard the Russian front as being only of secondary importance.' TORCH had no direct bearing on the Russian front, and he did not see how the general interest could be served by discussing it further. What upset him was not that supplies had not arrived, but that they had been promised in the first place, with unfortunate results on his own production planning.

Colonel Jacob, called in by Churchill to take minutes after only about ten minutes, as the mood soured, found Stalin talking in a low, gentle voice, occasionally gesturing for emphasis, while never looking Churchill in the eye.⁷² Turning to the PQ17 disaster – in a passage not recorded in the Soviet minutes – Stalin assailed Churchill in the most intemperate language, declaring that this was the first time that the Royal Navy had deserted the

field of battle. 'You British are too much afraid of fighting the Germans,' he taunted. 'If you try it like the Russians you will not find it so bad.'⁷³

Thumping the table, Churchill burst into a spontaneous oration in which he assailed the Russians without mercy: What had they been doing, he demanded, when the British were fighting alone to save the liberties of the world? The Russians had been supplying war goods to the enemy and praying for Britain's defeat.⁷⁴

The outburst lasted, according to Tedder, for five minutes and was delivered with such fluency that Major Dunlop stumbled, unable to keep up with the flow. The P.M. made him repeat each sentence in English to make sure that it was right, and Jacob and Cadogan found themselves rehearsing the unfortunate interpreter in what Churchill had actually just said. Stalin laughed out loud, and finally held up a hand for silence: 'I may not understand your words,' he said to Churchill, 'but by God I like your spirit!'⁷⁵

As for the Arctic convoy operations, Churchill told him that the Allies had no fewer than 'one hundred fully laden freighters . . . the whole problem was how to get them to the Soviet Union.' As the prime minister's temper rose, Stalin interrupted to suggest that higher sacrifices were called for. Ten thousand men a day were being sacrificed on the Russian front. 'We have arrayed against us 280 German divisions of which twenty-five are Panzer divisions with two hundred tanks in each. However we are not crying.'

'We admire the valour of the Russian armies,' responded Churchill, 'and we grieve over their losses. We hope in the course of the war to show that the British and Americans are no laggards and we hope that we are not deficient in valour either, and that we are just as ready as the Russians to spill blood when there is a prospect of success. But oceans, seas, and transportation – these are factors that we cannot ignore.' His temper was roused. 'He declared,' the Russian record continues, 'that he is prepared to sacrifice 100,000 British soldiers in a landing on the coast of France if it might help the Russians.'^{*} He added, 'He wants Stalin to believe in the devotion, sincerity and determination of Britain to fight.'⁷⁶

Mollified by this reiteration of Churchill's willingness to sacrifice his men, Stalin suddenly invited Churchill and Harriman to dine with him on the morrow. It had however been one hell of a row. As they drove back to the embassy at two A.M. Sir Alexander Cadogan tentatively asked, 'Shall I

* On August 15 he wired this eight-word query to Ismay: 'What is the position about renewal of RUTTER?' – Mountbatten's *old* plan to land troops at Dieppe (CAB.120/66).

tell Stalin in confidence that in view of what has happened you are hesitating whether to accept his dinner invitation tomorrow?’

‘No,’ said Churchill. ‘That’s going too far, I think.’⁷⁷ He believed he had got Stalin’s measure now.

HE, HARRIMAN and Colonel Jacob held an inquest into the disastrous meeting as soon as they returned to the villa. What had provoked the insulting tirade from Stalin? Churchill felt that he had got over the worst of their problems the previous evening. He concluded, and he may well have been right, that Stalin was unable to carry the Supreme Soviet with him; he had been speaking as much to the hidden microphones as to the British visitors. Harriman comforted him that Stalin had used just the same ‘hot and cold’ tactics with Lord Beaverbrook the year before.⁷⁸

‘In the public interest,’ the prime minister assured Clement Attlee in what Jacob called ‘a masterly telegram’ to London, ‘I shall go to the dinner.’



The dinner with Stalin would begin at nine P.M. on the fourteenth. It was to be a full-scale Kremlin banquet, held in their honour in the state rooms of Catherine the Great: the square marble pillars were faced with bright green malachite, the walls hung with panels of shot silk. There were about two-score guests, eating a meal of nineteen courses.

Stalin showed up wearing his usual lilac-coloured tunic buttoned to the neck, and cotton trousers stuffed into long leather boots. To Colonel Jacob, this little shambling fellow looked like the kind of peasant one might meet in a country lane with a pickaxe over his shoulder; he seemed out of place at these banquet tables.

After a while Jacob could see that it was developing into the kind of party that the prime minister did not like at all: General Wavell delivered a speech in Russian; Churchill, though placed to Stalin’s right, found himself rather left out as his host waltzed around his generals, clinking glasses and wisecracking in a language of which his other guests had no inkling. Churchill counted thirty-four toasts, a self-perpetuating celebration which soon had even him bored, despite the fast-flowing fiery liquor which it involved.⁷⁹ (‘Silly tales have been told,’ he would write in an unusually defensive passage of his memoirs, ‘of how these Soviet dinners became drinking-bouts. There is no truth whatever in this.’⁸⁰)

Churchill perked up momentarily when Stalin took him into an adjacent room to be photographed. After they had been banqueting for four hours, Stalin suggested they see a movie: appalled by the prospect of a flickering black-and-white Eisenstein epic in a foreign tongue, Churchill made his excuses. 'After a cordial handshake,' he reported a few hours later, 'I then took my departure and got some way down the crowded room but he [Stalin] hurried after me and accompanied me an immense distance through corridors and staircases to the front door where we again shook hands.'⁸¹

Stalin had ragged him mercilessly, however, and as they were driven back to their dacha Cadogan could see that the P.M. had not enjoyed that.

'I don't know what I am supposed to be doing here,' he growled. 'I'm going to return home without seeing Stalin again.'⁸²

The atmosphere was charged with enmity. Back at the dacha Churchill and his advisers wrangled over the final communiqué. Churchill disliked the Russian draft. Cadogan raged at him so loudly that the doctor, Wilson, was aghast: he had never seen anybody talk to Winston like that before.

'Do as you think,' the P.M. finally snapped. 'But I wanted it recorded that I thought it would be disastrous.'

Cadogan refused to issue the communiqué without the P.M.'s approval. Churchill merely glared, and went to bed.

'Goodnight!' called out Cadogan after the figure that stamped off. It was three A.M.⁸³

On the following morning, August 15, another inquest followed. The British party were deeply hung-over. Churchill suggested to Colonel Jacob that perhaps Stalin had not intended to be so insulting at their very first meeting. He now dropped the idea of retreating from Moscow. Everybody agreed that he must seek another meeting with Stalin alone, and that this time he should take a more fluent interpreter, perhaps Major A. H. Birse, who had been born in Saint Petersburg and had spent thirty years of his life in Russia. For a few hours the Russians played hard to get, the Soviet operators telling Cadogan at hourly intervals that Stalin was 'out walking'; finally he agreed to see Churchill at seven P.M.⁸⁴ Meanwhile the British generals extracted from their Soviet colleagues the all-important prediction that they would be able to hold the Caucasus against the German offensive.

That evening, summoned by Churchill, the Polish general Wladyslaw Anders, Sikorski's army commander, arrived in Moscow from Tashkent where he was doing what he could to salvage an army from the mass of Polish prisoners taken by the Russians in 1939. Anders was a capable, tall

officer, his appearance marred only by having his head shaved. He told horror-stories about how the Russians had treated him and his fellow officers after overrunning eastern Poland. 'Eight thousand of his best officers had been put in a concentration camp in 1939,' noted Jacob. 'Today they had all vanished without a trace. When asked about them, Stalin said that perhaps they had run away somewhere, but apparently had made no efforts to clear up the mystery.'⁸⁵

Having little stomach for the Poles, Churchill asked Cadogan to minister to the shaven-headed general until he got back from the Kremlin around ten o'clock. He had now received a response from London to his inquiry about the coming Dieppe raid, JUBILEE: no longer code-named RUTTER, it was due to be carried out at first light on the eighteenth.

CHURCHILL DROVE off to the Kremlin with Major Birse at six-thirty. He told this interpreter that he was determined to have one more shot at getting closer to Stalin. Birse would find little difficulty with his style. 'His remarks were prefaced,' he wrote, 'by a kind of suppressed murmur, as if he were trying out the richness of his words while on their way from brain to tongue, as if he were repeating them to himself, testing them, discarding the inappropriate, and choosing precisely the right expression. I could almost hear them travelling from the depths of his being to burst into life.'⁸⁶

Stalin's bodyguard took them upstairs to his conference room. Its windows looked across the Moskva river to the splendid British embassy building on the other bank. The meeting began and ended inconclusively. Stalin stood sulkily beside his writing desk; he offered no smile, nor could the prime minister even catch his eye as they shook hands. The Russian record shows that Churchill expressed sorrow at this tension, but he had felt it proper to bring the painful news about the Second Front to Stalin in person. He wanted, he said, to achieve with Stalin the kind of rapport that he had established with Roosevelt. Stalin admitted that 'their exchange of views' had proved inconclusive, but at least they had met and understood each other.

To inspire the Russian leader, Churchill showed him a timetable from Roosevelt revealing that there would be 1,043,400 American troops in Britain by July 9, 1943. Quite apart from TORCH, Churchill stated that he intended to keep Hitler in a state of suspense, expecting an invasion across the Channel at any time. 'In order to make Germany more anxious about an attack from across the Channel,' he said, 'there will be a more serious raid in August, although the weather might upset it. It will be a reconnais-

sance in force. Some eight thousand men with fifty tanks will be landed. They will stay a night and a day, kill as many Germans as possible and take prisoners. They will then withdraw.’⁸⁷ It could be compared, he said, to dipping one’s finger into a hot bath to test the temperature. ‘The object is,’ said Churchill, ‘to get information and to create the impression of an invasion. Most important, I hope it will call forth a big air battle.’

Stalin was dubious, declaring the obvious: ‘The Germans will announce that the invasion has not succeeded.’

‘The Germans will certainly say this,’ agreed Churchill. ‘But if we take prisoners and kill many Germans then we too can say something about it.’

For a while they talked about the latest news from Malta. On the Russian front, said Stalin, the Germans had broken through near Stalingrad and Voronezh, but they lacked the strength to exploit this success.

Toward the end, Churchill reminisced about how he had deduced from Hitler’s intercepted orders switching three Panzer divisions from the Balkans to Cracow that he was about to attack the Soviet Union, and how he had at once passed a warning to Moscow; he was curious to learn whether it had reached Stalin.* Stalin replied only that he had never doubted it.

Having hinted at ULTRA, Churchill lifted a corner of the veil on MAGIC too, revealing that the Japanese were rejecting the demands of the German ambassador in Tokyo to declare war on the Soviet Union. ‘Stalin,’ the Soviet transcript states, ‘thanked Churchill for this information.’⁸⁸

All this showed Churchill in an unfortunately garrulous light, as he certainly had no business to be betraying the Allies’ most costly secrets – the breaking of the ENIGMA and PURPLE cyphers – to the Soviets. Only four months before ‘C’ had discussed with the foreign office whether they should inform Moscow of an intercepted Japanese message indicating Tokyo’s anxiety to find out whether Hitler and Stalin might make a compromise peace. ‘We have an added responsibility in not compromising this source,’ the head of the secret service, Brigadier Menzies, reminded the F.O., ‘in view of the help that the Americans have given us, and it is for consideration whether I should not first enquire from them if they have any objection to your acquainting the Soviet of this enquiry.’⁸⁹

AS CHURCHILL rose to leave around eight-thirty Stalin asked when they would next meet. Churchill said he was taking off at dawn, and Stalin in-

* See vol.i, page 581.

vited him back to his apartment for a drink. Whatever his memoirs might say to the contrary, Churchill never refused alcohol in his life. Several bottles were uncorked, and Stalin's daughter Svetlana was called in. The red-head dutifully kissed her papa. 'I confess,' Churchill would tell his cabinet a few days later, 'that I acquired a quite definite physical impression.'

Empty bottles clattered at intervals to the floor. Molotov arrived, and the three men, aided by the two interpreters, tucked into dishes of sucking-pig, chicken, beef, and fish. Churchill politely refused the head of the sucking-pig that was offered; Stalin cleaned it out with a knife and ate the rest with his fingers. The feasting went on until after two-thirty A.M.⁹⁰

Churchill had forgotten, indeed abandoned, the Polish general Anders altogether: it was a symbolic lapse of memory. He had solemnly promised the Poles in London to represent their interests in Moscow; this promise he now betrayed.⁹¹ Churchill watched contentedly as Stalin roasted Molotov, but then the dictator rounded on him too and reverted to the disaster that had befallen Convoy PQ 17. The Royal Navy, he implied yet again, had abandoned those freighters to their fate. 'Has the British Navy no sense of glory?' he roared. Churchill responded that Stalin would just have to take it from him that they did the right thing. 'I really do know a lot about the navy and sea war,' he said.

'Meaning,' replied Stalin, 'that I know nothing.'

'Russia is a land-animal,' retorted the P.M. 'The British are sea animals.'^{92*}

Once, Stalin brought up the question of that British air raid on Berlin in November 1940, timed to coincide with Molotov's visit to Hitler. 'In War,' responded Churchill, 'no advantages can ever be neglected.' Stalin laughed and explained that Ribbentrop was just explaining that the British empire was finished when the sirens sounded and he decided to continue the discussion underground. When Ribbentrop then picked up where he had left off, that there was no longer any need to take account of the British empire, Molotov had asked: 'Then why are we down here now?'

The story, which was true, caused general merriment.

The strait-laced Cadogan, summoned to join them after midnight, found the two dictators bandying reminiscences. 'Whatever happened to the,' hesitated Churchill, 'ah, —,' and Cadogan supplied the missing word: '—

* When Churchill repeated this dictum in public a fellow-admiral wrote to Admiral Cunningham, 'The neglect of the Sea by our "Air" all these years is a madness which would have led to the destruction of any nation less well favoured by the Gods.'⁹³

kulaks,’ the Russian middle farmers of whom ten million had been exterminated in the course of the Bolshevik collectivisation.

Stalin belched. ‘We gave them an acre or two,’ he roared, ‘in Siberia! But they proved very unpopular with the rest of the people.’⁹⁴

AMONG THE gifts that Stalin gave to Churchill was, curiously, a black skull cap; he wore it a few times in private afterwards.⁹⁵ There is no doubt that Churchill’s arduous journey had been necessary, and that he had performed with skill the feat of holding the Grand Alliance together at this difficult time. Molotov told the British ambassador afterwards that Churchill’s dynamic qualities had impressed Stalin. ‘Stalin,’ the ambassador added, ‘is a lonely man and head and shoulders above those about him. It must therefore have been stimulating to meet a man of his own calibre.’⁹⁶ From Stalin’s caustic comments later to visiting Americans, however, it is possible that he was less taken with Churchill than the latter believed.⁹⁷ As for Churchill, there was no doubt from his later utterances that he had taken a shine to the Georgian. Speaking not long after to Arthur Hays Sulzberger of *The New York Times* – wearing that skull cap for the occasion – Churchill piously averred, ‘I would rather never have lived than to have done what Stalin has done.’ He added however, ‘It is my duty to cultivate him.’ Having said which, he quoted to Sulzberger the stirring words once spoken by Edmund Burke: ‘If I cannot have reform without injustice, I will not have reform.’⁹⁸

HE DROVE away from the Kremlin at two-thirty A.M. He had a splitting headache whose origin he could not understand. He cabled to Roosevelt the next day, ‘The greatest good will prevailed and for the first time we got on to easy and friendly terms.’⁹⁹ Flattering stories, mostly apocryphal, soon circulated in the British working-class pubs about Stalin’s admiration of their prime minister. One Durham miner related that Stalin had ushered Winston into a luxurious bedroom with a mother-of-pearl bed upon which lay a Circassian beauty. ‘Don’t you think this girl is a little young?’ the P.M. had gasped. ‘As a matter of fact,’ replied Stalin, ‘she is only fourteen, but I thought she’d be old enough by the time you were ready for her.’¹⁰⁰

Arriving back at the dacha at three-fifteen A.M. they found General Anders, Jacob, Rowan and ‘Tommy’ Thompson fast asleep on sofas. Churchill woke up Anders, suggested they meet in Cairo, and told him to sleep on.

He himself went off for a bath, and called in Colonel Jacob while he was dressing afterward. For a while he flopped onto a sofa as if in a daze, eyes

closed, reciting to the colonel and their ambassador all that had happened; he felt now that he had pulled triumph out of the jaws of the earlier disaster. Reflecting on these last few days, Jacob decided that to make friends with a man like Stalin would be not unlike making friends with a python. Just two hours later they were already boarding their planes to leave, while bands played the three national anthems of the great powers. Stalin had laid on a military guard of honour. The soldiers stood motionless in a torrential downpour as the Liberators thundered past and trundled into the air at five-thirty A.M., bound for Teheran and Cairo.

UPON HIS arrival in Cairo on August 18 Churchill received word from General Ismay, responding to his rather diffident request on the seventeenth to be told 'if and when JUBILEE takes place,' that bad weather had delayed Mountbatten's amphibious assault on Dieppe by twenty-four hours until the next morning. Churchill had also told London that Stalin intended to start bombing Berlin himself soon. Bomber Command should therefore strike hard 'as soon as darkness permits,' he added, though care should be taken to avoid Anglo-Soviet clashes over the target city. He even suggested they arrange 'a rendezvous with the Russian pilots' over Berlin.¹⁰¹

Harris was unwilling to commit more than two hundred and fifty of his Halifaxes to such an operation. Sinclair and Portal replied to Churchill that they could send only this number of bombers to Berlin, and not until during the next dark-moon period; but this scale of attack would invite disproportionately heavy casualties. The two men recommended that they should wait until they could send at least five hundred bombers, the minimum number to saturate the defences.¹⁰² Churchill did not buy that. '250 heavies far exceeds [the] weight and number of any previous attack on Berlin,' he retorted. He sensed procrastination. 'What date will 500 be possible?' he pressed. While he would not allow any attack to be made 'regardless of cost,' he recalled that 'Butcher' Harris had mentioned to him, before he left England, that an attack in the August moon period would be possible. 'Can you do it in September?' pressed the prime minister. Very cogently he added, 'I had always understood darkness was the limiting factor. Not numbers.'¹⁰³

Portal replied that even if they sent three hundred in September, they would lose about fifty in the attack, a wound from which it would take the Command at least a month to recover.¹⁰⁴

In Egypt, things already looked different. General Alexander, the new commander-in-chief, Middle East, had moved his headquarters out of Cairo

and into the desert, as Allenby had done in the Great War. Montgomery had arrived to take over the Eighth Army. On August 18 Churchill drove out to meet him in the desert. Was there already a change in the spirit of the troops he encountered, or was it his imagination? They seemed somehow more alert and confident. They joined Montgomery in time for dinner. Monty had shifted his headquarters from the arid and uncomfortable patch of inland desert favoured by Auchinleck to the coast near Cunningham's Desert Air Force headquarters at Burg-el-Arab. He took the P.M. down to the beach to bathe, in the nude, before dinner. Everywhere along the beach were soldiers of the Eighth Army; from a distance their white skin where their shorts had kept off the sun looked like neat white bathing trunks.¹⁰⁵

The next day found him inspecting the positions at Alamein. From the intercepts they knew that Rommel was about to attack again, probably at the southern end of the front and on the twenty-sixth, and nothing would tear Churchill away now. General Brooke was not happy at the prospect that the P.M. would be interfering with the new generals as he had with the old.¹⁰⁶ There was however shortly a distraction. A radio message came from London around midnight: 'Weather sufficiently good. JUBILEE has started.'¹⁰⁷ Conscious that this adventure, the great seaborne assault on France, might reap large political rewards, on August 19 Churchill set out nonetheless for an all-day visit to the desert front; unable to still his curiosity, however, he telephoned several times from the desert to the embassy asking for news.¹⁰⁸

The files do not reveal whether Mountbatten had consulted him about the renewed and perplexing choice of Dieppe as the target for the JUBILEE assault. Perhaps properly, Churchill had certainly not spoken of this town when talking about it to Stalin. Thousands of men who had already been briefed twice to raid that port in June and July had meanwhile dispersed around southern England.¹⁰⁹ Even Anthony Eden had watched baffled as invasion craft scurried hither and thither off the Sussex coast on the eighteenth, and he had noted on the following day, the day of JUBILEE, that he was 'puzzled by the evidence given by destroyers & barges yesterday,' and he learned that 'the Germans didn't appear to have been surprised.'¹¹⁰

The first message from Mountbatten, covering events to midday, was ambiguous: it spoke of companies storming the beaches at Dieppe, and of strong opposition. On the third of the five beaches, RED, the initial landing had been successful but later reports indicated that several tanks were out of action and the situation was 'rather serious.' On the fourth beach, BLUE, the tanks had been unexpectedly held up by a sea wall. Several tank-land-

ing-craft had been sunk. 'The zero hour for the start of the withdrawal was 11 A.M. and the order for this was given according to plan,' the telegram continued. 'At that time the situation was obscure. It was uncertain how much progress had been made on the flanks and how far the troops had advanced. In the centre our troops and tanks were definitely faced with serious resistance and the situation is unpleasant.' After putting losses in the air at forty-eight, with forty-five enemy planes definitely and twenty-five probably destroyed, the report concluded: 'The withdrawal is still continuing under great difficulties and it is feared that casualties may be heavy.'¹¹¹

This did not look good. In fact it smacked of a rout. Churchill signalled to Ismay in London at nine P.M., 'Consider it would be wise to describe JUBILEE as "Reconnaissance in force."¹¹² A few hours later a message came from Ismay explaining that Mountbatten was unable to give further details until all the reports were in. 'It is certain however that casualties have been heavy and that generally speaking objectives were not attained.'¹¹³

If this too seemed to speak the unequivocal language of failure, Mountbatten's version, received in Cairo only a few minutes later and evidently circumventing Ismay's channels, was more buoyant: 'It is clear,' reported the admiral, 'that although strategical surprise was impossible tactical surprise was achieved.' The fact that 'our troops were unable to capture the town before the time for withdrawal' was buried halfway down the report, as was the doleful admission that one third of the 6,100 troops were missing. 'Morale of returning troops reported to be excellent. All I have seen are in great form.' The attack had obviously 'rattled' the Germans, the admiral suggested, and he now claimed that they had destroyed ninety-six German planes in the ensuing air battles (the real figure was exactly half). This enhancement was necessary, as he now also had to concede that the R.A.F. had lost ninety-eight planes in the process (the true figure was 107); but thirty of those pilots had survived.¹¹⁴

Seemingly satisfied with the young admiral's report, Churchill cabled to London that his general impression was that the results 'fully justified the heavy cost.' 'The large scale air battle alone justified the raid.'¹¹⁵



Operation JUBILEE had begun at first light on August 19, 1942. Five thousand soldiers, mostly eager young men of the Canadian 2nd Division,

but fifty U.S. Rangers too, were carried across the Channel and debouched onto beaches at Dieppe. Within nine hours, the surf was tinged with blood. In an inferno of bullets and grenades, the defenders killed 1,179 men and captured two thousand more. Of the 4,963 Canadians, 3,367 were casualties, two out of every three.¹¹⁶ Their equipment was abandoned on the beach.

The cover-up began that same day, with Mountbatten writing the laconic entry in his diary: 'Great air battle. Many casualties and some successes.'¹¹⁷ He rendered a colourful account to the cabinet, claiming that his operation had destroyed one-third of the Luftwaffe in the west. This was untrue. The Allies eventually assessed the German losses at between 125 and 150 planes; the true figure was forty-eight. Mountbatten also told the cabinet that nearly two-thirds of the raiding force had returned. These were however mainly the men who, fortunately for themselves, had failed to get ashore. Even Leo Amery, one of Mountbatten's less critical fans, found it odd that he had launched a frontal assault on a strongly held place like Dieppe instead of landing at an 'undefended point' and careering around the country wreaking havoc. Speaking with him in private, Mountbatten implied that he had wanted a scheme of that sort, but had been overruled.¹¹⁸

The Dieppe disaster stemmed in part from disjointed planning, which in turn resulted from the lack of one firm-handed task force commander. About the topography and defences in the Dieppe area Mountbatten's hand-picked officers had provided pre-raid Intelligence which proved totally inadequate.¹¹⁹ They had not revealed the anti-tank guns on the beach at Dieppe, the machine-gun posts covering the frontal and eastern landing beaches, or the shallowness of the water at Pourville which prevented the assault craft there from landing their tanks. Lessons were duly learned, primarily the need for a purpose-built fleet of assault landing-craft, and for airplanes and heavy naval guns to bombard the landing beaches. Above all, the fiasco dispelled any illusion that a cross-Channel invasion would be easy. 'It may fairly be said,' wrote Mountbatten's biographer, 'that nobody who remembered Gallipoli should have needed so elementary a reminder.'

It is often overlooked – though Churchill, reading the *ULTRAS*, was painfully aware of it – that the Germans too had profited from the raid: the British had crossed the Channel, mocked Adolf Hitler in private, and kindly deposited on the sea front at Dieppe quantities of their latest tanks and guns for him to study; no doubt, he warned, they would now have realised their follies – the real invasion would look very different. Hitler issued orders for the Atlantic Wall to be made stronger than ever.¹²⁰

To Churchill, as he continued his visit to the Eighth Army, the difference since Montgomery's take-over six days before seemed dramatic. 'The highest alacrity and activity prevails,' he reported to London. 'Positions are everywhere being strengthened and extended forces are being sorted out and regrouped in solid units. The 44th and 10th Armoured Divisions have already arrived in the forward zone. The roads are busy with the forward movement of troops, tanks, and guns.'¹²¹ He fitted in visits to the Hussars, the reborn 51st Highland, and Desert Air Force units.

Addressing his old regiment, the Fourth Hussars, on the twentieth he spoke words which one trooper mimicked in an irreverent letter home: 'Gentlemen, you will strike – ah – an unforgettable blow – ah – against the enemy. The corn will be ripe – ah – for the sickle – ah – and you will be the reapers. May God bless you all.'¹²² Like an old but obdurate hunting dog, Montgomery's biographer would write, Churchill had finally picked up the scent that had eluded him for two long and wearisome years of war. It was the smell of victory.¹²³

He returned to Cairo that evening, August 20. The next day he asked Major-General B. L. McCreery, Alexander's new chief of staff, which armoured force he would rather have – Rommel's or his own? McCreery, a tank expert, loyally answered: his own. On the twenty-second Winston set out on an excursion to the Touru caves where the slabs which formed the Pyramids had most probably been quarried. Now aero-engines were being overhauled in workshops installed in the caves. His vitality despite the broiling Egyptian heat staggered the wilting diplomats. Even his doctor, Wilson, had fallen foul of the local stomach ailment, known as the Pharaohs' Revenge. 'Sir Charles has been a terrible anxiety to us the whole time,' Cadogan heard the P.M. cruelly joking. 'But I hope we'll get him through!'¹²⁴

A LETTER was handed to Churchill. General Wavell had written it in his own hand. 'I have never before asked for anything for myself,' it began – and now he did, to be promoted to the ultimate rank of field-marshal.

In justification he offered that he had defeated the Italians in Cyrenaica in the winter of 1940–1 and in East Africa after that; true, there had been 'setbacks' since then, but having now been put in command of over one million soldiers, he wrote, 'I think I have fair claims to the rank.'¹²⁵ This seemed fair enough to Brooke and Churchill, but the war minister Sir Percy

Grigg expressed himself frankly shocked at Wavell's presumption, believing he had neither enough fire in his belly nor iron in his body; he sourly agreed however to put the proposal forward to the Treasury.¹²⁶ In his response on September 16, Churchill denied ever having said, 'I have only to express a wish, for you to be determined to obstruct it;' but he had at least received consideration of his wishes from other ministers. Grigg's views about Wavell, he felt, would astonish most people who had served under him. He proposed therefore to announce the promotion in the New Year's Honours List.¹²⁷ Cabling to Wavell on October 7, Churchill assured him, after telling him that Hitler's 1942 campaign against Russia would be 'a great disappointment' to the Führer: 'The personal matter which you mentioned to me is arranged, and will be announced in the New Year List.'¹²⁸

This delay to his promotion was for Wavell scarcely less of a disappointment. Though thanking Churchill, he pressed, 'I hoped and still hope that you could announce it forthwith.' He had after all earned his baton in 1941, not 1942: his military career was beginning to draw to an end, and the new rank might help in dealing with the Americans and Chinese over Burma. 'Gingerbread is always gingerbread,' he whimpered, 'but may I have it with the gilt on please.'¹²⁹

Churchill would have met his wishes there and then, but the king had told him that he wanted Lord Gort to have that baton too, and at the same time: Churchill was outraged, but suppressed it; he felt that Gort had never earned it but had been 'pushed up by Hore-Belisha,' the former war minister, in a manner most detrimental to the service and to himself.¹³⁰



The air was hot and humid, and the Nile was on the rise. Auchinleck came to say good-bye, having refused the command offered to him in Iraq and Iran; the job went to 'Jumbo' Wilson instead. In a callously worded telegram to Attlee, which bore the stamp of Montgomery's own hand, Churchill criticised both the outgoing commander-in-chief and his chief of staff General Eric Dorman-Smith in these terms: 'I am sure we were headed for disaster under the former regime. The Army was reduced to bits and pieces. . . Apparently it was intended in face of heavy attack to retire eastward to the Delta. Many were looking over their shoulders to make sure of their seat in the lorry.' Auchinleck's biographer called this telegram a 'disagreeable, inaccurate and offensive document.'¹³¹

They were still far from over the hump. The latest news of PEDESTAL merely added misery to all their misfortune so far.¹³² The Germans and Italians had launched a furious air assault on the remnants of this convoy and its escorts, having already sunk the carrier *Eagle* and damaged the carrier *Indomitable*. Bombers, U-boats, and E-boats had picked up the attack. Reports reached the prime minister's travelling map room that the cruisers *Manchester* and *Cairo* had also gone down, and one by one the precious merchant ships were being picked off and sunk as well. It was like PQ 17 all over again, with the difference that these seamen could expect to survive immersion in these warm waters for longer than a few minutes. Only three of the freighters survived: he learned of their arrival at Malta at dawn on August 20, followed by *Brisbane*, limping in next day, and then, best news of all, a disabled American oil tanker complete with her lifesaving liquid cargo intact, towed in by a destroyer.

The cabinet at last telegraphed from London its approval of his measures. Delighted about this, the prime minister marched up and down his bedroom, as Colonel Jacob described, exclaiming that he 'knew all along that he had laid a very good egg that morning.'¹³³

MORE AMERICANS in England were now privy to the ULTRA secret. By August 1942 admirals Stark and Kirk had full access to it; after a suitably stern lecture, Eisenhower had been made 'aware of its existence,' and there was talk of giving appropriate ULTRA decodes to his chief of staff Bedell Smith and to his G-2 Brigadier Mockler-Ferryman.¹³⁴ On August 11, 1942, the R.A.F.'s commander-in-chief Middle East, asked if General Russell L. Maxwell, the American C.-in-C. in Cairo, could also be given access to ULTRA, as General Brereton had been. On August 12 the chiefs of staff ruled that a telegram should go to Cairo authorising disclosure to either Maxwell or Brereton, but not both.¹³⁵ On August 28, the question arose whether it would be right to give the three American chiefs of staff regular briefings on the general trend of events, derived from ULTRA, the actual material being transmitted to the United States 'over C's route and in his cypher' for him to scrutinise 'in accordance with his responsibility' to Churchill as minister of defence.¹³⁶

Until the spring of 1943 there was no formal sharing of ULTRA between the Allies. To avoid any breach of security Bletchley Park was adamant that the Americans must promise never to attempt to copy the British 'bombe' used for breaking the German codes. Frantic to learn the British secrets,

the Americans readily gave the necessary undertakings to Captain Eddy Hastings, 'C's' man in Washington, in July 1942, and as readily broke their word.¹³⁷ Thus one more of Britain's costly secrets crossed the Atlantic. Whereas even in October 1942 the U.S. navy department's opposite number to Commander Rodger Winn, commander of the admiralty's Submarine Tracking Room, did not know of the existence of the 'most secret sources' and was 'puzzled' by the fact that for some months past the admiralty's intelligence about U-boats had been slipping (this was a period when Bletchley Park could not read the submarines' SHARK cypher), soon more people than was healthy in Washington were aware of Mr Churchill's 'oracle.'¹³⁸

Rommel's attack would begin very soon, as Churchill knew from ULTRA. 'There is one thing I would like to make absolutely clear,' he told the press corps in Cairo. 'We are determined to fight for Egypt and the Nile Valley as if it were the soil of England itself.'¹³⁹ The next day, August 23, he decided to leave for home. They took off from Cairo at seven P.M., and touched down at Gibraltar early the next morning. A plain van backed up to the Liberator and delivered him, unseen by the prying Nazi eyes just across the frontier, to the Convent for breakfast and a bath. He was in 'cracking form,' recorded Cadogan. They took off again at two P.M. and descended through cloud into south-western England that evening.¹⁴⁰

'The arrival at the aerodrome,' wrote his waiting secretary, ignoring Churchill's linguistic edict that the word henceforth be *airfield*, 'was rather thrilling. It was dark, with clouds gathering overhead, and the first we knew was the drone of engines far above. Then a squadron of escorting Spitfires came down into sight, and finally the big Liberator. The P.M. seemed remarkably fit and fresh and so were most of the rest of the party, though they must have had an exhausting time.'¹⁴¹

Churchill found Clementine waiting with Randolph on the airfield. He alighted from their special train at Paddington station at 11:30 P.M., very smart in his air commodore's uniform, and buoyant about the latest word of the Congress agitation in India. The Indian problem! It was good to be back in the heart of things again. 'We've got them on the run,' he said confidently to Leo Amery. The India Secretary was none too sure.¹⁴²

Back at Downing-street the P.M. kept Attlee and Eden up until one-thirty with tales of his great adventure.¹⁴³ He gave the cabinet much the same account the next day, embellishing it with details not contained in the official record – for example that Stalin had decided on his fateful 1939 pact with Hitler after learning that France could muster only eighty divi-

sions and Britain only three. He left no colleague in doubt as to his admiration for Stalin despite, or perhaps even because of, his ruthlessness in liquidating the kulaks in the thirties.¹⁴⁴

Churchill was profoundly dismayed by all that he now learned about the Dieppe fiasco of one week earlier. General Alan Brooke muttered that the planning had been all wrong. Invited to dinner at Chequers with 'Dickie' Mountbatten on August 29, together with the Americans Eisenhower and Mark Clark, he voiced some very outspoken criticism of JUBILEE.

Mountbatten was dumbfounded – that was the word he used, writing to Brooke that night – and tried to take him to task about it outside the dining-room. Before he could do so Winston invited him out onto the terrace and tackled him outright: 'I heard the C.I.G.S. complaining that the planning was all wrong for the Dieppe show. What did he mean?' Mountbatten replied that he had meticulously followed the procedures which the chiefs of staff had laid down. Stung to the quick, he wrote to Brooke threatening to demand 'a full and impartial enquiry' into the conduct of all concerned.¹⁴⁵

It did not help that the Luftwaffe dropped millions of leaflets over Portsmouth with photographs of the débâcle – the bodies, the mangled and abandoned equipment, the hundreds of Canadians being marched off into captivity.¹⁴⁶ Churchill ordered one of the leaflets shown to Admiral Mountbatten.

Whatever his private views about Dieppe, Churchill put a brave face on it. 'It was like putting a hand in the bath,' he told a visiting American newspaper editor three weeks later, repeating the analogy he had used before the event to Stalin – 'to get the temperature of the water.'¹⁴⁷

He rationalised this argument three days after that in the House: 'The raid must be considered as a reconnaissance in force. It was a hard, savage clash such as are likely to become increasingly numerous as the war deepens. . . I personally regard the Dieppe assault – to which I gave my sanction – as an indispensable preliminary to full-scale operations.'¹⁴⁸

Churchill explained to Colonel James Ralston, the visiting Canadian defence minister, that two factors had led to the disaster – the enemy's early interception of the assault force, and the delay to the operation. He conceded that the defences had also been stronger than anticipated, and that there had been no aerial bombardment to soften them up.¹⁴⁹

MOUNTBATTEN WOULD later claim, 'The German records after the war revealed that their High Command had no inkling that any raid was mounted

or even planned for August.’¹⁵⁰ This statement was hazarding the truth, because on August 12, one week before the raid, the British codebreakers had picked up a German signal which indicated that the enemy knew of a forthcoming operation against Dieppe.¹⁵¹ The subsequent interrogation of a Luftwaffe officer revealed that a war game held on the fifteenth at *Luftflotte 3* headquarters at Versailles, with opposing officers representing Mountbatten and Field-Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt, had suggested that if the Allies landed at Dieppe they would be thrown out within five days at most. Two days after that, the same interrogation report showed, Luftwaffe squadron commanders on the western front were summoned to a conference at the headquarters of the German *Fliegerführer Atlantik* General Ulrich Kessler, in Angers; they were told that the Allies were planning a raid on Dieppe as soon as the weather conditions were right, a five-pronged assault bracketing the town.¹⁵²

After Dieppe the clamour for an early Second Front died down, but the raid and its casualties left a wound which began to fester during the remaining months of 1942. Canadians felt bitterness about the arbitrary manner in which somebody had cast their young men into a charnel house. By December 1942 there was renewed pressure in London for a full inquiry. Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay heard that the Chief of Combined Operations (Mountbatten) was going to have his wings severely clipped. ‘But,’ wrote Ramsay to another admiral, ‘he is as slippery a customer as Rommel, and with the P.M. behind him he may “come again”!’¹⁵³

Probably put up to it by Lord Beaverbrook, who was one of the most aggrieved Canadians, Churchill began asking questions again as Christmas approached. The more he studied the maps, the less he understood the raid. It defied all the accepted principles to attack a fortified coastal town without first securing the cliffs on either side, and to use tanks in a frontal assault off the town’s beaches instead of landing them up the coast and taking Dieppe from the rear. He asked General Ismay to investigate.

‘Although for many reasons,’ Churchill wrote to Ismay, ‘everyone was concerned to make this business look as good as possible, the time has now come when I must be informed more precisely about the military plans’ – a startling admission for Britain’s minister of defence to make to his chiefs of staff. Who had made these plans, he asked, and who had approved them? What was the part played in them by Montgomery and the Canadian commander McNaughton? What had the Canadian generals concerned thought about the plans, and were they checked by the army’s general staff?¹⁵⁴

Naïvely, or out of a misplaced sense of comradeship, Ismay showed Churchill's peremptory minute to Mountbatten, asking him to treat it as 'private, not to be shown even to your staff.'

'It may be that adverse criticisms have reached his ears,' Ismay warned Mountbatten, referring to the prime minister,

or again, it may be that he wishes to ensure that false deductions have not been drawn from the results. . . Yet again, it may be that his mind is harking back to the incident at the dinner party at Chequers [described above, on August 29] when the C.I.G.S. made a number of allegations which you afterwards cleared up with him, and which were never reported to the prime minister himself.¹⁵⁵

By way of reply Mountbatten gave Ismay a précis of his own full report on Dieppe. It was evasive at best; Ismay worked the admiral's answers into his response to the prime minister, without saying that they came from Mountbatten himself. Churchill allowed the matter to drop.¹⁵⁶

When the time came in 1950 to deal with Dieppe in his memoirs he set out with the honest intention of telling his readers how and why it had happened. 'It will be necessary,' he wrote to one friend, 'for the whole story to be told.' His 916-page volume eventually devoted only three pages to the fiasco – and these now turn out to have been rewritten by Lord Mountbatten himself, who had obtained the ageing prime minister's first draft from Ismay. Where Churchill had originally stated that the raid was remounted 'on the initiative of Lord Mountbatten,' the admiral crossed out that incriminating phrase and assured the forgetful former prime minister that the decision had been Churchill's. The 'Churchill' version also contains the words, 'The Germans did not receive, through leakages of information, any special warning of our intention to attack.' Churchill thanked him for the redraft, which he substantially used, ascribing to his 'poor memory' that he had not remembered all the details 'you mention.'

Into this redraft Mountbatten had slipped the following words, for which there is no support in the archives: 'I personally,' indicating Churchill, 'went through the plans to remount the raid.'¹⁵⁷ The narrative concluded, 'The story is vividly told by the official historian of the Canadian Army and in other official publications and need not be repeated here.'¹⁵⁸ The passage closed on the brief refrain: 'Honour to the brave who fell. Their sacrifice was not in vain.'

25: *In Chains*

THERE WAS AN unseemly sequel to the Dieppe raid. The Germans had captured a British order stating: 'Wherever possible prisoners' hands are to be tied so that they cannot destroy their papers.' In war, like any gentlemanly sport, there are agreed rules that have to be obeyed, and under these rules the 'manacling' of prisoners is illegal; on August 30, 1942 the German High Command (the *Oberkommando der Wehrmacht*, O.K.W.) demanded a British explanation, failing which all the prisoners taken at Dieppe – who were mostly Canadians – would be put in chains as a reprisal, starting four days later. The war office formally denied that prisoners had been tied up, but undertook to revoke the order.¹

That would have been the end of the matter, but during Mountbatten's subsequent Commando raid on the German-occupied Channel island of Sark on October 4 there was a further incident. A raiding force of sixteen Commandos seized a German work party, tied them with ropes, and marched them to the beach where they bayoneted and shot to death some of them, still trussed, before withdrawing.

The O.K.W. announced on the seventh that as from the next day the Dieppe prisoners would be placed in fetters. Hitler himself drafted the communiqué: 'The terror and sabotage squads of the British and their accomplices act more like bandits than soldiers. In the future they will be treated as such by the German troops and ruthlessly put down in battle, wheresoever they may appear.'

Mountbatten's headquarters issued a denial, while admitting that four prisoners taken on Sark had been shot 'trying to escape.'

Once again Churchill backed his protégé; on the eighth his government declared the German reprisals unlawful under the Geneva Convention, and without consulting the Canadian government – who had most prisoners at

risk – he announced that from the tenth the British would place an equal number of German prisoners in chains.²

It was all very ugly, and after the cabinet discussed it at length on October 8 even Eden privately noted his discomfiture: 'I am not happy about this. We certainly did tie some prisoners at Sark & shot them when they tried to escape. It is not illegal to tie prisoners' hands & [we] have got ourselves into a false position by denying we have done it.'³

Churchill's actions aroused a storm of protest telegrams from the Dominion prime ministers.⁴ There were threats of riots and shooting among the prisoners held in Canadian camps.⁵ With the Germans now holding in chains – more precisely in chromium-plated handcuffs, for twenty-three hours each day – the prisoners who had survived the Dieppe débâcle, the Canadian government was particularly distressed. Visiting London that month, their defence minister Colonel Ralston took it up with Churchill.⁶ He however refused to climb down, and the relentless stand-off with Hitler, a 'grisly affair,' as another visiting Canadian official recorded, continued. 'It has now become a matter of saving his [Churchill's] face in part,' he wrote after discussing it with British ministers, 'and he is being obdurate.'⁷

A few days later he learned that the prime minister had sent an 'extremely rude' telegram to Mackenzie King about the reprisals. When Cripps explained that secret Intelligence revealed Hitler's personal role in the manacling, the Canadian lectured him that it all 'left a bad taste in Ottawa,' a taste which Churchill's telegram had done nothing to dispel.⁸

Despite his call for Parliament and the York Convocation to refrain from any public discussion on the subject, for weeks he was bombarded with letters from local Conservative Party associations, and from influential Englishmen including Quintin Hogg, Cardinal Hinsley, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and the Bishops of London, Truro, and Winchester, expressing their abhorrence and the intense feeling 'of many Christian people.'

Several writers pointed out that Germany held far more prisoners as pawns than did the British. There were angry letters from the Prisoners of War Relatives' Association, and from parents of prisoners including hundreds held by the Germans at Colditz Castle who, while 'loyally supporting' Churchill, were anxious that the 'mistaken' policy of reprisals should cease; Churchill noted on one such letter, 'I am most anxious to have our men relieved from this indignity & will certainly act simultaneously with the Germans.'⁹

Neither Hitler nor he wanted however to take the first step. At the defence committee that night, November 23, the Canadian government represented that the Swiss Protecting Power should be asked to intervene and to suggest that 'shackling should cease' at an agreed hour on both sides. Eden approached the Swiss, but Germany did not reply.¹⁰ On December 2, the Canadian government informed Churchill that since he still refused to back down, they would take independent action to bring about the unshackling of the prisoners of war.

Churchill told the cabinet the next day that Berlin was seeking a confession that his troops had acted wrongfully, and this confession he did not feel inclined to give. All agreed that an urgent telegram should go to Ottawa asking the Canadians not to step out of line.¹¹ A few days later the cabinet learned that Hitler had unofficially informed the Swiss authorities that he had given orders to unshackle the prisoners during Christmas week.¹²

In February 1943, during Churchill's absence at the Casablanca conference, the cabinet again debated what Eden called 'this tiresome & tragic shackling business.' 'We are in a bad tangle,' he wrote, '& Winston clearly made a mistake about the applicability of the Geneva convention in an earlier reply.'¹³

Mountbatten's Commando raid on Sark had had one darker consequence of which the British were not yet aware – Hitler's infamous top secret Commando Order: in future, all Commandos caught in action were to be liquidated out of hand. Hitler justified it by referring to the Commandos' methods as being outlawed by the Geneva Conventions. 'Captured papers show that they are ordered not only to manacle their prisoners, but to kill their defenceless prisoners out of hand the moment they feel such prisoners might become a burden or hindrance to them in the prosecution of their purposes.' Hitler's Commando Order was distributed to his commanders on October 19. This order appears to have escaped the attention of British Intelligence, although the codebreakers caught one fore-echo, a signal radioed by Berlin to Rommel's staff inquiring what they knew about the battle instructions for British Commandos, since a captured document recently shown to General Alfred Jodl, of the High Command, was 'said to have contained the order that German prisoners, who were brought in during the course of a Commando-operation and who were a hindrance to the further prosecution of the operation, were to be shot.'¹⁴ Bletchley Park telexed this intercept to London on October 19, and 'C' showed it to the prime minister the same day.

Churchill, it should be said, was not a stickler for international law. When General Eisenhower asked that Britain's low-flying Fleet Air Arm aircraft going in with the first wave of the North African landings should carry *American* markings the First Lord A. V. Alexander pointed out that this would involve a breach of the Hague Convention; but the admiralty and foreign office were prepared to assent, and the prime minister did not object.¹⁵

THERE WERE other matters concerning German prison camps to which Whitehall preferred to turn a blind eye. Rumours were still trickling out of Hitler's empire about things happening to the Jews.

Britain already had evidence from codebreaking and diplomatic sources that the Germans were deporting the Jews from Germany and other parts of Europe under their control to ghettos and camps in the Government-General (formerly Poland) where malnutrition, epidemics, brutal conditions, and executions were taking an immense toll.¹⁶

There was no shortage of Intelligence about the continued 'cleansing' operations in the east. The codebreakers had only just intercepted a message from the southern Russian front, reporting a *Judenaktion* on July 23 forty miles south-west of Kamenets, during which seven hundred Jews found incapable of work had been shot.¹⁷

Despite this, the foreign office was inclined to treat the more lurid public reports with scepticism. They were regarded as part of the international Zionist campaign, which was continuing regardless of the war effort. 'Information from Jewish refugees is generally coloured and frequently unreliable,' the F.O. had reminded one diplomatic outpost in December 1941.¹⁸

When such a telegram arrived from Geneva on August 10, 1942, composed by Gerhart Riegner, the youthful secretary of the World Jewish Congress, it ran into this wall of institutional disbelief: Riegner claimed that Hitler's headquarters was planning to deport up to four million Jews from Nazi-occupied countries to the east during the coming autumn, where they were to be exterminated 'in order to resolve, once and for all, the Jewish question in Europe.' Killing methods under discussion included, claimed Riegner, the use of hydrogen cyanide.¹⁹

There was nothing new in such allegations: after World War One the American Jewish community had raised a similar outcry about what they had even then called a 'holocaust'; the Governor of New York had claimed in a 1919 speech that 'six million' Jews were being exterminated.²⁰ In 1936,

three years before the war, Victor Gollancz Ltd. had published a book entitled *The Extermination of the Jews in Germany*. In April 1937 a typical article in Breslau's Jewish newspaper had been headlined, 'THE LIQUIDATION CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE JEWS IN POLAND.'²¹ They had cried wolf too often before. In internal papers, the F.O. remarked that there was no confirmation for Riegner's story from 'other sources' – a hint at ULTRA.²²

There was a marked reluctance to exploit the stories for propaganda, and the files show that there was little public sympathy with the Jews in wartime Britain. A year before, the ministry of information had directed that horror stories were to be used only sparingly, and they must always deal with the maltreatment of 'indisputably innocent' people – 'not with violent political opponents,' they amplified. 'And not with Jews.'²³

Sydney Silverman, a Labour Member of Parliament, asked permission to phone Riegner's report through to Rabbi Stephen Wise, president of the American Jewish Congress in New York; the foreign office refused, arguing quaintly that this would merely provoke the Germans who 'always listen to such conversations.'²⁴

While they felt that they might profitably consult P.W.E. (their own Political Warfare Executive) about Riegner's 'rather wild story,' that was the only further action they would take.²⁵ There is no indication that Riegner's message was ever put before Churchill, who was in Cairo and Moscow at that time.

Similar 'wild stories' did however reach the United States. On September 4 the Polish ambassador in Washington produced to Lord Halifax 'an awful report about the Germans exterminating all the Jews in the Warsaw ghetto at the rate of 100,000 a month.' Halifax added: 'They are supposed to make various things they want out of the boiled-down corpses. I wonder whether this horror is true.* A good deal more likely to be true, I fancy, than it was in the last war.'²⁶

A few mornings later he noted heartlessly a visit by Rabbi Stephen Wise and a colleague 'whose talk was exactly like that of a stage Jew.' Grim though the subject-matter of their visit was, as the ambassador privately recorded, 'it was all I could do to keep a straight face when he chipped in.' They depicted in vivid detail how the Nazis were deporting French Jews to the east to kill them. 'If this is true,' Halifax cautioned himself, 'how vile it is of Laval to hand any more poor wretches over.'²⁷

* It was not true.

Again the foreign office line was one of scepticism. In September 1944 a British diplomat would argue against publicising the atrocity stories on the heartless ground that it would compel officials to 'waste a disproportionate amount of their time dealing with wailing Jews.'

Later in September 1942 information did reach Churchill from his secret sources lifting a corner of the veil on Hitler's concentration camps. Analysis of their commandants' secret returns, transmitted in cypher to Berlin, had begun yielding daily figures for the death rates in a dozen such camps. These included twenty-one deaths during August at Niederhagen, eighty-eight at Flossenbürg, and seventy-four at Buchenwald; in a fast-growing camp at Auschwitz in Upper Silesia the intercepts revealed the notable totals of 6,829 male and 1,525 female fatalities. There was evidently a deadly epidemic raging at the camp, since a message of September 4, in reply to a request for a thousand prisoners for building the Danube railway, stated that Auschwitz could not provide them until the 'ban' (*Lagersperre*) on the camp had been lifted. It was an odd, one-way kind of quarantine: 'It appears that although typhus is still rife at Auschwitz,' the Intelligence report pointed out, 'new arrivals continue to come in.'²⁸



On Churchill's insistence a further North Russian convoy operation, PQ18, was now run. It ended on about September 21 with only twenty-seven of its forty ships safely reaching Murmansk.

Throughout the Royal Navy feelings ran high about running these murderous Arctic convoys. It did not help that the admiralty's files held disturbing reports about the high-handed and humiliating Soviet treatment of the British sailors who had run the gauntlet of Hitler's bombers and U-boats to deliver cargoes to North Russia. The Soviets refused permission for British hospital units to land at Archangel, arguing that Britain already had too many naval personnel there. Colonel Edward Crankshaw, M.I.8's 'Y' (signals Intelligence) officer attached to Britain's 30 Mission in Moscow, reported that having hesitantly begun sharing codebreaking expertise in June 1942, in mid-October the Russians halted all further co-operation having failed to provide anything other than raw undecoded intercepts.

After the Russians sealed up the admiralty's MEACON gear (for jamming radar-beacons) at Murmansk in March 1943, the British retaliated by cancelling the hand-over of the German air force AUKA codebooks.²⁹ In April

and May 1943 the Russians would begin serious harassment of 30 Mission, and Churchill ordered the British Scientific Mission to Russia to be postponed indefinitely.³⁰

In June and July 1943 the Soviets would seize 106 bags of British mail, and step up their harassment of Royal Navy sailors, often jailing them for petty offences. When this was brought to Churchill's attention he would suggest that the admiralty 'ostentatiously prepare to withdraw our personnel' from North Russia. This move, conveying as it would a threat to abandon the PQ convoy operations altogether, would not be entirely bluff. By the summer of 1943 he was already beginning to harbour doubts about his great Russian ally, as will be seen.³¹

In September 1942 however the convoy operations still hung round the navy's neck. Admiral Tovey continued to argue for their early cessation. Within the navy's confines, he was becoming an outspoken critic of Churchill's strategic direction of the war. This appeared to him, as he wrote to Admiral Cunningham, to have been based on expediency and bright ideas, without any real governing policy behind it. 'W.C. as prime minister is magnificent and unique,' he continued, aware that even his letters were not beyond being opened by the government's censor, 'but as a strategist and tactician he is liable to be most dangerous. He loves the dramatic and public acclamation. He has, to my knowledge, put up some wild schemes and, again without knowing details, I disliked intensely his original scheme for a Second Front.'³²

Faced now with the losses to PQ18, Churchill had to accept that Tovey was right. He informed President Roosevelt that he was going to warn Stalin that there would be no more convoys until January 1943.³³

Without an early cross-Channel invasion to promise to Stalin either, the prime minister was hoist by his own petard: TORCH, the bombing of German civilians, and an increase in American aid were all that he had to offer to Moscow. He did however order that the now idle ships be used to mislead the enemy into believing that the next convoy would go ahead in October – this would induce Hitler to keep his submarines, aircraft and warships in the far north, well away from the TORCH area.³⁴



Work on TORCH had begun in earnest soon after Churchill's return from Moscow, although General Eisenhower still did not have his heart in it.

It is proper to remark that relations between the British and American peoples were already raw. The arrival of the first American troops in Northern Ireland in January 1942 had led inevitably to friction with the local British population. Eamon de Valera, prime minister of Southern Ireland, was equally disconcerted and resentful at these new arrivals; stationing American troops in northern Ireland violated the sovereignty which his government claimed to assert over its six counties.³⁵ He asked Roosevelt for arms as well, but Churchill brought pressure on Winant not to allow this.³⁶ As Harry Hopkins passed through Ireland, the commanders of the American armoured divisions told him that in the event of an enemy invasion they could occupy Dublin within seventy minutes.³⁷

All the root causes of discontent were there. Overfed and overpaid, the American troops bought up all the Irish liquor and other scarce items for prices which the average British soldier could not afford. The GIs were bored by inactivity, often drunk, and ill-disciplined. They felt they had been finagled into fighting Britain's war. The American consul general in Belfast, the provincial capital of northern Ireland, reported that they were not immune to the influences of the Irish Republican Army; one U.S. army chaplain declared openly that the British had no right to be in the province.³⁸

Washington saw fit to intervene repeatedly on behalf of I.R.A. terrorists. When six young Irishmen were sentenced in August 1942 to hang in Belfast for murdering an Irish policeman called Murphy the American embassy in London expressed strong misgivings, representing that the Irish minister in Washington had protested at the sentences, and that any executions would have the 'most unfortunate effects' on Anglo-Irish relations as well as making the position of British and American forces in Ireland even more difficult.³⁹ After consulting with Churchill and Herbert Morrison the Northern Ireland government recommended that four should hang, with the other two reprieved and sentenced to penal servitude.⁴⁰

By September 1942 American troops in Northern Ireland had already murdered two British soldiers in rowdy affrays.

These incidents mirrored public opinion in the United States. Surveys showed that Americans felt resentment toward British 'bunglers,' and toward what they saw as their class-system and the 'old school tie;' but mail intercepts showed that they had great faith in Churchill himself, particularly after his parliamentary victory in the July 1942 Vote of Confidence debate. They admired his courage, but there was a prevailing belief that the British soldier would not stand and fight – he just never seemed to stop

‘running.’ One American wrote of the R.A.F. as the ‘run away fast’ boys.⁴¹ While Churchill was admired by forty-five per cent of the Americans, they regarded the British people as aristocratic, snobbish, selfish, arrogant and cold; the British saw the Americans as conceited and cocksure, and associated them with gangsters, graft, and corruption.⁴²

AT THE governmental level too, as Churchill must have realised, there were tensions between London and Washington, and between Harriman, Roosevelt’s personal emissary, and Winant, the ambassador. From inside the American embassy on Grosvenor-square came whispers of prevalent anti-British speculation and discussion.⁴³

The most serious sticking-point was Britain’s overseas empire, and more particularly her Indian possessions. In Washington Lord Halifax had privately recommended that Churchill find a new word for ‘colonies’ – ‘whether “territories” or any other that ingenuity can suggest.’⁴⁴

It would take more than cosmetic touches to fob off the Americans, however; President Roosevelt left no doubt of his hostility to any empire – other than his own burgeoning imperium of course. After the fall of Malaya he had bluntly told Sir Ronald Campbell that Britain could never retrieve the *status quo*, and he suggested that Britain, the United States, and China should jointly exert a trusteeship in Malaya. In August 1942 Leo Amery, an old-guard Conservative, taxed Churchill about the president’s unfriendly attitude: ‘I found Winston rather weak on this,’ wrote Amery, ‘inclined to think that America’s sacrifices would entitle her to some sort of say.’⁴⁵ Churchill responded only that it would no doubt be hard on Amery if the Americans did force Britain to abandon her empire – Amery’s life’s work. The minister replied sharply that he saw no need whatever for that.⁴⁶

The preparations for TORCH put military relations between the staffs equally to the test. To British eyes, the Americans seemed unable to plan operations on any scale. Eisenhower had asked the Pentagon to appoint General George Patton, a fine cavalry commander, to command the expeditionary force which would land at Casablanca; Patton arrived in London on August 9 and scouted around for a few days during Churchill’s absence. Eisenhower would have preferred to mount the entire TORCH operation within the relatively calm waters of the Mediterranean, and to leave the capture of Casablanca, with its terrifying Atlantic surf crashing on the beaches, until a later date; the further east their *Schwerpunkt*, he felt, the more probable an early capture of Tunis would become.

Fearing however that Hitler and Franco might at any moment make common cause and seal off the Straits of Gibraltar, the American Joint Chiefs of Staff overruled him.⁴⁷

Eisenhower remained pessimistic. On August 23 he sent a gloomy letter about the operation to the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington.⁴⁸ In conversations with his private staff he remarked that TORCH might well break his reputation.⁴⁹ He had begun the habit of twice-weekly meetings with Churchill – lunching with him at No. 10 early each week and dining with him at Chequers on Fridays. Churchill did not comment on the letter when he had Eisenhower and Mark Clark round for a meal on Tuesday August 25.⁵⁰ He reported that Stalin had told him in Moscow, ‘may God prosper this operation,’ and this, he felt, committed them all to staging TORCH at the earliest date and on the most ambitious scale.

The more that he saw these two American generals, the more he liked them. Conversely, their private views on him were less flattering. True, the prime minister had on this occasion drunk less than Eisenhower expected – he saw him down only one glass of sherry – and he had smoked only an inch of the over-long cigar. The P.M.’s manners in company had however startled his visitors. Once he accidentally knocked a highball glass off a side table; he continued talking without even glancing round to see where the glass and brandy had fallen.

Later that evening Churchill took off his shoes in front of the astonished American generals and changed into fresh socks, brought him by a valet. This was not his only personal problem. He walked over to the door, put his back against its open edge and rubbed his shoulder blades against it like a cow against a post, explaining: ‘Guess I picked ’em up in Egypt.’ Eisenhower related these incidents to his staff the next day and demonstrated how Churchill drank his soup. ‘Being short and blockily built,’ dictated his naval aide afterwards, ‘the P.M.’s chin isn’t very much above the soup plate. He crouches over the plate, almost has his nose in the soup, wields the spoon rapidly. The soup disappears to the accompaniment of loud and raucous gurglings.’⁵¹

The bickering over TORCH continued for several days. There now arrived from the American Joint Chiefs of Staff a memorandum insisting on a landing at Casablanca instead of the Mediterranean landing sites at Philippeville and Bône.⁵² ‘Out of the blue,’ as Churchill lamented in an unsent letter to Harry Hopkins when it was all over, ‘arrived the shattering memorandum of the United States Chiefs of Staff, which altered the whole

character and emphasis of the operation – discarding Algiers, the softest and most paying spot, and throwing all the major weight upon Casablanca and the Atlantic shore.⁵³ General Brooke could not understand why, and on August 26 there was a difficult chiefs of staff meeting, trying to establish the latest position on TORCH.

On the twenty-seventh the prime minister telegraphed to the president a rebuke about the ‘endless objections, misgivings and well-meant improvements’ saying that if the president would only appoint the date and place for TORCH, the rest would fall back into their proper place, and ‘action will emerge from what will otherwise be almost unending hummings and hawings.’ Brooke was horrified to discover that in this cable from Churchill to President Roosevelt he had arbitrarily set October 14 as the date for TORCH without even consulting his own chiefs of staff, arguing that ‘a bold, audacious bid for a bloodless victory at the outset may win a very great prize.’⁵⁴ Meeting with the chiefs of staff on the morning on August 27, General Brooke insisted to Churchill that they must oppose the American view, and undertake landings at Algiers and Oran, as well as at Philippeville and Bône.⁵⁵ Roosevelt had yet to reply.⁵⁶

Churchill invited them all down to Chequers on Friday August 28 to unravel all the uncertainties over TORCH. When Brooke motored over he found the two Americans, Eisenhower and Mark Clark, already there with Ismay, Eden and Mountbatten (it was the evening of Mountbatten’s spat with Brooke over Dieppe). Eisenhower had agreed only reluctantly to come, conscious that his exposed position between president and prime minister, and between the British and American chiefs of staff, was fraught with political risks. He was already wary of Winston’s ways and feared being misquoted by him to Roosevelt. He was tired of talking about TORCH, and called it all a ‘tedious, tiresome rehash.’⁵⁷ ‘After dinner we saw films including a Walt Disney one,’ noted Brooke. ‘However [we] did not get to bed till after two A.M.’⁵⁸

Impatient at the disputes, Churchill now suggested that he go over in person to Washington yet again. Eden discouraged the idea, putting forward reasons of health; Sir Charles Wilson advised Churchill that his heart would not stand the rigours of another Atlantic flight at this time.⁵⁹ Eden volunteered to make the trip himself. For reasons of domestic politics he seldom shunned the limelight, wherever its dazzling rays were to be sought, as he wanted to reinforce his position *vis-à-vis* Beaverbrook, Cripps, and other contenders for the prime ministerial succession.⁶⁰

On the next morning Churchill called yet another conference to discuss TORCH. 'Best not write anything about it,' wrote Eden afterwards.⁶¹ Less restrained, Brooke recorded that they reached agreement to stage the landings at Casablanca, Oran, and Algiers instead of at Oran, Algiers and Bône. Brooke felt this much wiser, as it conformed to the American outlook; but the Americans would now have to withdraw forces from the Pacific, and this would not suit Admiral King at all.⁶²

Early on Monday August 31 Churchill received a telegram from Roosevelt about TORCH, proposing still further changes. It was largely unintelligible, but it seemed that under pressure from General Marshall, the president wanted the Americans to stage the two westernmost landings first, as the vanguard of TORCH, leaving the British to put in their third assault a month later, after the Americans had secured a lodgement; this seemed their best chance of getting the Vichy French defenders not to oppose the landings – they were known to hate the British, and particularly Churchill, since the July 1940 naval slaughter of Mers el-Kébir.⁶³ The British loathed the idea. Brooke argued with Churchill about it until five P.M., then went to a chiefs of staff meeting with Eisenhower and Clark. The dispute went on.

On the morning of September 1 Churchill discussed with his chiefs of staff, and with Attlee, Eden and Lyttelton, the wording of a new message to Roosevelt insisting on landing their troops at Algiers as well as at Casablanca and Oran.⁶⁴

The only one to benefit from all this was Clementine – and her cook. Eisenhower had had the foresight to bring over a bag of lemons for her, a delicacy whose scent was almost forgotten by the English at war. Clementine decided to keep one on her table to look at from now on. Her cook 'almost fainted with joy.'⁶⁵

This disagreement with the Americans began preying on Winston's health. To Brooke he seemed tired and dejected, and Eden suspected that Winston's heart was beginning to give out.⁶⁶ On September 3 Churchill sent a further message about TORCH to the president, and he called another full-scale meeting. 'Winston depressed by last American telegram,' noted Eden, 'and all of us, I think, by this further evidence of "order, counter-order, disorder."' Eisenhower and Clark fought to straighten things out, and Eden once more took note of their high quality.⁶⁷

Unwilling to upset Roosevelt directly, Churchill drafted a furious letter to Harry Hopkins for Mountbatten to carry to Washington, protesting at this interference from 'across the ocean.' 'What is the use,' he wrote, 'of

putting up an Allied Commander-in-Chief or Supreme Commander if he cannot have the slightest freedom in making his plan or deciding how, when, and where to apply his forces? We are prepared to take his decisions and to obey.' The letter was never sent, for on the fifth a message arrived from Roosevelt, finally agreeing to throw their full weight behind the invasion of all three cities in French North-West Africa.⁶⁸



In the North African desert the tide of battle was already turning in Britain's favour.

In the first week in June 1942, even before the loss of Tobruk, the codebreakers at Bletchley Park had begun reading both of the German army's ENIGMA keys with only one day's delay. They had simultaneously broken a key which they nicknamed SCORPION, the new Army–Luftwaffe liaison (*Fliegerverbindungsoffizier*) key; from July 11 moreover the British secret service had allowed the deciphering of SCORPION signals to be done on the spot in Egypt, for which purpose the innocuously-named Combined Bureau Middle East had requisitioned the former Fauna and Flora Museum at Heliopolis, seven miles outside Cairo.

'It was easy to break,' reports one of Bletchley Park's men, 'for the daily settings could be predicted in advance.' On such trivia empires can be won and lost. It helped that several actual German cypher machines had been captured, and these only needed each day's settings typed in.⁶⁹

With the breaking in mid-July of another key, that used by Rommel's supply line from Greece and Crete, Bletchley Park had taken illicit possession of every Nazi cypher in use in North Africa.⁷⁰ All these secret triumphs had occurred before Auchinleck was replaced.

Montgomery recognised that it was vital for Eighth Army morale to win an early and decisive victory over Rommel. He soon had his chance. On August 13 he had decided that to thwart Rommel they must emplace a line of tanks and guns on the Alam Halfa ridge, south-west of Alamein.

The decrypts from the seventeenth onward confirmed this assessment; they revealed Rommel's exact operational plans and the approximate date for his offensive. With his fuel and ammunition supplies reduced to only four or five days of fighting, instead of the fifteen days for which he had hoped, Rommel decided at four P.M. on August 30 to mount his attack that same night. Churchill telephoned the news to General Brooke.⁷¹

The German attack began on the night of the thirty-first, but Montgomery had already set his trap. Wakened with the news of the attack, he remarked only: 'Excellent, couldn't be better,' and went back to sleep. Churchill radioed the news to Roosevelt and Stalin.

On September 1 the codebreakers in Britain heard Rommel warning his superiors in Berlin and Rome that he was already going over to the defensive; this realistic choice was forced on him by the ULTRA-inspired attacks on named tankers and freighters, which had destroyed one-third of his supplies including forty-one per cent of his fuel.⁷²

Rommel abandoned his attack on September 2 and retreated to his starting position: it was the first major defensive victory that Britain had scored since he had arrived in North Africa. 'I feel that I have won the first game,' Montgomery wrote to a friend in England, using a tennis analogy, 'when it was his [Rommel's] service. Next time it will be my service, the score being one-love.'⁷³

There was a limit to which such analogies were useful. When he mentioned his intention of replacing his chief gunner at headquarters, a senior officer replied that the incumbent was a delightful chap and a great golfer. 'Unfortunately,' snapped Montgomery, 'the game we are about to play is not golf.'⁷⁴



In the absence of military victories, Churchill continued to crush cabinet dissent like a dictator. He refused to recognise that Stanley Bruce, Australia's representative and a powerful opponent of Churchill's bombing policy, was entitled to contribute opinions other than on purely antipodean matters. Bruce had begun to express critical views on Churchill's strategy, particularly where Britain's shipping losses were concerned, and on the prime minister's vendetta against Germany's cities; he had written him several letters, without getting proper replies. The troublesome Australian privately told Lord Hankey, another powerful critic, that a showdown was coming. 'He knows most of the war cabinet agree individually with him,' noted Hankey, after meeting Bruce in the privacy of his apartment, 'but they are so much under Winston's spell that he is not sure that collectively they will back him.' Hankey, an expert both on cabinet government and on Winston's wily ways, advised Bruce to secure the backing of the other Commonwealth governments.⁷⁵

While Churchill's appointment of P. J. Grigg as war minister had been generally praised, his nomination of young Duncan Sandys – he had married Diana Churchill – to be Grigg's political under-secretary created much bad blood. Grigg accused the ambitious Sandys of snooping behind his back and reporting direct to his father-in-law. General Brooke, not one to mince his words in his unpublished diary, called Sandys an 'objectionable specimen.'⁷⁶ He tackled the foreign secretary about it, and Eden promised to do what he could with Winston – 'short of accepting Sandys in the foreign office.'⁷⁷ Churchill refused to budge. When Grigg threatened to hand in his resignation, Churchill called his bluff.⁷⁸

AS BRITAIN'S misfortunes continued, Churchill's attitude toward freedom of speech became more intolerant. War censorship rules already barred the press on either side of the Atlantic from touching upon the powder-keg issue of race or the racial affrays between Allied soldiers.⁷⁹ The censorship authorities had confiscated from Claire Booth Luce a dossier of very dangerous information about the damage sustained by *Queen Elizabeth* and *Valiant* and about Sir Miles Lampson's handling of King Faroukh.⁸⁰ Reading in Henry Luce's *Time* a description of Britain as 'oft-burned' and 'defensive-minded' he wrote to Brendan Bracken, minister of information, calling the news magazine a 'vicious rag' and ordaining that '[it] should have no special facilities here.' He was particularly indignant about Luce. 'I took some trouble with him myself,' he grumbled, referring to the publisher's recent visit to Britain.⁸¹

The left-wing British weekly *New Statesman* also caused him heartburn and he directed Bracken to see that none of its content was repeated outside Britain until he had personally been consulted: 'You can recur to me at any hour of the night or day,' he told Bracken, revealing the importance he attached to this.⁸² After the Soviet ambassador protested that the Royal Institute of International Affairs reviewed the publications of the Axis and Nazi-occupied territories in an objective and scholarly spirit while subjecting the Soviet press to passages 'couched in sarcastic and inimical terms calculated to provoke ridicule,' Churchill instructed Eden to threaten to withdraw the foreign office subsidy from the offending journal. 'We cannot indulge in such detachment in wartime,' he wrote.⁸³

At a dinner party late in September 1942 Churchill regurgitated to Beaverbrook, Sinclair, and several other cabinet ministers all his old hostility toward *The Daily Mirror*; surprisingly it was Beaverbrook who stood up

for the *Mirror*, saying that it spoke for very many people, particularly the younger generation.⁸⁴

Churchill's censorious methods extended to personalities too. When Eleanor Roosevelt invited Harold Laski, a fiery Jewish intellectual, to visit a youth congress in the United States, Churchill persuaded Hopkins to get the invitation withdrawn, explaining: 'Laski has been a considerable nuisance over here and will, I doubt not, talk extreme left-wing stuff in the United States. . . He has attacked me continually and tried to force my hand both in home and war politics.'⁸⁵ Censorship did of course have other privileges: the secret reports compiled by the censors allowed Churchill illicit glimpses into the thinking of his contemporaries. One report on Isaiah Berlin, the well-known thinker, described him as 'a very clever Jew who works in the British propaganda dept. here' (in Washington). With the understandable *Schadenfreude* of one race upon discovering that another is equally unloved, as the official censors put it, Dr Berlin had written privately to a friend listing no fewer than twenty-three reasons why the Americans disliked the British. In particular, he averred that the 'insincere and artificial sounding' English accent raised hackles in the USA, where Yorkshire and even Cockney was preferred.⁸⁶

Some months later Churchill's staff invited a Mr I. Berlin to lunch at No. 10. Under the impression that this guest was Isaiah, Churchill asked the puzzled Broadway composer Irving Berlin – for it was he – numerous questions about the American economy and about Roosevelt's prospects of being elected for a fourth term; Churchill, baffled by the composer's ad lib pronouncements, lisped afterwards that their guest did not seem to talk as well as he wrote; while the composer's wife remarked that if the prime minister really still thought her Irving was an economist after two hours, there were grounds for solid concern about the war. It would be April 15, 1944 before Dr Isaiah Berlin got to visit the prime minister at Chequers; displaying a greater felicity with words than with music, he would write perceptively afterwards that Churchill remained 'a mythical hero who belongs to legend as much as to reality, the largest human being of our time.'⁸⁷



The prime minister had driven down to Chequers early on Thursday September 3, worried by an attack of tonsillitis, and here he would stay until the seventh.⁸⁸

Arthur Hays Sulzberger, the publisher of *The New York Times*, came to lunch that Saturday. He had been on a three-week tour of British and American units on behalf of the American Red Cross. Over the meal – a baked potato concealing an egg, followed by mutton with onion sauce, green beans and mashed potatoes, and rounded off with an apple tart – the newspaperman studied his host closely. Winston, as was his wont, had appeared in his rompers. As Major Birse had also remarked in Moscow, when Churchill sensed that a Great Phrase was coming, he slowed down, enunciating each syllable with drama and expression. At times his voice dropped so low that, coupled with the lisp, it was at times unintelligible. It sounded inebriated; Beaverbrook would mischievously assure Sulzberger that evening that it was untrue that Churchill drank heavily, but Sulzberger kept silent count as the prime minister downed three or four glasses of white wine, three or four glasses of port, and two glasses of brandy and he noticed that his host had difficulty bringing the lighted match exactly to the end of the nine-inch cigar clamped in his jaw. ‘His nose seemed stuffy,’ the perceptive newspaperman noted afterwards, ‘his eyes watery, and his lips appeared to drool a bit.’⁸⁹

Churchill related in a few revealing phrases what had happened in Moscow. Stalin seemed unconvinced that the British were doing their bit. ‘All they have to do,’ he grumbled, ‘is to walk west, toward the setting sun, and shoot Germans. But when we walk towards the rising sun – we get our feet wet.’ Since the fiasco of Dieppe, the idea of the cross-Channel invasion hung over him like a nightmare. The rest of his remarks revolved around Washington’s interference in India, and his admiration for Winant, Eisenhower, and Mark Clark, whom he called the ‘American Eagle.’ Sulzberger professed himself impressed with the prospects that Churchill set out of increasing their bombing of Germany’s cities. Just as Eden often complained, however, the prime minister refused to discuss post-war issues at all. They still had a long way to go yet, that was his excuse. ‘The Hun is terribly strong.’ ‘The man who promised the skin of a lion,’ he admonished, ‘was eaten by the beast when he went to shoot it.’⁹⁰

The sore throat continued to worry him. He wanted to put on a good show when he reported to Parliament on the eighth about his encounter with Stalin. Editors had been warned by No. 10 to allow about ten thousand words for Churchill’s speech, which was two or three times as long as usual.⁹¹ The Members’ reception of the speech was mixed. The ‘weaker brethren’ were eager to bait him over the dismissal of Auchinleck, the Di-

eppe raid, and the failure to start a Second Front. While the Labour Members were disenchanted, the armed services were encouraged by his heartening account of the fighting against Rommel and his emphasis on the importance of Malta. Even Admiral Tovey was impressed. 'The PM's speech in the House was another masterpiece,' he wrote, 'and deservedly he scored a great personal success.'⁹² A socialist writer felt that Churchill had spoken with such mastery of understatement that he had taken the wind out of his critics' sails. He saw them tear up their notes and remain seated; when the prime minister finished there was a general exodus, and the debate, which had been expected to last two days, fizzled out within an hour.⁹³

THERE WAS one problem of coalition war which neither Churchill nor his cabinet had foreseen: he had discovered that by an edict of General Marshall ten per cent of the American troops coming over were to be Black; that was far too many. The United States were shipping tens of thousands of Negro troops into the southern British Isles which had hitherto been almost entirely white. Nor had the British received, as they had silently hoped, the upper ten per cent, the elite of those Blacks; one-third of those GI's currently in British prisons were Black. The cabinet was united in recognising the problems, chief among which was the over-friendly response by what they considered to be an ill-informed British public to these newcomers. At one meeting Anthony Eden articulated fears that American troops would be offended to see certain sections of the British people displaying 'more effusiveness' to the coloured people than they did.⁹⁴ While the wealthier classes kept the Negroes at the same healthy distance as did the White GIs, observed Eden, the frustrated and man-starved English country girls, lacking the same racial consciousness, saw no reason not to fraternise, and frequent affrays between American and British troops were the result.⁹⁵ One Member of Parliament told Lord Halifax on July 23 how difficult things were, what with the factory girls in his constituency throwing themselves at the Negro troops; it was, he added, in no way the fault of the latter.⁹⁶ Many other Members also wrote anxious letters to the war office about the arrival of Negro troops. Several ministers expressed disquiet, among them the Colonial Secretary and the Lord Chancellor. All told, there was a risk that this war might change the fair face of England for a long time to come.

Churchill had assured Sulzberger that he fully understood Eleanor Roosevelt's well-publicised concern for the Negroes' status; he observed that American politics were now bedevilled by race, as each side pandered

to the Black vote. His motives for saying this were, it seemed, of deeper root. Twice during their luncheon at Chequers he remarked to Sulzberger that there were depraved women who lusted sexually for Blacks – ‘It makes them feel something they have missed for years,’ he said.⁹⁷ Sulzberger told Lord Halifax on his return to Washington that the prime minister had been ‘a great deal concerned about Negro troops and how they ought to be used, and saw very clearly the dangers of quartering them in areas where nobody had seen a coloured man before.’⁹⁸ ‘The fact that the English treat our coloured people without drawing the race line,’ he told Henry Stimson, ‘was sure to make for trouble in the end.’ When Stimson admitted that they were encountering difficulties everywhere on that score, the newspaper publisher suggested that they concentrate the Negroes in the crowded English ports rather than in rural areas, where they were more likely to get into trouble.⁹⁹ The syndicated columnist Walter Lippmann made substantially the same recommendation after visiting England.¹⁰⁰ Recognising how sensitive the race issue was, Stimson asked Roosevelt to persuade Eleanor not to interfere during her forthcoming trip to England.¹⁰¹

In fact Churchill had already raised the matter with Harry Hopkins and General Marshall during July, stating that there had been serious racial disturbances involving Negro troops in Londonderry in Northern Ireland.¹⁰² His own views on the coloured peoples were robust, if primitive. At a cabinet discussion on July 27 on the disciplinary powers to be exercised by Indian army officers he let fly a flood of ‘childish’ objections to allowing the poor, harassed British soldier to be bossed around by ‘a brown man.’

‘Except Grigg,’ noted Amery, ‘nobody really agreed with him, but they none of them will speak out when Winston is in a tantrum.’¹⁰³

IT WAS a serious dilemma and Churchill’s government, unlike its successors, tried to face up to it. Washington ignored all hints that it should adjust the coloured influx. At the end of August 1942 Eden regretted to the cabinet that ‘the United States authorities were still sending over the full authorised proportion of coloured troops (about 10 per cent),’ and that given the likely problems they should again press the Americans to stem the flow.¹⁰⁴ The cabinet agreed that they should do what they could to keep English women – and White soldiers – away from this dusky newcomer with ‘his good qualities and his weaker ones.’¹⁰⁵ At Grigg’s advice the cabinet decided on October 13 that it was desirable that the British people should avoid becoming ‘too friendly’ with the Negro American troops. Their own

troops should be lectured by senior officers – putting nothing on paper; chief constables should be alerted to the problem; and selected newspaper editors should be supplied with media packs enlightening them on the colour question in the United States.¹⁰⁶

The problem grew more acute as more Blacks arrived over the next two years. They were mustered into segregated units, mostly engineering and labour, housed in segregated camps, and provided with equal but segregated facilities like Red Cross Clubs.

The British population, unfamiliar with the problems of race experienced by the United States, saw no reason either to differentiate or to segregate. Editors at *The Sunday Pictorial* and *The Sunday Express* published unhelpful editorials clamouring that the colour bar operated by the Americans must go. Their officers – who were almost all White – were again shocked by the loose behaviour of the British women, who actually seemed to single out the downtrodden Blacks for their sympathies. The women were however not the only ones blamed. Once, when American military police tried to arrest Negro troops, British civilians intervened shouting, 'They don't like the Blacks,' and 'Why don't they leave them alone?' A Black mutiny resulted, with court-martial charges.

By late October 1943, 38,179 Negro troops had arrived. Putting his finger on what he saw as the real problem, the secretary for war wrote to Churchill: 'I expect that the British soldier who fears for the safety or faithfulness of his women-folk at home, would not feel so keenly as the B.B.C. and the public at home appear to do in favour of a policy of no colour bar and complete equality of treatment of Negro troops.'¹⁰⁷

Churchill expressed his anxiety to Grigg, and asked for the relevant figures.¹⁰⁸ Providing to No. 10 the requested statistics on murder, attempted murder, 'carnal knowledge,' and rape committed by these Negro troops, the Duke of Marlborough, attached to the office of the U.S. Army's provost-marshal, urgently counselled taking preventive action before it was too late. Local people, he said, were now frightened to go out after dark where these troops were stationed. The figures showed that five times more Black than White troops had contracted venereal diseases, the curse of every great war. Moreover, 'The existence of the drug marijuana (a form of hasheesh) has been found in the possession of coloured troops' – they believed that the drug if given to unsuspecting women might 'excite their sexual desires.' The trickle of mulatto children on its way into England's ancient people was about to become a tide.¹⁰⁹

Churchill was shocked, and passed the figures on to the war office, while asking them to keep the Duke's name out of it.¹¹⁰ Grigg discussed the behaviour of the American Negro troops with General Jacob Devers, the theatre commander. Devers assured him he had the situation in hand. Writing to the prime minister Grigg blamed the high incidence of crime and V.D. on the Americans having deliberately selected the worst elements among the Negro troops for the European theatre, and on their 'exuberance . . . on coming overseas.' The statistics showed that Negroes were committing twice as many sex offences as White troops, and five times as many other crimes of violence. In both cases, lamented Grigg, the root cause was 'the natural propensities of the coloured man.' Since there was going to be a vast increase in the number of Negro troops based in England in the spring of 1944, there were no grounds for complacency.¹¹¹



Winston Churchill was very conscious of his own White Anglo-Saxon origins, and this was sometimes the despair of his colleagues – albeit a despair tinged with an element of hypocrisy. That same month, after an evening in which he downed eight slugs of whisky, he reacted furiously to Sulzberger's suggestion that he was making a mistake in refusing to see Gandhi. Churchill exploded that he would see the Indian politician in jail.¹¹² 'I hate Indians,' he burst out in a conversation with Amery at this time. 'They are a beastly people with a beastly religion.'¹¹³

Gandhi and the extremist Hindu members of his committee had declared a mass campaign of sabotage and civil disobedience in India, and early in August the viceroy ordered them arrested and interned – Gandhi in a palace, and his followers in less comfortable prison conditions in Bombay. It was an unavoidable action in the midst of a war: India might otherwise have found herself well on the road to another bloody mutiny.¹¹⁴ The arrests aroused indignation around the world.

When the British refused to take American concerns seriously, Claire Booth Luce placed a large advertisement in *The New York Times* calling for mediation. Lord Halifax noted with private amusement, 'I should like a full page advertisement in *The Times* calling a large meeting at the Albert Hall to consider the Negro problem' in the USA.¹¹⁵ Another Englishman, arriving in New York, was asked about the Indian problem; he rejoined: 'I didn't know there was one. I thought you had killed them all off.'¹¹⁶

To the Americans however India was no laughing matter. Roosevelt was both disappointed and embarrassed by the Churchill government's attitude on India, which was so out of tune with the 'people's war' that Washington hoped the Allies were fighting.¹¹⁷ The Chinese leader Chiang Kai-shek protested to Washington that the Indian Congress leaders only wanted the British out of India so that they might help the Allies the more. Roosevelt forwarded this seductive Chinese argument to London, and Amery mischievously forwarded it to Churchill – by then slugging it out with Stalin in Moscow.¹¹⁸ The prime minister dismissed it as 'eye wash.' After Amery urged Winston to tell Chiang and the president to mind their own business, the prime minister cabled the president on August 14:

I take it amiss [that] Chiang should seek to make difficulties between us and should interfere in matters about which he has proved himself most ill-informed which affect our sovereign rights.¹¹⁹

(He wrote 'Chiang' but clearly his real target was Roosevelt himself). The decision to intern Gandhi was, Churchill averred, taken by an Indian executive of twelve men, of whom only one was a European; the other eleven were as patriotic and able as any of the Hindu Congress leaders. 'It occurred to me,' he told Roosevelt, '[that] 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 [anticipation] of their joining hands with Hitler.' He suspected the hand of the diminutive Madame Chiang behind the message. '*Cherchez la femme*,' he hinted to the president.¹²⁰

He was not frightened of the Chinese. When they demanded later in 1942 that Britain voluntarily terminate her lease on the New Territories which supported Hongkong, Eden recommended to the cabinet that they tell the Chinese that Britain would be 'prepared to discuss its surrender' after the war. It was neither the first nor the last time that Eden showed himself in favour of appeasement; Churchill however lectured the same cabinet sardonically about 'those people who got up each morning asking themselves how much more of the empire they could give away.'¹²¹

CHURCHILL spent several days drafting a statement on India to the House. By the time it had been mauled over by this minister and that, it was in Amery's words 'a queer document,' and he hoped it would not do more harm than good in India. Churchill delivered the statement after Questions

on September 10. 'I therefore feel,' Churchill concluded, 'entitled to report to the House that the situation in India at this moment gives no occasion for undue despondency or alarm.' The statement evoked ringing cheers from the Tories, and disappointment from the Opposition benches.¹²² The impression was that he was glad to sit back and smash the Hindu Congress, and this was not welcomed in Washington.¹²³ From there Lord Halifax wrote to Eden, 'Winston's statement on India will not have done us much good here. Why must he talk about White troops when "the British Army in India" would have served his purpose just as well?'¹²⁴

Lord Halifax tried to get Smuts to make a speech commending Britain's purpose and actions in India when visiting London in October, and in Halifax's words 'supplying some of the warmth of feeling and hope' in which Churchill's utterances were so singularly lacking. 'I really begin to think,' wrote Halifax, 'that whatever his merits as a war leader, on many things Winston is little short of a disaster.'¹²⁵ In November, Churchill suggested to his cabinet that it might be a good plan to publish a history of the development of the British colonial empire, vindicating their policies, in view of these on-going criticisms from the United States.¹²⁶

There was one related topic on which Churchill displayed a mulish obstinacy, the huge sterling balances which India had accumulated in her favour through the vicarious arrangements made for her defence. As Montagu Norman, Governor of the Bank of England, had pointed out these were already so vast that India had bought back from Britain her government and railway indebtedness, and she might now want to buy out every other British interest in India too.¹²⁷ Churchill's attitude was that it was 'monstrous' to expect Britain to defend India, and then to have to clear out but 'pay hundreds of millions for the privilege.' Amery reasoned that India had supplied goods and soldiers to the Middle East, Malaya, and other theatres of this war. Kingsley Wood suggested they adjourn the prickly issue indefinitely. Amery liked that, noting however that they must word things 'so as not to cast doubts upon our genuine intention to honour our obligations.'¹²⁸

The matter of the sterling balances, which by July 1943 amounted to over £800 millions, kept coming up: fed by the Prof. with spurious economic arguments, Churchill rumbled like an only partially extinct volcano throughout such debates, hinting that he was minded to submit 'a counter claim' against India when the time came.¹²⁹

Amery stoutly opposed him. 'It may be honourable or necessary to bilk your cabby when you get to the station,' he observed in a shrewish aside to

his diary, 'but I cannot see how it helps telling him through the window that you mean to bilk him when you get there.'¹³⁰ He passionately demanded a private interview with the prime minister. Resorting to a now familiar ploy, Churchill invited his old friend round to see him on September 22 and took off all his clothes. 'I found him,' dictated Amery that day, 'just emerging from his bath and we discoursed while he was drying himself down.' Viewed thus, the prime minister evoked ancient memories of shared showers in their House at Harrow. Winston was, Amery however noticed, 'a very different figure from the little boy I first saw in a similar state of nature at Ducker' some sixty years before. After suggesting that they send Sir John Anderson, to whom Churchill in a fit of whimsy referred as 'Jehovah,' to replace Lord Linlithgow as viceroy, he refused to discuss the sterling balances at all and, still dripping, genially ushered the India Secretary out.¹³¹



To fix the final date for TORCH he had the American generals round for dinner on September 8; asked now when the operation could be launched, Eisenhower asked for sixty days, which would expire on November 8. To the prime minister, it seemed 'a tragedy' to wait so long, as he minuted the chiefs of staff the next day. He worried that the enemy would guess their targets, and gave each of the intended invasion sites French names – Dunkirk, Calais, and Boulogne – as cover.

On September 11 he invited the generals down to Chequers again – Eisenhower, Mark Clark, and Brooke, accompanied by Lords Mountbatten and Leathers (the latter minister for war transport). After dinner, to Brooke's dismay, Winston again insisted that they watch a movie until one A.M., after which he kept them all up until three arguing over the prospects of TORCH and the reception which the Americans were likely to receive.¹³² At three A.M. he then announced, as the Vice-Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Moore recalled, 'It's time you people went to bed, I am going to do my papers.'¹³³ In the morning they wrangled over his demand that they launch TORCH earlier; for a while they even examined whether they could shoehorn in another PQ convoy to North Russia first, but the dangers were too great that the naval escorts might be damaged and thus be unavailable to TORCH, and that the eighty freighters might find themselves frozen in at Archangel throughout the coming winter. As usual, Brooke noted, Churchill was trying to squeeze the last ounce out of the naval forces.¹³⁴

Eisenhower was never keen on the North African assault. Reporting to General Marshall on September 15, he warned that his own carrier-borne air forces would be heavily outnumbered by the Vichy French squadrons in Africa. The French ground forces, though poorly equipped, could also delay the Allies long enough to enable the Axis to bring in reinforcements. The Spanish army's attitude was unknown; the indications were however that Hitler did not intend to move into Spain, since he had made no move in this direction so far. 'Based on all the above,' Eisenhower concluded, 'we consider that the operation has more than a fair chance of success.' Even so, he rated the chance of obtaining Tunis, the overall goal of the enterprise, before the Axis could reinforce it at less than fifty-fifty.¹³⁵

Churchill was more worried than Eisenhower about General Franco's attitude. He had to consider every possibility. With the build-up at Gibraltar already beginning, so many Allied aircraft would have to be parked on R.A.F. North Front, the neutral ground between the Rock and Spain, that Hitler might well demand their eviction or reciprocal permission to base Luftwaffe planes on airfields at Valencia. 'We might,' minuted Churchill, 'be faced with a showdown with Franco over this at an awkward moment.'¹³⁶ Eden agreed, worried that the R.A.F. airfield at Gibraltar was well within range of Franco's artillery.

SO FAR however the Spaniards appeared keen to avoid disturbing the British. When a Catalina flying-boat crashed off Cadiz without any survivors at the end of September, the corpses were handed over to the British authorities, evidently untouched. This was just as well. As the Governor of Gibraltar, Lieutenant-General Sir Noel Mason-Macfarlane, reported on September 28, a highly secret document had been found on the body of one passenger, Paymaster-Lieutenant J. H. Turner – a letter dated September 14 from Major-General Mark Clark to Mason-Macfarlane himself, announcing the date on which he and Eisenhower would be arriving; the letter also mentioned November 4 as the 'target date.' Churchill told Ismay to find out whether the letter had been tampered with. The admiralty learned that a second letter on the body, dated September 21, was no less revealing, from 'Headquarters, Naval C.-in-C., Expeditionary Force.' British Intelligence initially decided that the sand lodged in the button-holes of Turner's coat indicated that the Spaniards had not reached into its inside pocket; the two seals on the Mark Clark letter had not been tampered with, and they assured the prime minister that TORCH had not been compromised. Within a

month codebreaking revealed that the enemy had in fact photocopied all the documents.¹³⁷ It was probably this episode which later inspired his Intelligence to do something like it again, only this time deliberately.



One aspect of TORCH worried Eisenhower. His country was about to launch an unprovoked attack on Vichy France, which was technically a neutral and a country with which they maintained friendly diplomatic relations. As General Eisenhower would later write, it met every criterion of a crime against international law, unless some way could be found of persuading the French to invite the Americans to invade – an artifice of which Adolf Hitler had from time to time made unashamed use, for example in invading Austria.¹³⁸ The Americans set great store by politics as a way of sparing blood. Roosevelt briefed Robert D. Murphy, one of the state department's most experienced diplomats in North Africa, about TORCH and sent him over to London in mid-September.¹³⁹

Sporting the uniform of a lieutenant-colonel and the code-name 'McGowan,' Murphy arrived to see Eisenhower at Telegraph Cottage, the general's English country hideout, on Wednesday the sixteenth. Since TORCH was to be a primarily American operation, Murphy saw only fellow Americans; he would return straight to Washington without even seeing the British prime minister. He was amused to find that Eisenhower, like most of the others present, had a mental image of North Africa as a country of primitive peoples inhabiting mud huts; he corrected them – it was more like California. That did nothing to cure Eisenhower's instinctive dislike of TORCH; like Marshall, the general viewed it as a sideshow, a wholly unnecessary diversion from the 'real' campaign in Europe.

Murphy identified to him several Vichy French officers believed to sympathise with the Allies; he intended to disburse large quantities of Gold bullion to nourish those sympathies.¹⁴⁰ The invasion forces would meet most resistance, he predicted, from France's four-star Resident-General in Morocco, Auguste Paul Noguès, adviser to the Sultan. In what was eventually to prove a cardinal misjudgement, Murphy also recommended that they somehow bring the army general Henri Honoré Giraud out of occupied France; Giraud was reputed to be a great hero in Morocco, having escaped by daredevil means from German captivity. The plan would be to evacuate him to Gibraltar in time to assume command of a friendly Vichy French

army in North Africa. The French navy was unlikely to follow suit, as their admirals' dislike of Churchill was all too evident, since the Royal Navy's massacre of two thousand young French sailors at Mers el-Kébir two years before, coupled with de Gaulle's fiasco in Dakar and the further bloodshed in Syria.¹⁴¹ (Well aware of this, Churchill contemplated allowing all British participants in the invasion force to wear American army uniforms.)¹⁴²

Many Vichy officials were likely to oppose both Allies. Murphy casually set out his plans for their elimination – according to notes taken by one of Eisenhower's staff Murphy spoke of assassinations 'as nonchalantly as if lighting a Murad.' Further targets for assassination would be the members of the German and Italian armistice commission in Algiers. Confirming that he would 'lie, cheat, steal, and even give orders for assassination' to beat the enemy, Eisenhower admitted to his staff a few days later that he had already issued one such instruction.¹⁴³ After this day-long conference, Murphy flew straight back to the United States.



At Alamein there was a temporary stalemate, as Rommel's and Montgomery's armies eyed each other and wound up for their next offensives.

As the days of late summer passed in seeming inactivity Churchill's nervousness increased. Through his Oracle he could follow the progress of Rommel's engineers as they dug-in and fortified, and laid ever-denser minefields ahead of the Eighth Army; Montgomery had sent to London his own plan for an offensive, code-named LIGHTFOOT, but it was not due to start for many weeks. The prime minister wanted General Alexander to bring it forward, so that Spain would be restrained before TORCH began.¹⁴⁴

On September 17 he had sent an anxious cable to Egypt: 'My understanding with you was the fourth week in September.' Alexander showed this to Montgomery, who drafted a short reply indicating that if the offensive went ahead in September, it would probably fail; if the attack took place in October, however, victory was guaranteed.

It all seemed distressingly familiar. Winston replied to General Alexander that he had been unprepared for such bad news, 'having regard to your strength compared with the enemy.' Telephoning Eden, he grumbled that now Alexander was asking for a month's postponement. 'W. naturally depressed,' recorded Eden afterwards, 'and I could give no useful encouragement, consequences being evident.'¹⁴⁵

Churchill put through a scrambler telephone call to the C.I.G.S., but Brooke was out shooting on the Yorkshire moors. When the prime minister accused him of being out of touch, Brooke replied unhelpfully that he had yet to solve the problem of how to remain in touch whilst in a grouse-butt. Told of Alexander's arguments for postponing until October, Brooke could only advise the prime minister that they sounded excellent. Still dissatisfied, Churchill wired to Alexander educating him on the need to draw German forces away from TORCH. On September 23 he wrote again, adding in red ink, 'Whatever happens, we shall back you up and see you through.' As each day passed Rommel's efforts to fortify his defences worried him more: 'Instead of a crust through which a way can be cleared in a night,' he asked Alexander, 'may you not find twenty-five miles of fortifications, with blasted rock, gun-pits and machine-gun posts?' It was a worrying wait all round.¹⁴⁶



Still fretting, Churchill called his chiefs of staff down to Chequers on Monday September 21 for a joint meeting with the American generals Eisenhower, Mark Clark, and Bedell Smith. Since they were to dissect all their coming operations the prime minister had also invited Eden, General Nye, and Mountbatten as well as the transport minister Lord Leathers.¹⁴⁷ Walter Bedell Smith, Eisenhower's chief of staff, had arrived in England two weeks earlier; he was a highly capable staff officer of the older generation, with an old ulcer problem about which he kept quiet for fear of being pink-slipped out of the war. He was on a milk diet, and Eisenhower did not find it easy to cover for him in the hard-drinking milieu of Chequers.¹⁴⁸

The American commander hoped that Churchill was now beginning to appreciate the risks involved in TORCH, and the delay that establishing nine American and four British divisions in French Morocco, with all their supporting echelons, would inevitably inflict on any cross-Channel invasion; he had been pointing this out, via Marshall, to the British chiefs of staff since July. After sitting up all night, they now agreed on November 8 as the date for launching TORCH. This ruled out running another convoy to North Russia in the interim: it was just as well, because PQ 19's cargo of 151 P-39 fighter planes was being unloaded by the Americans to free them for their role in TORCH.¹⁴⁹

Mark Clark afterwards provided Henry Stimson with a thought-provoking account of this Chequers weekend, and of Churchill's belated dis-

covery of the dispersion of forces that TORCH would involve – and of his proposed further diversion of forces to Norway as a sop to Stalin.¹⁵⁰ The prime minister suggested once again that they launch his little operation JUPITER against northern Norway, this time as a cover for TORCH. He told the chiefs of staff that he would ‘ask for the approval of the war cabinet’ to send out General McNaughton to Russia to begin staff studies on this.¹⁵¹ Since he had already gained Stalin’s qualified support for the operation, the chiefs of staff had to develop even more determined means of discouraging him. They turned his ‘wild plans’ over to their Joint Planning Committee – a body which existed for little other purpose than to tear such projects to pieces. (It was not surprising, wrote Brooke after the war, that Winston in one moment of anger said, ‘Those damned Planners of yours plan nothing but difficulties.’)¹⁵²

AFTER THE uninspiring Chequers meeting ended General Eisenhower stepped out into the panelled entrance hall where an aide was waiting to drive him to London. As he signed the guest book, he was heard to mutter, ‘Discouraging, discouraging.’¹⁵³

More than one man shared Eisenhower’s alarm at the dives and sweeps characterising Churchill’s grand strategy. From Ottawa, Mackenzie King – evidently alerted to the plan by McNaughton – telegraphed his vehement objections to any invasion of northern Norway. Churchill tried to explain in his response the ‘dire necessity of convincing Premier Stalin of our resolve to help him to the utmost of our strength.’¹⁵⁴

In London, Admiral Tovey, the commander-in-chief of the Home Fleet felt that the prime minister was prone to rely on expediency and brainwaves – that he was over-fond of the dramatic, and intoxicated with public acclaim. To the admiral’s knowledge he had put up several wild schemes – he was undoubtedly thinking of northern Norway; the admiral had strongly disapproved of SLEDGEHAMMER, the original scheme for a Second Front. ‘It was impossible not to feel uneasy,’ he wrote privately to a fellow admiral late in September, after planning for TORCH began, ‘when I heard a lightning shift had been made to a totally different locality.’¹⁵⁵

ONE SUCH dramatic act which Churchill contemplated that summer, not unlike the naval massacre at Mers el-Kébir, was to wipe out the southern French town of Vichy, seat of Marshal Pétain’s government, in a ‘severe and immediate bombing’ raid in the run-up to TORCH. Since Britain was not at

war with Vichy France, this too would have been a criminal act. 'Let me know what could be done during November,' he wrote to the chief of air staff, 'assuming it was considered necessary.'

Not troubling his prime minister with the problems in international law, Sir Charles Portal replied only that the town was small and difficult to find, particularly in such a bad-weather month as November. There would be no good moon before the twentieth: he personally favoured an attack at dusk, despite the inevitably heavy casualties from the ground and air defences. 'Butcher' Harris agreed. Portal suggested they enlist the American bomber squadrons too. 'Yes,' noted Churchill, inking his approval: 'It is prudent to have everything possible up one's sleeve. I regard action as most unlikely and undesirable,' he added.¹⁵⁶

There was still a troublesome ambivalence about Churchill's bombing policy. His cabinet had defined that bombing enemy-occupied countries, as opposed to Germany itself, must be confined to military objectives, and they had forbidden any attack on their populations as such; indeed, they were to take every reasonable care to avoid killing civilians. Since the enemy was deemed to have adopted a campaign of unrestricted air warfare these restrictions did not apply to the bombing war against German, Italian, or – when the time came – Japanese territory.¹⁵⁷

THINKING AHEAD to the months after victory in North Africa, he asked the chiefs of staff what studies they had undertaken to exploit TORCH. 'Sardinia, Sicily and Italy itself have no doubt been considered,' he prompted. 'If things go well we should not waste a day but carry the war northwards with audacity.'¹⁵⁸

These things should not have required saying, but he detected a reluctance of the Americans to operate forcefully in the Mediterranean theatre; the inability to follow through while the enemy was off balance was to plague Allied strategy from the middle of 1943 onward.

26: *Pig in the Middle: Darlan*

IN NONE OF these deliberations had any account been taken of General Charles de Gaulle, the Free French leader. It is now easier to piece together a history of Churchill's relations with de Gaulle, as more of the relevant British official files have been opened. From these scorch-marked files, and from private papers of certain Americans, it is clear that there was continuing and corrosive animosity between the two leaders.

The émigré general had become the creature of the foreign office, and Churchill found that it was not easy to disembarass himself of the monster which he had himself created in Britain's hour of need. In his opposition to de Gaulle he found open support from Eisenhower.

They had no desire to import all the hatreds inherent in France's burgeoning civil war. 'In our Civil War it was brother against brother, and father against son,' said Bedell Smith, Eisenhower's chief of staff, a few days after his arrival at Norfolk House in Saint-James's. 'The civil wars are the bitterest, so we are purposely keeping the De Gaullists out of this picture.'¹

Roosevelt's opposition to de Gaulle was to prove even stronger.² As a democrat, he distrusted political generals; if he had to choose one, his instinct was to go with General Giraud as Murphy had advised.

In the months before TORCH he recognised de Gaulle as a liability, as the French forces in North Africa detested him for his abortive attack on them at Dakar in 1940.

In September 1942 the president again urged Churchill to leave the initial TORCH landings to American troops, explaining: 'A British-commanded attack . . . or [one] with De Gaullist co-operation, would meet with determined resistance.' To this Roosevelt added a few days later that he considered it essential to give de Gaulle no information whatsoever, 'regardless of how irritated and irritating he may become.' Churchill agreed, although he did

feel it unwise to keep the Frenchman entirely off the North African stage once TORCH had begun.

De Gaulle had become even more intransigent because of Syria. After Churchill lifted the ban on his leaving Britain, on receiving assurances of good behaviour, the general had flown to Beirut in August 1942 and begun talking about forcing the British troops out of the French Levant if they failed to meet his terms. He wanted Churchill to recall his personal friend General Sir Edward Spears, who was now Britain's minister in Damascus and Beirut. The cabinet had however indicated to de Gaulle through their Minister of State in Cairo, Richard Casey, that the general should hold free elections in Syria.³ De Gaulle declared that Casey had no authority to dictate to him. Churchill peremptorily recalled the French general 'for consultations'; the general refused to return and suggested that Churchill deal with René Pleven, of his French National Committee.⁴ Churchill retaliated by refusing to allow this committee to take over in Madagascar.

Surrendering to *force majeure*, on September 24 de Gaulle slunk back to London, asking to see Churchill.⁵ The latter, his ire roused by reports from Spears and the generals, fobbed him off until the last day of September. It was a cold evening, and the heating at No. 10 would not be turned on for another month. De Gaulle acted, as Anthony Eden afterwards described, like a 'second Ribbentrop' – being as stiff, rude, and arrogant as the Nazi foreign minister had ever been. Churchill remained patient but obdurate, refusing to transfer the military command in Syria to the Free French, and again urging elections there. De Gaulle ruled this out; as there were now more French than British troops in Syria, he insisted, command there should pass to the French. Churchill refused and remarked, without elaborating, that the differences between them there did not augur well for other theatres. When de Gaulle said that events in Madagascar called into question future collaboration between France and England, Churchill corrected him. '– Between *General de Gaulle* and England,' he said.⁶

The C.I.G.S. arrived at seven P.M., just as the Frenchman was sweeping out; Brooke learned that de Gaulle had 'adopted a very high-handed attitude.'⁷ Exploiting the privileges of high office, Churchill ordered a stop on all outgoing telegrams issued by General de Gaulle.⁸ Discovering that he was due to broadcast that same evening Churchill also telephoned instructions to the BBC to switch off the microphone the instant de Gaulle departed from the script.⁹ The Frenchman was mortified – *ulcéré*, as his staff put it – and spoke much about Churchill's injuries to his *honneur*. His generals and

admirals made plain that the Free French navy was on de Gaulle's side 'and would follow him.'¹⁰ Over the next weeks his attitude softened, but Madagascar and the Levant remained unresolved issues between them.¹¹

KNOWING OF Eden's soft spot for the general, Churchill commented to him that he felt sorry for the Frenchman, but he was 'such a fool.'

In their meetings during the coming week he put on a kinder face to the young foreign secretary. Once, he remarked on how much he wished he could always run the war like this – just the two of them, with the chiefs of staff occasionally consulted. As soon as Attlee came back – he had gone to visit Roosevelt – they would have, alas, to revert to the old routine. Eden again pleaded with him to abolish the defence committee, which was a hotbed of opposition. Churchill responded that this was the one place where his service ministers (Grigg, Sinclair, and Alexander) still had a show.¹²



He had not abandoned hope of enticing Turkey into the war and invited the Turkish ambassador to see him after lunch on September 24, 1942. A day or two later 'C' sent him the ambassador's report on this, intercepted by the codebreakers. 'He received me with a smiling face and a genial air,' the diplomat had described. Beginning with the 'good news' about Turkey's requirements for war material and munitions, Churchill had read out a list of British and American tanks, anti-tank guns, Bofors guns, and other weapons which, he promised, 'could be' in Turkey within two months. The ambassador shrewdly remarked that he could see no mention of aircraft in the list. 'I am studying that point and I shall do my best,' said Churchill evasively. 'If there is a disaster on the Egyptian front it will naturally be impossible to send these things to Turkey.' Turning to the eastern front, he said that the fact that the Russians were still holding Stalingrad looked hopeful for the future.¹³

MONTGOMERY'S TACTICAL success at Alam Halfa was not the sort of thing to inspire popular enthusiasm, and murmuring against Churchill resumed.

Among the murmurers was Sir Stafford Cripps. Sensing that his hour might be approaching to seize power, on September 21 he had written to the prime minister announcing that he wanted to resign as Leader of the House. Churchill begged him to wait. The ascetic socialist politician came

over to see him on the thirtieth – on the evening of the ugly row with de Gaulle – for their first real talk since his return from India in the spring. He cannot have found the Churchillian ambience palatable, with its late hours, small talk, swathes of cigar smoke, and endless whisky.¹⁴ He complained to Churchill that he was being left in the dark about everything, and that Beaverbrook was poisoning relations between them; Churchill did not really care and showed it. For the first hour, according to Cripps' account, the prime minister attacked him, accusing him of stirring up malcontents from all quarters. They went at it hammer and tongs until 2:30 A.M., and Cripps felt that they had reached the parting of the ways.

Seeking allies, he suggested to Eden that they would all get on better without Winston. He wanted to resign as he was 'not satisfied with the conduct of the war,' and he cited several specific instances.¹⁵ He said that he might ask to be sent overseas, for example co-ordinating war supplies in the United States. Eden hurried round to warn Churchill.¹⁶ He 'found the P.M. in a great state of anger,' as his secretary recorded, 'rolling out threats and invectives against C[ripps] and declaring it was a conspiracy.' Churchill warned that they could not afford to let Cripps go before TORCH: he knew too much about the ramshackle ways of this government. Eden bridled: 'I thought we were fighting the Germans!' He persuaded Churchill, though not without difficulty, to do nothing rash about Cripps.

Churchill remained convinced that Cripps was engineering a 'Machiavellian political plot.' He declaimed melodramatically, 'If TORCH fails, then I'm done for and must go, and hand over to one of you.' He flatly refused to treat further with Cripps. They eventually agreed that Attlee and Eden should see Cripps and discuss with him his American idea; alternatively he might take over the ministry of aircraft production without a seat in the war cabinet. The two men appealed to him not to rock the boat at this critical juncture in the war.¹⁷ Cripps agreed to sleep on these proposals.

On October 2 Churchill received Cripps and pleaded with him to postpone the whole question until after TORCH. Cripps asked to talk it over with Eden first. Eden again lectured him about rocking boats. If TORCH failed, he said, they would all be sunk anyway. He urged the minister to think of the poor effect it would have on their troops if a cabinet minister started a general attack on Churchill's direction of the war right now. Cripps pointed out that Eden's suggestion left his principal criticisms unresolved – namely that they would be better off without Winston. He agreed to think things over and write a letter to the prime minister. Eden, who read the

resulting draft, advised him that no prime minister could accept it. Reporting all this to the prime minister, Eden tactfully omitted Cripps's more *ad hominem* criticisms. Churchill agreed not to force things to a head. Eden prayed that the P.M. would not consult Beaverbrook, who would be less moderate.¹⁸ As for the letter, Cripps redrafted it – the new version undertook not to announce any resignation until TORCH had been launched. Eden telephoned the text through to Winston. Thus what had loomed as the gravest threat yet to Churchill's premiership subsided.

Eden could tell that the prime minister was relieved, though still exasperated by the minister's conduct. 'The hostility between them is bound to deepen,' recorded the foreign secretary in his private diary, 'but the essential is that it should not burst at a time most damaging to the nation.'¹⁹



That Sunday, October 4, 1942, the prime minister again invited the American generals Eisenhower and Mark Clark down to Chequers. The ancient house was chilly; Winston and Clementine both wore heavy overcoats, while the coatless generals shivered. President Roosevelt's son Elliott, a lieutenant-colonel, joined them for dinner, as did Pamela Churchill, Randolph's estranged wife. She passed on to Eisenhower criticisms she had heard of favouritism in the hiring of female drivers for the American headquarters. The subject of his female drivers was not a felicitous topic to raise with Eisenhower, as history now knows. With scarcely greater tact, Eisenhower suggested to Churchill that the media might speak of American troops assisting Montgomery's forces at El Alamein. (There were no American troops within a thousand miles of Montgomery's army.) Eisenhower meant well – the newspapers had somehow got wind of TORCH and he wanted to lay a few red herrings. Churchill told him gruffly that the idea was a non-starter. 'The feelings of our troops have to be considered,' he noted separately for the British chiefs of staff. Rommel's *Afrika Korps* was unlikely to be deceived, and the Eighth Army would be none too pleased either.²⁰ He again required his guests to stay up watching a movie until two-thirty A.M.; Eisenhower had already seen it twice before.

By the time this weekend was over, feelings were ruffled all round. On Monday morning, without waiting for the arrival of their car, the American generals walked out of the gate at Chequers to meet it, 'as if more than ready to leave,' as Eisenhower's startled aide noted. The generals told him

that they had said all the proper farewells, but they had decided to hit the road in case the prime minister raised still more topics of debate.²¹

BACK IN London the prime minister dined with Ambassador Winant and Myron C. Taylor, Roosevelt's special ambassador at the Vatican.²²

The conversation soon turned to bombing the Italian capital, which had long been Churchill's ambition. 'We will bomb Rome when the time comes,' he had inked on one Intelligence report in November 1940.²³ On September 4, 1941 an enemy plane had dropped bombs near Cairo, but the cabinet had decided that this isolated action did not justify 'retaliation on Rome.' Taylor, who was close to Pope Pius XII, had already had one secret conversation with the prime minister a year before about his noisy threats to extend the bombing war to Italy – Churchill had publicly declared in Parliament on the last day of September 1941 that Britain would not hesitate to bomb Rome as heavily as possible when it suited her.²³ The Pope had given Taylor a memorandum warning of the most serious consequences if bombs fell on the Vatican City or any of the very numerous basilicas, churches, or pontifical buildings and institutions in Rome. 'The Holy See could not remain silent,' the Vatican had warned the British minister to the Holy See, Mr D'Arcy Osborne, and his American colleague Harold Tittmann.²⁴

Churchill had been inquiring for some time into what scale of attack could be mounted on Rome, and he wrote to the chief of air staff even before seeing Myron Taylor.²⁵ The response was discouraging, and the air ministry signalled secretly to R.A.F. Middle East that there were to be no attacks on the city without prior sanction. The Americans had been shocked by Churchill's pronouncement, warning that bombing Rome would unite the whole Italian people behind Mussolini. Air Chief Marshal Portal rejected the foreign office suggestion that nuisance raids should presage any all-out attack on the Italian capital. 'I am sure,' he wrote in October,

that the proper course is to hold our hand until the right moment has come and then to deliver attacks on the heaviest possible scale in the centre of the city.

The only factor restraining the air ministry was the fear of enemy bombing reprisals against Cairo.²⁶ 'Incidentally,' the F.O. reminded Lord Halifax, 'no word of condemnation was ever expressed by the Pope in regard to the bombing of shrines of the Anglican Church.'²⁷

In 1941 Myron Taylor had urged the prime minister to make a statement sparing Rome and its non-combatant civilians from this new horror, and he repeated this plea now, on October 5, 1942. Sir Arthur Harris had declared that he entertained no false sentiments about bombing Rome. Although Churchill could hardly say so, he was actually looking forward to sending his heavy bombers to the Italian capital, and he encountered no opposition to this from the air ministry. His friend Archie Sinclair advised that the moment would have to be well chosen because of both international Catholic and 'liberal' opinion – the latter not only regarded Rome as a shrine of European civilisation but was altogether 'a bit sticky' about bombing. 'You were quoting the Archbishop of Canterbury against me at the beginning of the year,' he wrote to Churchill. 'Success is enabling us to carry them with us; but they might come out against bombing rather than acquiesce in the bombing of Rome, as a mere incident in the air war against Italy.' As the air minister irreverently put it, the risks of wrecking the 'churches, works of art, Cardinals, priests and students' were not small, and they could not undertake such risks too often. 'It is no use fiddling with the bombing of Rome,' Sinclair added for the benefit of this modern Nero,

and attacking the outskirts, as was at one time suggested. The blow when it comes should be aimed at the Palazzo Venezia – although it must be realised that it is only about 2,000 yards from the Vatican City.

He anticipated that 'few will condemn it.' As said, it was all a matter of timing. Churchill noted on this document, 'I agree generally.'²⁸

ENCOURAGED BY the success of the thousand-bomber raids, Sinclair circulated to the war cabinet during August 1942 a paper by 'Butcher' Harris arguing against any diminution of the bomber offensive.²⁹ Churchill now agreed, arguing for an increase from thirty-two to fifty bomber squadrons; he even authorised the transfer of two squadrons from Coastal Command to Bomber Command.³⁰ The air staff argued that only if the British and American bomber commanders could raise a force of five thousand bombers by June 1944, and six thousand by December 1944, could they pave the way for an invasion of western Europe.³¹

As Britain's armada of Lancaster and Halifax heavy bombers grew in size, some of them now carrying bombs weighing four tons each, so the grumbling among those branches of the armed forces starved of air power

grew louder; but saturation bombing remained popular with the civilian politicians. General Brooke despaired. 'The policy of bombing Germany occupies such a prominent place in the minds of most cabinet ministers,' he wrote with heavy irony to Sinclair on October 9, 'that it is very difficult to get them to realize that if we are not careful we might lose the war in all theatres for want of air support, and be left with the largest bombing force in the world at home to hand over to the Germans!'³²

To the navy, Britain's senior service, Churchill's predilection for killing enemy civilians was unprofessional at best, and unprofitable and unprincipled at worst. There was not an admiral who agreed with Churchill's saturation bombing campaign. Admiral Tovey described it in a memorandum as 'a luxury, not a necessity.' Put out by this criticism, and declaring that Tovey's paper 'damns itself,' Churchill ordered it suppressed.³³ He told the chiefs of staff that there must be no slackening of the bombing effort, 'but rather that it should be built up.' For a multitude of reasons the Germans were about to face a very trying winter, he said, and he did not want them to think that the bombing campaign was easing.³⁴

Portal circulated at the beginning of November 1942 an estimate of the coming bomber offensive. In the year up to June 30, 1941, Göring's bombers had dropped fifty-five thousand tons of bombs on Britain, killing 41,000 people and destroying 350,000 homes. By 'employing the latest incendiary technique' however the British could achieve much better results. They could drop one and one-quarter million tons of bombs on Germany during 1943 and 1944: they could kill an estimated 900,000 German civilians, and maim a million more, as well as destroying around six million houses. They could deliver to every major German town and city ten attacks of the intensity of the thousand-bomber raid on Cologne. 'Germany,' he argued, 'is in no condition to withstand an onslaught of this character.' He had no doubt that 'against a background of growing casualties, increasing privations and dying hopes' the effect on morale would be 'profound indeed.'³⁵

Dudley Pound protested that there was not enough tanker capacity to bring in the five million tons of additional aviation spirit that this colossal bombing campaign would require, let alone the bombs and other munitions. He demanded a proper inquiry into Portal's estimates.³⁶ Brooke was also worried for the other services.³⁷ Impressed by the bound albums of aerial damage photos that 'Butcher' Harris showed him, Churchill was blind to such criticisms of the R.A.F. His doubts about the Americans however remained. On November 1, he expressed to the chiefs of staff powerful

doubts whether the American daylight bombing campaign, if it ever began, would achieve worthwhile results.

The first American heavy bomber group had arrived at the end of July 1942, with some 50,000 personnel; yet they had not dropped a single bomb on Germany. The twenty-two daylight operations which they had conducted against northern France and Holland had required massive British fighter support. Churchill suspected that the claims of enemy fighters destroyed were exaggerated. 'Meanwhile,' he grouched, 'the American public has been led to believe that a really serious contribution has been made by the American Air Force. It is not for us to undeceive them, but there can be no doubt that they will find out for themselves before very long.' Since prestige was involved, Churchill warned that they must expect the Americans to persevere obstinately in their daylight bombing method; but he feared that in the meanwhile American warplane production was being cast ever more deeply into 'an unprofitable groove.' What would happen, he asked, if a formation of Fortresses, bristling with its half-inch machine-guns, ran out of ammunition? He predicted a massacre. 'What ought we to do?'³⁸

The American bombing of French targets did not endear the Americans to de Gaulle. The bombing of Rouen left 140 dead and 20 injured, with homes, schools, and churches destroyed. De Gaulle protested vehemently about the casualties, and pleaded for the bombing to be switched to Germany or Italy. The chiefs of staff ignored his objections.³⁹

Churchill's support for Harris became unconditional. When the question arose whether to equip the night bombers or the anti-submarine planes with centimetric radar, he speciously offered to allow his cabinet to decide; A. V. Alexander stood aside, feeling that no purpose would be served by pressing the navy's claim.⁴⁰ In January 1943 Pathfinder bombers began operating over Germany with the panoramic radar known as H2S; by the end of February the first such set was already in the hands of Nazi scientists, salvaged from a Lancaster bomber brought down at Rotterdam.

THEIR INABILITY to do much to aid Stalin, other than bombing German cities, preyed on Winston's mind. He suggested to Lord Beaverbrook on October 5 that he might go to Moscow to explain their supply difficulties. Beaverbrook declined. Still nourishing his own leadership ambitions, he had been eyeing Winston since his return from the Moscow trip and he confided to Eden that in his view Churchill had become quite 'bent'; he did not expect him to last much longer.⁴¹

Churchill held an after-dinner cabinet the next day in his underground War Room, mostly to discuss his next telegram to Stalin. With that disagreeable task behind him, he invited Lyttelton and Eden to stay behind for a drink – ‘Like being asked into the pavilion,’ murmured Lyttelton in an cricketing aside. Eden had wanted to talk privately with the prime minister, but young Randolph’s loutish behaviour rendered all intimacy quite impossible. The son shouted at one stage at the prime minister, in words painfully reminiscent of Stalin’s recent barb: ‘Father, the trouble is your soldiers won’t fight.’⁴²

Unable to throw off his sore throat, on the seventh Churchill took to his bed. Beaverbrook eyed him over, and pronounced him ‘bowed’ and ‘not the man he was.’ Bracken also found him ‘very low.’ Eden loyally assured these vultures of Winston’s powers of recuperation.⁴³

WINSTON DROVE down to Chequers as usual that weekend – with Elizabeth Layton, his stenographer, sitting next to him in the big Daimler. ‘The light was just fading,’ she described a few days later, ‘and most of the way it was “Pull that blind down – that one up – now down again – put the light on – off – etc.” He really was *sweet*.’ The prime minister kept up a train of odd disjointed asides like ‘Frost will soon be here.’ Once he asked her, ‘How fast do you think we are travelling?’ She replied, ‘Oh, about fifty.’ ‘Oh no,’ he murmured, ‘*much* more – at least sixty.’

In a more modern, more cumbrous age his behaviour toward this young secretary might have been seen as harassment; she saw it just as the unbending of a charming elderly gentleman, happy to have companionship. ‘I did most of the Old Man’s work,’ she wrote of this weekend.

He was simply sweet all the time – never barked once. Except when he had said for the fortieth time one dinner-time, ‘Now I must get up.’

So finally I thought he was going to and went to take the work he had done out of his box.

Immediately, ‘What are you putting your fingers in my box for? Sit down,’ grumble grumble.

So I sat feeling (and I suppose looking) very crushed.

A few minutes later, ‘Now you may take the things out of my box. And don’t look so nervous – no one is going to bite you,’ with a grin.

One time he came into the office and said, ‘I’m now going up to work. I’ll have my box and Miss Layton.’⁴⁴

On the eighth he left southern England in his special train to spend some days in Scotland and to visit the Home Fleet. The government heaved a sigh of relief. 'It is an awful thing dealing with a man like Winston who is at the same moment dictatorial, eloquent, and muddleheaded,' wrote one, after another row about losing India; on October 12, the same minister dictated: 'Winston being away receiving the Freedom of Edinburgh, Attlee presided [over the cabinet] and the whole business was over in three quarters of an hour.'⁴⁵

The crowds in Edinburgh on the way to the Usher Hall were sparse, but his staff put this down to the lack of publicity.⁴⁶ He returned to London carrying the scroll in a silver casket.⁴⁷ His attention never left the war's battlefronts. Like Hitler he liked to pry into every facet of the war. As Stalin's military crisis approached, Churchill demanded that his codebreakers break into the Soviets' weather cypher.⁴⁸ Conscious of the great drama now beginning as Hitler's and Stalin's armies grappled for control of Stalingrad, this strategic city on the Volga, he asked General Ismay to ensure that he was given a daily report on weather conditions along the whole Russian front. 'The best possible will do,' he jested.⁴⁹

IN NORTH Africa his own armies would shortly begin a drama of no lesser moment. General Brooke, the C.I.G.S., had watched the impatient exchanges between Churchill and his desert generals during late September 1942 with a sinking feeling – a sense of *déjà vu*. Was Churchill beginning to use the same old arguments now against Alexander and Montgomery that he had used against Auchinleck? 'I think I have at last got him to leave them alone and not rush them,' Brooke decided however.⁵⁰

By mid-October Brooke knew Montgomery's detailed battle-plan and even the date for LIGHTFOOT, his coming offensive – Montgomery had asked the C.I.G.S. to guard the secret closely. As Brooke had no confidence whatsoever in Churchill's ability to keep anything secret, he decided at first against telling him – difficult though this would be, as the prime minister was continually fretting about delays. Eventually, he did divulge the secret to Winston after lunch at No. 10 on October 16. Churchill, pleased that Montgomery had brought forward the date of the attack, solemnly promised to tell nobody else.⁵¹ Only six days later however Brooke found that the prime minister had 'calmly gone and told Eisenhower and [Bedell] Smith!!' The Americans had no business to be told such details – least of all Eisenhower, whose headquarters in Norfolk House was notoriously 'leaky' at that time.

Brooke's first instinct was that it was fatal to tell a politician any secret; later he realised that it was the 'newspaper reporter' in Churchill which had done the harm. News, to a journalist, was something to be 'cashed-in' at once.*⁵²

On October 13 he dined at No. 10 with Eisenhower, Clark, Bedell Smith, and Admiral Cunningham. Field-Marshal Smuts had just arrived from Cairo brimming with the latest news, and he came in after dinner. They discussed TORCH from every angle.⁵³ Smuts addressed the cabinet on October 14, 'a wonderful old boy,' wrote one witness, 'fresh as new paint.' Smuts spoke well of Montgomery's prospects in Egypt.⁵⁴

EARLY THAT Friday October 16 they all went to Chequers. Winston had invited Smuts down with his slow-spoken son Captain Jacobus Daniel; he asked the Edens and several others too. Secretary John Martin found Smuts the picture of health though obviously ageing.⁵⁵ Smuts himself described this weekend as 'like a tornado.'⁵⁶ There was much to discuss, with remarkable new developments in North Africa soon commanding their attention.

There is much that still has to be learned about the political background of TORCH – particularly the dealings with neutral Spain, and the clandestine (and separate) British and American dealings with the leaders of Vichy France.

General Franco would remain an unknown quantity. The American plan called for thirty transport planes to cross Spain in the darkness at ten thousand feet, carrying troops to seize a vital airfield at Oran in North Africa. Worried that this violation of Spanish neutrality might prove the last straw for Franco, Anthony Eden passed the buck to Churchill. Churchill gave the go-ahead, but noted, 'It is an audacious plan, and A.M. [the air ministry] are none too sure of its success.'⁵⁷ While France was very much an American responsibility, as he reminded Eden, it was for the British to deal with Spain. Eisenhower, who was to command the TORCH operation, sent a note setting out what he planned to do if Spain did 'go sour.' Churchill hated messages couched in sloppy and opaque Americanisms. 'I am sure he will agree it was

* Hitler made the same scornful comparison, discussing Churchill's incautious phone conversation with Paul Reynaud on March 30, 1940, which had revealed to the Nazi intercept service – when it was relayed to Finland – the British plan to invade Norway in a few days' time. 'A journalist,' scoffed Hitler. Ambassador Walther Hewel recorded his dinner-table reminiscences on July 5, 1941, thus in his diary: 'If Churchill and Reynaud had kept a still tongue in their heads, I might well not have tackled Norway.'

a loose expression,' he observed irritably, 'and ought not to remain the basis of our correspondence.'⁵⁸

The codebreakers provided only sparse clues. On November 1 Churchill read an intercepted despatch of the Spanish ambassador. In this, the Duke of Alba reported to Madrid that the Allies were going to open their second front in Africa, since the recovery of the Mediterranean coastline would effectively save them six million tons of shipping space. The ambassador believed that the French and Arab civil population and army would offer little resistance to the invasion because of their hatred for the Germans and Italians. 'Although I do not claim to know the plans of the British General Staff,' the ambassador however advised, 'I believe Spanish territory will be respected.' Churchill himself, concluded the duke, had told him that he approved of Franco's foreign policy, and he had undertaken not to interfere with Spanish sovereignty.⁵⁹

AS FOR Vichy, as noted earlier, Churchill had maintained tenuous and unpublicised liaisons with its leaders ever since the fall of France.* Notwithstanding what the Duke of Alba believed, the stumbling block was still the antipathy of the French officer corps to the British, particularly in North Africa, resulting from Churchill's 1940 attack on Mers el-Kébir. The Americans knew of this – they had printed leaflets for dropping on Casablanca, Oran, and Algiers when TORCH began, carrying the Stars and Stripes and Roosevelt's likeness, and justifying the landing of American troops; Eisenhower secretly recommended printing a second leaflet 'to forestall any impression on the part of the French people that they are being double crossed by [the] use of British troops' – when British troops subsequently entered Algiers.⁶⁰

Vichy's liaisons with the United States were far more substantial. Admiral Darlan had extended a discreet feeler to the Americans in mid-1942. As recently as the end of April he had assured Admiral Leahy, before the painfully pro-Vichy American ambassador returned to Washington, that if the Americans should set foot in North Africa with sufficient force he would not oppose them; Darlan had added that he had no desire for friendly relations with Britain.⁶¹ Since May 1942 he had maintained clandestine links directly with Robert Murphy, the U.S. consul-general in Algiers, through Vice-Admiral Raymond A. Fenard, his agent in that city. Murphy reported

* Page ix above, and vol. i, pages 450–2, 474.

regularly on these to Washington, and he dwelt upon them during his visit to Eisenhower in England in mid-September.⁶²

In October, Darlan intensified his efforts, sending Colonel Jean Chrétien to Murphy to propose once again a joint Franco-American military operation against the Axis; he spoke of prefacing this campaign with an operation whereby Marshal Pétain would travel to Morocco, escorted by the French fleet, ostensibly to visit the Sultan. Under Pétain and Darlan, France would re-establish her military power in Morocco and rejoin the Allies. The snag was that Darlan was proposing this for the spring of 1943 – the earliest he believed the Americans could land in North Africa.⁶³

The British secret service was in rather more hesitant contact with the French underground. This is confirmed by the papers of General Ismay, Churchill's chief of staff: after seeing the head of the Special Operations Executive on October 13 Ismay confirmed to the secret service chiefs that the chiefs of staff were anxious to know more about the two French underground organisations with which they were in contact before deciding whether to proceed with 'negotiations' through either of these channels.⁶⁴ The Americans acted more decisively. American archives, particularly those of the late Robert Murphy, contain revealing documents on the secret negotiations between Washington and Darlan which have somehow eluded the official historians of both nations. In mid-October Murphy cabled to Leahy in Washington – intending him to relay it to Eisenhower in London – that a representative of Darlan had contacted him with a firm and tempting offer: the French admiral expected, he said, a German military occupation of French North Africa and he had somehow heard word of TORCH, or something like it. Darlan wanted the Americans to know, said Murphy, that

he will be willing to come to Africa and bring with him the French fleet, if he, as Commander in Chief of the French armed forces, can be assured of United States ability and willingness to supply large-scale aid, both material and economic.

Murphy stressed that the intermediary, whom he did not name, was sincere and reliable, and he recommended that they win Darlan's co-operation. He then asked Washington for instructions: 'Please advise me at once as to the limits I may go in replying to Darlan's representative, who desires to know: (1) Are we willing to cooperate with Darlan? (2) If so, will we be able to do so quickly and on a large scale here and/or in Europe?'⁶⁵

What happened to Murphy's cable in Washington is not known. The war department eventually replied to Murphy in Leahy's name, but the reply largely ignored his carefully phrased questions. He was merely instructed:

Inform your contact we also have information that Germany contemplates occupation of African Colonies and it is our opinion that Darlan should resist aggression by Axis with Army and Navy in which event America will provide at once large scale military, material and economic aid in the colonies.

Marshall also relayed Murphy's cable to Eisenhower in London on October 16, but without however expressing any viewpoint other than to remark that his intelligence chief, General Kenneth Strong, thought that Eisenhower's headquarters could not trust Darlan.⁶⁶

In Norfolk House, Eisenhower called a 'planning session' to discuss Murphy's cable, and this resulted in a proposal which did respond to Murphy's requests. Early on Saturday October 17 he sent this highly secret document both to the war cabinet offices and to Washington. It suggested that they accept Darlan as the commander-in-chief of all French forces in North Africa, and that they propose to General Giraud that he assume the position of French governor of North Africa. After North Africa was secured, Eisenhower would even consider appointing Admiral Darlan as his Deputy Supreme Allied Commander.⁶⁷ This was a clearcut solution of the French conundrum, but a very radical solution indeed.

ARRIVING IN Whitehall on Saturday, October 17, Eisenhower's message about the secret approach from Darlan caused turmoil in British government circles. The foreign office, personified in Anthony Eden who was at Chequers at the time, detested Darlan. The young foreign secretary recorded in his diary that morning how the drama began: 'Pug [Isma]y rang up & said mysterious French message had arrived.' They awaited the message, and it finally arrived at Chequers at one P.M. Eisenhower confirmed that the Vichy French wanted to take an active part in TORCH, and were even suggesting that there should be a simultaneous Allied invasion of southern France. According to Murphy, while Giraud also claimed that he alone could rally the French troops defending North-West Africa to the Allied cause, Admiral Darlan, as commander-in-chief, was the one French officer who could issue *orders* to the French forces to allow the Allies to enter

North Africa unopposed, and to place the surviving French fleet at their disposal. The emissary cited by Murphy claimed that they feared a preemptive German attack on Vichy France. Murphy, said Eisenhower, had outlined the TORCH plan to the messenger, without revealing the date.

Churchill discussed these tantalising feelers with his chiefs of staff that afternoon, October 17. Smuts and Eden sat in on this Chequers conference. Eden smelt a rat.

A preliminary reading by Winston, Smuts, Pound, Dickie [Mountbatten] & self. I felt suspicious, which may just be my nature but it seemed too much like the way Germans would play this hand if they wanted to know our plans & delay them. Found that Jacob shared my suspicions. After luncheon Smuts proposed adjt [adjournment] to London to discuss with Americans. Off we went, Winston in high tide of enthusiasm.⁶⁸

Back in London at four-thirty p.m. Churchill convened a staff conference, this time with the American generals present, to discuss both the Marshall telegram and Eisenhower's reply. General Brooke objected at once that they could not sustain a bridgehead in southern France at the same time as TORCH, whatever undertakings the Vichy French might give about taking an active part. They decided however to smuggle General Mark Clark into Algiers, the Vichy-occupied capital of Algeria, by submarine, to meet this latest emissary and persuade him that TORCH, an Allied invasion of French North Africa in strength was more imminent than Darlan believed.⁶⁹

The prime minister vaguely recalled the secret approach that he had received from Darlan during his Atlantic crossing in December 1941.* His staff had the file sent for. 'C' summarised it to him: Darlan had inquired whether the British would refuse to deal with a postwar French government of which he was a member. Churchill had replied, through 'C,' that if Darlan were to sail the French fleet from Toulon to North Africa 'such a service' would entitle him to 'an honourable place in the Allied ranks.' John Martin told Churchill however: 'It is not certain if the message ever reached Darlan.'⁷⁰ It seems likely that the foreign office had halted it. Churchill however – and this is important – now expressed his approval of the way that Eisenhower was handling this latest Darlan development.⁷¹ Murphy's papers show that Eisenhower shortly notified Washington that Churchill's

* Page 261.

cabinet approved.⁷² A few hours later Admiral Leahy cabled to Murphy in Algiers Washington's instructions to deal with Darlan. Churchill, the message said, had given his blessing to this undertaking.⁷³

ANTHONY EDEN was beset with misgivings that Churchill had risen to this alluring bait. He and his department backed only General de Gaulle. The foreign office was already unhappy about the way in which TORCH was becoming an American operation, with the role of British soldiers and sailors being played down to avoid antagonizing Vichy. Using Darlan might have its attractions, but for two years, said the F.O., British propaganda had reviled him as a traitor second only to Pierre Laval; he had fired on British sailors at both Mers el-Kébir and Dakar: he had betrayed British naval secrets to the enemy: he had aided Rashid Ali's uprising against the British in Iraq.

On balance the foreign office preferred to back General Giraud, and they authorised an immediate operation to whisk him out of Vichy France to Gibraltar by submarine (he had explained that he was averse to flying). At some time soon, a showdown between Churchill, Eden, and Eisenhower over Darlan, de Gaulle and Giraud therefore became inevitable.



Eden had hoped to use that Chequers weekend (October 17–19, 1942) to ride his own hobby-horse before the prime minister, the foreign office's plans for the post-war world. Churchill however could not have cared less, and dealt his young foreign secretary a wounding put-down. 'I hope these speculative studies will be entrusted mainly to those on whose hands time hangs heavily,' he wrote, 'and that we shall not overlook *Mrs Glasse's Cookery Book* recipe for jugged hare – 'First catch your hare.'"⁷⁴

Taken aback, Eden and his staff found Winston's reply 'foolish and denigrating.'⁷⁵ When Eden pressed the matter, the prime minister sent another minute, no less hurtful than the first: 'It would be easy to dilate upon these themes,' he wrote on October 21. 'Unhappily the war has prior claims on your attention and on mine.'

On the same day he sent to the foreign secretary a paper which was so reactionary that Oliver Harvey, Eden's secretary, wrote these lines: 'With Roosevelt straining to put the British empire into liquidation and Winston pulling in the opposite direction to put it back to pre-Boer War, we are in danger of losing both the Old and the New World.'⁷⁶

The draft foreign office proposals had boiled down to setting up regional organisations covering Europe, the Far East, and the Middle East, all subordinate to a Four Power council consisting of the Russians, British, Chinese, and Americans.

'It sounds very simple,' the prime minister lectured Eden in his response, 'to pick out these four big Powers. We cannot however tell what sort of a Russia and what kind of Russian demands we shall have to face. . . I cannot regard the Chungking government [of Chiang Kai-shek] as representing a great world-power. Certainly there would be faggot-vote on the side of the United States in any attempt to liquidate the British overseas empire.'

He continued: 'I must admit that my thoughts rest primarily in Europe. . . It would be a measureless disaster if Russian barbarism overlaid the culture and independence of the ancient States of Europe. Hard as it is to say now, I trust that the European family may act unitedly as one under a Council of Europe.' He wanted a United States of Europe to emerge eventually which would exclude Russia, and indeed keep Russia disarmed.⁷⁷

It is worth noting that, even as Stalin's armies were fighting their historic battle at Stalingrad, Churchill could – in private – express such forceful contempt for his Russian allies and their way of life.



If Churchill was unwilling to think beyond this war, others were less shy. When he returned from Chequers to London on Monday October 19 he found Roosevelt's treasury secretary, the shrewd, bespectacled Henry R. Morgenthau Jr, had arrived from Washington. Morgenthau told him over lunch that a cartoon in Washington's evening newspaper had shown British officials phoning Churchill warning, 'Morgenthau is coming over there. Watch your shirt!' The powerful treasury secretary had the president's private instructions to do what he could to dismantle the system of imperial preference on which the empire's trade was based, and to inquire whether Britain would allow United States oil companies into Britain's oil-producing territories in the Middle East after the war.⁷⁸

Morgenthau was, in a sense, Britain's banker and perhaps Churchill should have shown him greater deference. He met him and his chief aide Harry Dexter White – known to History for other reasons – three times, but he neither invited them down to Chequers, nor did anything to alleviate the chill austerity of the clammy London rooms in which they were housed.⁷⁹

THERE WAS little now to do in these last days before Montgomery's big push at Alamein began – to be followed shortly after by TORCH. Seeking solitude, Churchill drove out to Chartwell that Tuesday afternoon, then back to London. Eisenhower and his chief of staff Bedell Smith came round late that evening, October 20, but they escaped comparatively early, around one A.M., after a discussion of history, on the trivia of which Eisenhower had for once out-pursued his host.⁸⁰ The next day Winston went to the Houses of Parliament to hear the South African prime minister speak for fifty minutes to an audience of peers and parliamentary worthies in the Royal Gallery. There were appreciative chuckles when Smuts said that the empire's peace aim must be 'Japan for the Japanese.' Leo Amery thrilled to the spectacle of this apotheosis of a British field-marshal, this prophet of empire, while finding that his own prime minister looked 'curiously gross and commonplace, a blend of Eighteenth-Century English and Twentieth-Century America.'⁸¹ The South African's fine, weatherbeaten face contrasted with Churchill's putty-coloured pallor. Churchill looked tired, pale, and not at all well.

'He said only a few rotund and complimentary words at the end,' noted one Member; Lloyd George, equally pallid, shocked the left-wingers in a different way by talking of 'this terrible and perplexing war.'⁸²

AT ALAMEIN, Rommel's *Panzerarmee Afrika* glared at Montgomery's Eighth across a few hundred yards of minefield. In London, the eyes of all who knew were on that five or ten-mile wide strip of wasteland in Egypt, this bottleneck barring each army's way past the other.

'All our hopes,' the prime minister radioed to General Sir Harold Alexander, 'are centred upon the battle you and Montgomery are going to fight. It may well be the key to the future.'⁸³

This was so true – the future of Churchill himself was in the balance. Nearly two hundred thousand men under General Bernard Montgomery's direct command were confronting the forty-nine thousand German and fifty-four thousand Italian troops of Field-Marshal Erwin Rommel's Panzer Army, well dug in and shielded by a carapace of one hundred flak 'eighty-eights' and a hundred more 76·2-millimetre guns.

Rommel had spent three months digging his forces in along this line from the sea to the impassable Qattara Depression. Half a million anti-

personnel and anti-tank mines had been laid in a patchwork of foxholes, defensive boxes, and belts which could be raked by machine-gun fire, swept by searchlights, and bombarded by anti-tank guns. Against Rommel's 250 German and 280 Italian tanks, mostly dug in now, hull-down, with only their gun turrets showing above the sands, Montgomery would pit five hundred Crusaders, Grants, and Shermans – the latter, built in America, being tested in battle for the first time.

The prognosis for the British offensive seemed good. Montgomery had a powerful desert air force in support. His Eighth Army had a vast arsenal of artillery; he enjoyed a two-to-one superiority over Rommel in numbers. Above all, he had his 'cheat,' his ULTRAS from Bletchley Park where 'the monotony of the correspondence of the enemy post in the Qattara Depression who daily signalled *Nacht ruhig verlaufen* [night passed quietly] . . . provided Hut 6 with one of its best cribs for a considerable season.'⁸⁴

From the other side of the minefields the enemy was sending increasingly dire telegrams to Rome and Berlin about the dwindling gasoline supplies, and Churchill and his generals were reading each and every such message. On October 20 this Oracle, on which the prime minister relied so heavily, regurgitated the Panzer Army's secret and urgent warning that in five days' time – by which time the battle should have been joined – its fuel stocks would be so depleted as to allow only four-and-a-half days of battle; and that of these stocks, only three days' fuel supply was forward of Tobruk.* In consequence, warned the German commander *General der Panzertruppe* Georg Stumme (Rommel had gone on leave to Austria), his army no longer possessed the tactical freedom of movement which was 'absolutely essential,' given that the British offensive might start any day.⁸⁵

WINGING ACROSS southern England, the Channel, Nazi-occupied Europe and the Mediterranean, Winston Churchill's thoughts hovered silently above Egypt and the terrible events about to begin as dusk fell on Friday, October 23. As a full moon filtered its neutral light across the battlefield – neutral as between friend and foe – the Battle of Alamein opened at the hour that Montgomery had decreed, at eight P.M., with the sudden, blasting roar of

* Churchill rightly attached importance to such intercepts, although the German commanders inevitably exaggerated their plight. As Hitler pointed out sarcastically months later, 'A gigantic army drove back from Alamein to here [Agheila] – they didn't drive on water.' David Irving, *Hitler's War* (London, 1991), page 509.

almost a thousand guns of the British empire speaking in unison to the soldiers of Hitler and Mussolini cowering in their lines. Shortly the agreed code-word – ‘ZIP!’ – arrived in London from Harold Alexander, and Churchill proudly announced the opening of the battle in an urgent telegram (‘CLEAR THE LINE!’) to his great friend President Roosevelt, adding most generously: ‘All the Shermans and self-propelled guns which you gave me on that dark Tobruk morning will play their part.’⁸⁶

He found himself dining with Eleanor Roosevelt at Buckingham Palace that evening. His Majesty the King had invited his first minister, along with Field-Marshal Smuts and the Mountbattens, to dine with himself and Mrs Roosevelt. The president’s lady had been due to arrive in England two days earlier, but bad weather had detained her in Ireland. Her stay in London now proved a rather traumatic time. No effort had been spared in simulating for her, in her own bleak accommodation at Buckingham Palace, the deprivations of the Londoners; the Queen had given up her own first floor bedroom – but the windows of this vast, unheated room had been blown out by bombing and were only roughly filled with wooden frames and perspex.⁸⁷ It was moreover separated by hundreds of yards of blacked-out corridors from the bedroom of her personal assistant Malvina Thompson, about whose relationship to Eleanor there was already scandalised gossip in some quarters.

As for dinner itself, although eaten off Gold and silver plate the meal was blighted by the prime minister’s unconcealed dislike of his transatlantic guest. ‘I find the prime minister not easy to talk to,’ Eleanor dictated as a wan comment to her diary that night, ‘which was my experience in Washington. Sometimes I think by the end of the day there has been a little too much champagne, because he repeated the same thing to me two or three times.’⁸⁸

On this occasion, however, Churchill’s mind was far away – on Alamein. He was on tenterhooks throughout both the meal and the war movie screened to them afterwards, *In Which We Serve*, in which Noël Coward played the part of his friend the destroyer-hero ‘Dickie’ Mountbatten. Unable to bear the suspense any longer he finally made his excuses and ‘phoned across to No. 10 Downing-street for the latest news from Cairo. There was very little. He returned however to the king’s dinner table lustily singing *Roll out the Barrel*.

For several days the news from Cairo would be excruciatingly thin. In a display of insouciance Churchill took his son Randolph with Henry Morgen-

thau and other notables down to Dover the next morning to inspect the coastal defences. He showed his visitors everything, including underground 'shadow' factories which astounded even these Americans. The Dover citizenry received Churchill and Smuts with applause of unmistakable sincerity. The navy staged a gunnery display with live ammunition, and Churchill made a pleasing little speech introducing Morgenthau as the man who gave to Britain the hundred thousand rifles she needed after Dunkirk.⁸⁹

The two Churchills and Smuts spent much of the journey talking with Rauf Orbay, the Turkish ambassador, and frank words were spoken about Turkey's supply of chrome to Hitler's munitions factories.

Orbay replied with a bluntness bordering on bitterness that after concluding her alliance with Britain and France, Turkey had in 1941 found herself deprived of aid by both countries: had she, after the Nazi victory in the Balkans, provoked Germany to attack the Turkish army, which lacked tanks, airplanes, and guns, this would have given Hitler the pretext he needed to seize the Dardanelles Straits. They had had no choice but to honour their obligations to supply chrome: in doing so they had served the interests of the Allies.

'Prime Minister Churchill was most cheerful and sprightly throughout the whole journey,' reported Orbay to Ankara in a cypher telegram which Churchill read soon after. 'He kept on telling us again and again that 130 aeroplanes each carrying three or four tons of bombs had bombarded Genoa and had returned without a single casualty. He spoke of the future and his eyes flashed.'⁹⁰

AFTER THAT Churchill withdrew once again to Chequers for the weekend, taking Elizabeth Layton as duty secretary. In her memoirs, she recalled the buzz of excitement, the wonderful humour, the hanging-about waiting for reports of the Alamein battle to come in over the scrambler telephone.⁹¹

The German and Italian minefields were however proving deeper and more tenacious than Montgomery had expected. He had told London anyway not to expect news for some days. Fortunately General Stumme's staff had sent a message to their absent field-marshal that the British had begun an attack late on the twenty-third in the north and early the next day in the south as well; the British were expected to extend the offensive to the whole front on October 25.⁹²

'C' telephoned to Churchill further news of the desert drama. Hitler himself had intervened: Berlin had signalled to the Panzer Army that the

Führer was demanding an update by one A.M., to decide whether Rommel should break off his leave and return. The update left no choice: Rommel's stand-in General Stumme was missing, having fallen into an ambush. General Wilhelm Ritter von Thoma had taken over the army.⁹³

The intercepts which Bletchley Park's chief of security, Wing Commander Fred Winterbotham, telephoned to the prime minister later that day, October 25, were more unsettling. At four-thirty P.M. the Panzer Army had stated that 'they were satisfied with the situation' and that General Stumme's body had now been recovered.⁹⁴

Giving a broader overall picture the Army's chief of operations had reported to local Luftwaffe headquarters that the British had first attacked with about 150 tanks and night bombers, penetrating the main battle position (*Hauptkampffeld*) at several points, but a counter-attack by 15th Panzer Division had restored the situation; on the twenty-fourth the enemy had launched an attack in the south with about 140 tanks, penetrating the minefields, but again the attack had been halted.

At five P.M. on October 25 Kesselring had reported from Rome that although combat strengths were down, 'in my opinion there is no danger in consideration of the reserves still available.'⁹⁵ Later that day, October 25, 'C' telephoned Churchill with word that Hermann Göring had been heard asking whether Rommel had arrived back on the battlefield yet.

Later still, a telegram from Rommel was intercepted – it was momentous news, and Bletchley Park's Hut 3 sent telexes reporting it to the chiefs of naval, military, and air Intelligence, and to General Alexander in Cairo himself. 'I have once more taken over the command of the army,' the Desert Fox had announced.⁹⁶

So everything was in the balance at Alamein.

WINSTON HAD felt duty-bound to invite President Roosevelt's wife down to Chequers, and he invited her son Elliott too, and her assistant Malvina, to have lunch and stay the night on October 25.⁹⁷ The signposts around the Chiltern Hills had been removed in 1940, and her driver had some difficulty locating the Chequers estate. She found Randolph's little boy Winston also down here, although there was no sign of either of his parents; Eleanor Roosevelt decided that the two-year-old was as sweet as his father Randolph was surly, while the resemblance to his grandfather the prime minister was so close as to be 'ridiculous.' At the dinner table later she found a 'Sir Wherton,' evidently Lord Cherwell, because she observed rather Wasp-

ishly that he was 'formerly a Mr Hinkelmann' (in fact Lindemann, and he was not of Jewish origin).⁹⁸

The prime minister fled to his study, leaving his guests, who now included 'Butcher' Harris, largely to their own devices while he composed a memorandum on the 'policy for the conduct of the war.' In view of the onset of LIGHTFOOT and the imminence of TORCH the 'under-belly of the Axis' inevitably featured prominently in its pages.



Hoping to mend fences with Eleanor Roosevelt before she left England, Clementine invited her to a little farewell dinner in the Annexe to No. 10. Playing safe, apart from the president's wife and Henry Morgenthau she had invited only General Brooke, Lady Denman – head of the Women's Land Army – and some other ladies.

Once again her husband squirmed with distaste throughout the dinner. For a long time in fact he refused to speak. Clementine announced, 'I am sorry dear, I could not buy any fish. You will have to eat macaroni.'

'Then,' recalled Morgenthau a few days later, still dismayed at this frugal dinner, 'they gave us little left-over bits made into meat loaf.'⁹⁹

Winston asked him if America was now sending enough food to the still starving (and still fascist) Spain. Eleanor rose to the bait and snapped that all this was too late, that something should have been done to help the 'Loyalists,' as she termed the unlamented Red Republic that General Franco had dislodged.

Churchill had supported the Franco regime, at least until Hitler and Mussolini joined in the civil war, and he was unrepentant about it even now.

'I had a slight difference of opinion with the prime minister,' Eleanor dictated to her diary that night, with these fresh wounds to lick, 'on the subject of Loyalist Spain.'

'I remarked,' she wrote, 'that I could not see why the existing [Red] government could not have been helped and the P.M. replied that he and I would have been the first to lose our heads if the Loyalists won.'

Eleanor snapped that losing her head was unimportant, to which the P.M. responded with a tartness that displayed his underlying contempt, 'I don't want you to lose your head – and neither do I want to lose mine.'

Not for the first time Clementine saw a dinner party dissolving in acrimony. She leaned anxiously across the table to agree fervently with their honoured guest.

That annoyed Churchill even more. He stood up, and announced: 'I have held certain beliefs for sixty-eight years and I'm not going to change now.' It was a signal that dinner was over. He had taken a first dislike to Eleanor Roosevelt in Washington, and he made no effort to see her again before she returned there now.

Brendan Bracken was troubled by the possible effect of all this on Mrs Roosevelt and went over to console her. She never forgot the episode.¹⁰⁰ She had planned to spend two days with Prime Minister de Valera in Dublin, but Churchill had managed to get that visit to southern Ireland, as he insisted on calling it (where Eden had written 'Eire') cancelled, having urged Eden to do something to 'cushion her off' this plan.¹⁰¹

Despite all that had passed, she reported favourably in Washington on her trip to England.¹⁰² Morgenthau too would leave England convinced that Hitler had 'seen his high-water mark; that the worst is behind us, and [that] it is not going to be as long a war as I thought it was.'¹⁰³

Like a man who has lived for years in penury but suddenly come into a fortune, Churchill too sensed that the whole mess was beginning to sort itself out. 'My thoughts are with you on this anniversary,' he cabled on October 30 to Dr Chaim Weizmann, now depressed and languishing in a luxury hotel in New York, for the anniversary of the Balfour Declaration falling three days later.

He added 'Better days will surely come for your suffering people and for the great cause for which you have fought so bravely.' In a postscript that was as symptomatic of his reliance on the Arabs as it was of his tenuous relationship with the Zionists, Churchill sternly added that this message was *not* meant for publication.¹⁰⁴



It is the opinion of many scholars of this, the greatest war of the twentieth century, that the events of the next four weeks at Alamein and Stalingrad reversed the flow of Hitler's fortunes.

In a few days' time, operation TORCH would begin. On Churchill's return to London on Monday October 26, 1942 he lunched with the American generals Eisenhower, Bedell Smith, and Mark Clark, and with his own chiefs

of staff Pound and Brooke.¹⁰⁵ Mark Clark, who would be the deputy commander, had paid a secret visit to Algiers by submarine just two days previously, to confer there with Robert Murphy and General Charles Mast, deputy chief of the Vichy forces in Algiers; he regaled the others with his adventures – how, returning by small boat to the submarine, he had narrowly escaped drowning when the boat was swamped by the surf.¹⁰⁶

The leading civilian subversive whom they had met was Henri d'Astier de la Vigerie, the brother of a French air-force general still in France; Henri led a vigorous underground youth group in Algiers, the *Chantiers de la Jeunesse*, which had furnished Murphy with much of his secret Intelligence in recent months.

Henri d'Astier, their unspoken leader, had chosen General Mast to meet the Americans: together with General Lyman Lemnitzer and members of the American consulate general, Mark Clark had met them near Cherchelle on the morning of October 24.

All were agreed that, if he could be sprung from southern France, General Giraud should take charge of the coup – and failing him, General Mast himself.¹⁰⁷ There was no talk here of Admiral Darlan. Later that same day, October 24, Churchill phoned Eden to report that Clark had had a satisfactory talk with 'those people' and was now returning.

Clearly savouring the element of conspiracy and adventure, Churchill summarised the position in an optimistic telegram to Lord Gort, governor of Malta: 'An American general of high rank visited TORCH area and held long conference with friendly generals. We have every reason to hope, and indeed believe, that very little opposition will be encountered and that powerful aid will be forthcoming.'

The whole operation might therefore move far more rapidly than planned. There was no evidence that the enemy had 'any idea of what is coming.'¹⁰⁸

ON OCTOBER 26 news had at last begun to trickle in from Montgomery's battle. He had taken 1,500 prisoners; it did not seem very many. Rommel's veteran 15th and the 21st Panzer Divisions had attempted several counter-attacks but they were taking heavy casualties from the desert air force.

That evening Montgomery took Kidney Ridge, a tactically important elevation on the otherwise featureless desert. The cabinet, informed of this meagre profit from three days' bloody fighting, was uneasy. One member admitted in his diary to an anxiety that they were letting themselves in for

‘another Passchendaele’ – spending themselves in ‘not quite’ getting through.¹⁰⁹

What titbits Churchill gleaned came from his Oracle. On the twenty-seventh ‘C’ sent over to him an intercept which established what had befallen the Panzer Army’s temporary commander, who had gone missing on the first day of the offensive: ‘In a renewed search of the ground,’ the army had signalled to Berlin, ‘*General der Panzertruppe* Stumme was picked up dead. Cause of death: heart-failure.’¹¹⁰* But in what better heart were Churchill’s own generals? He sent a telegram to the empire prime ministers, praising Montgomery and Alexander as generals ‘determined to fight the battle out to the very end.’¹¹¹ The very end? It was not a language calculated to inspire.

Worse seemed to follow. For a whole day on October 28 General Montgomery relaxed the offensive while he regrouped his forces for the final assault on Rommel’s still intact defensive position.

When Churchill heard that Montgomery, in a move not foreseen in the original LIGHTFOOT plan, was pulling the Eighth Army’s armour right out, he was alarmed; he was unaware that the previous day had seen some of the heaviest fighting as Rommel’s two veteran Panzer divisions hurled five determined counter-attacks at the British forces. Churchill had expected rather better news from Montgomery.¹¹²

He began drafting a telegram to General Alexander, pointing out that the ULTRA messages left no doubt that Rommel was ‘hard run’ for petrol and ammunition, while British air superiority was heavily weighing on him too. ‘We do not of course know what you have in mind,’ he continued, ‘and therefore were somewhat concerned to see that on the 27th the attack on Kidney Ridge by two battalions was the only substantial thrust.’ Now, by Alexander’s own latest report, he appeared to be pulling most of his units back into reserve. ‘We should be grateful,’ he appealed, ‘if you could tell us if you have any large-scale attacks impending because we feel that the intensity and scale of the battle will be hard for the enemy to bear.’¹¹³

He had not yet signed and sent off this message when, later that day, Eden came round to No. 10 for drinks at 6:15 P.M. Eden announced that he too was worried about the course the battle was taking. Neither Montgomery

* We have found that when a German C.-in-C. took his own life – *e.g.*, General Dollmann and Field-Marshal Kluge in the summer of 1944 – his staff invariably concealed it as a heart-attack.

nor Alexander, he said, was 'gripping the situation' or showing a true offensive spirit.¹¹⁴ Had their feckless generals already allowed victory to slip through their fingers once again? Churchill approved Eden's proposal that they immediately dispatch Richard Casey, the Minister Resident, from Cairo to the battlefield to find out what was going on, and to remind Montgomery – in case he had forgotten – that TORCH was due to begin on November 8.

Churchill also sent an anguished minute over to General Brooke at the war office: 'It is most necessary that the attack should be resumed before TORCH,' this message read. 'A stand-still now will be proclaimed a defeat. We consider the matter most grave.'¹¹⁵ Still nervous for news of victory, he also instructed his son-in-law Duncan Sandys to visit Montgomery.¹¹⁶

Nerves were fraying all round.

With his unpleasant draft telegram to General Alexander still unsent, on Thursday morning, October 29, Churchill sent it over to the C.I.G.S. even before he got up. Then, summoning Brooke to his presence, he bawled him out: 'What is *your* Monty doing now?' he asked, with a scathing emphasis on the possessive pronoun. After being idle for the last three days, he added, Montgomery now seemed to be pulling his troops out of the front. Why had he told London he would complete the battle in seven days, if all he had intended was to fight a half-hearted battle like this? Was there no British general capable of winning a battle?

Brooke asked him what had influenced him to adopt these extreme views; the prime minister identified Eden as his source, the night before. The general lost his temper, and asked the P.M. very pertinently why he consulted his foreign secretary for advice on strategic and tactical matters.¹¹⁷

Churchill 'flared' that he was entitled to consult whomsoever he wished.

Meeting with Churchill and the chiefs of staff soon after midday, Eden repeated his gloomy prognosis. He pronounced that Montgomery was 'allowing the battle to peter out' – he had done nothing for the last three days, and was now clearly withdrawing formations to the rear.

General Brooke dismissed these views as 'very superficial'; had the foreign secretary not noticed that for the last three days Montgomery had had to repulse a series of determined counter-attacks thrown at him by Rommel, who had suffered such casualties in consequence as must have a bearing on the outcome of the battle?

After a withering reference to Eden's rank as a Staff Captain in the Great War, to which rank Churchill had more than once in the past admiringly referred, Brooke added that Eden must appreciate that Montgomery had

brought his front line forward several thousand yards, which entailed now moving forward the heavy artillery and ammunition stocks as well before the attack could be renewed. If Montgomery was ‘withdrawing formations,’ he loyally added, it was undoubtedly to form a tactical reserve.

Churchill turned to Field-Marshal Smuts for his view. Smuts expressed agreement with Brooke. The unpleasant telegram remained unsent. For a while, back at the war office, as his diary shows, Brooke silently wondered if his loyalty was misplaced – was Montgomery, in fact, a busted flush?

IT WAS the lack of news that was generating this hysteria. Until now, the balance of raw anxiety on each side had been approximately even: Rommel and Montgomery had each feared that the other might be winning.

The codebreaking computers gave Churchill, as so often before, the vital edge. Later that day the teleprinter link from Bletchley Park started whirring, churning out panicking messages from Field-Marshal Rommel to Rome and Berlin.¹¹⁸ He was warning the High Command that his situation was ‘grave in the extreme.’¹¹⁹ Another intercept came in, an Order, No. 2878, from Rommel to his own commanders, beginning: ‘The present battle is a life and death struggle. . .,’ ordaining the immediate court-martial of any soldier who failed in his duty, and ending: ‘To be destroyed after it has been read.’¹²⁰

It looked as though Rommel’s army was cracking.

After dinner, at 11:30 P.M., Churchill, not often as willing as this to acknowledge his own error, sent for the C.I.G.S., told him he had a ‘specially good’ intercept he wanted him to see, and showed him this latest Rommel message. To General Alexander he sent off a telegram. ‘We assure you that you will be supported whatever the cost in all the measures which you are taking to shake the life out of Rommel’s army and make this a fight to the finish.’ Aided by the codebreakers, he said, they had succeeded in locating and destroying the three vitally-needed tankers that were rushing gasoline across to Rommel. More important, the intercepts showed ‘the conditions of intense strain and anxiety behind the enemy’s front,’ as Churchill told Alexander, and these had given the defence committee ‘solid grounds for confidence’ in the Eighth Army’s ultimate success.¹²¹

PERHAPS CHURCHILL’S pressure, transmitted by the personal visits of Duncan Sandys and Richard Casey, was not so untoward after all: General Montgomery’s diary shows that he now at last appreciated that Churchill had a

timetable governed by political imperatives and a deadline – namely the launching of TORCH. At eleven A.M. on the twenty-ninth he modified his previous operational plan, for a relentless infantry offensive along the coast, replacing it with a punch through Rommel's remaining minefields by the infantry and armour further to the south. To this operation he gave the name SUPERCHARGE.¹²² Churchill was now notified by Cairo that Montgomery was going to resume the attack with a full-scale operation to clear a way through for the main armoured striking force, the Tenth Corps.¹²³ The 2nd New Zealand division would lead the breakthrough with two British infantry brigades and the 9th Armoured Brigade.

After the two-day respite he resumed his general offensive, which had in fact bogged down in Rommel's minefields and anti-tank defences. A full day later a second message came from Alexander to Churchill: 'Enemy is fighting desperately, but we are hitting him hard and continuously, and boring into him without mercy. Have high hopes he will crack soon.'¹²⁴

Churchill cancelled his weekend engagements and stayed in London in a fever of excitement. On November 1 he informed President Roosevelt of the drama in the desert: the battle was now rising to its climax, he told the president, and 'our hopes are higher than I dare to say.'¹²⁵

'I wonder whether we pressed on hard enough,' wrote one F.O. official.¹²⁶ This, the 'failure to press on,' would become a question mark in the minds of many who were privy to the ULTRA messages.



Events now had a rising and irreversible momentum of their own, however. It was now November 2 – and TORCH was due to start in six days' time. The troopships from the United States were already on the high seas, bearing down on North Africa. Brigadier Menzies briefed Washington on the arrangements made to furnish ULTRA Intelligence direct to Eisenhower by fast radio link.¹²⁷ After a morning on the firing ranges at Princes Risborough, Churchill hosted a farewell luncheon at No. 10 for Eisenhower and his generals before they flew out to Gibraltar to command the assault.¹²⁸ A signal arrived from Montgomery – SUPERCHARGE had begun at one A.M. Again things seemed to hover in the balance; Rommel had pulled off miracles before. The prime minister presided over a cabinet in London that afternoon; all that they knew for certain was that General Alexander was confident, and that a big battle seemed to have begun.¹²⁹

The night hours passed in dreadful uncertainty. Early on the third 'C' telephoned through the latest ULTRA intercepts. Just after nightfall Rommel had radioed to Hitler that his army was exhausted after the ten-day battle against superior British forces, and would be unable to prevent the tank formations from breaking through, 'which may be anticipated tonight or tomorrow.' Given the lack of motor transport he did not expect to be able to withdraw the six Italian and two German infantry divisions, and the armoured divisions would also be difficult to extricate. 'In this situation,' concluded Rommel, 'despite the heroic resistance and magnificent spirit of the troops the gradual annihilation of the army must be expected.'¹³⁰

This pregnant intercept reached Churchill that same night. It was flashed back out to North Africa, to Alexander in Cairo, by a secure cypher channel within minutes.¹³¹ Over at the F.O., Cadogan wisely pondered whether the Desert Fox might not just be 'crying wolf' to get Hitler to rush more reinforcements over to him. Three even more desperate Rommel messages were shortly intercepted.¹³² In a message radioed to Hitler on November 3 he reported fifty per cent casualties so far: 'The German *Afrika Korps* is down to twenty-four tanks.'¹³³

The outcome, it seemed, could no longer be in doubt.

CONSCIOUS OF the great victories being wrought in the Egyptian desert even at that moment, Churchill could not restrain his elation at the midday cabinet at No. 10 on November 3. When his colleagues doggedly insisted on discussing post-war Europe he cried out, 'Damn Europe! We'll be strong enough to go our own way.' He was, wrote Leo Amery, in his most rollicking mood.¹³⁴ To coos of approval from Kingsley Wood and Amery, the prime minister declared that the only way to run Europe would be for the great powers to keep out and leave a Grand Council to run Europe, composed of Prussia, Italy, Spain, and Scandinavia. Eden sadly informed his cabinet colleagues that he had been trying to circulate to them his own Four Power plan for the post-war world, but that Churchill had decreed that such speculative studies be left to those with 'time on their hands.'

Churchill's excitement continued far into the night. He sent for 'C' at eleven P.M. to plead for the latest news. A historic response had come from Hitler to Rommel, sent from East Prussia via Rome during the day, and this had now been retrieved by Britain's code-breaking computers: the German people, said Hitler – who attached far greater significance to North Africa than to Stalingrad – were following the heroic battle in Egypt; he

exhorted the field-marshal not to fall back one step, but to throw every gun and warrior into the battle. 'Despite his superiority,' declared the Führer, 'the enemy will also be at the end of his strength. It would not be the first time in history that the stronger willpower triumphed over the stronger battalions of the enemy. You can show your troops no other path than that which leads to victory or to death.'¹³⁵

'You look very tired,' said Churchill to his Intelligence chief. 'You'd better go to bed.' At two-fifteen A.M. – it was now November 4 – he telephoned 'C' again however, to ask a wholly superfluous question; and then apologised.¹³⁶ He was like a small child on *The Night before Christmas*.

In the morning a telegram came from General Alexander which, when unwrapped, seemed to set the seal on their desert victory. 'The enemy's front has broken,' it announced, 'and British armoured formations in strength have passed through and are operating in the enemy's rear areas' – a phrase calculated to thrill, or to chill, any fighting man depending on which side of the battlefield he was on. Rommel's forces were, said Alexander, 'in full retreat.'¹³⁷

Churchill phoned this through to the king. 'Well, read it out, read it out,' stuttered the monarch, excitedly interrupting his rehearsal of his next Speech from the Throne. 'Good news, thanks,' he then said, congratulating Churchill, and wrote in his diary: 'A victory at last, how good it is for the nerves.'¹³⁸ In a state of excitement, the prime minister sent for Brooke to suggest that all the church bells in Britain should peal in celebration. The general drily recommended that they wait just a little longer.¹³⁹

Rommel's reply to Hitler's stern message, intercepted a few hours later, showed that the Nazi field marshal was losing his nerve. 'The casualties are so severe,' he informed his Führer, 'that there is no longer a coherent front.' He formally requested permission to begin a fighting retreat (which he had already secretly put in motion two days earlier).¹⁴⁰

At 8:50 P.M. Hitler gave permission, 'In view of the way things have turned out.'¹⁴¹

All or most of these signals were decoded; in fact several were in Churchill's hands before they reached Hitler or Rommel.¹⁴²

'I feel sure,' the prime minister now triumphed to his friend in the White House in Washington, 'you will regard this as a good prelude to TORCH.'¹⁴³

THE TIDE had surely turned both for Britain and its leader. A Canadian diplomat visiting Britain for financial negotiations summed up the situation on

this day, November 4: 'The dominance of Churchill emerges from all these talks. Cripps on the shelf, Attlee a lackey, Bracken the Man Friday of Churchill.' He added, 'It isn't as bad as the political gossips make out, but it's bad enough.'¹⁴⁴ The prime minister again urged that they have all England's church bells pealing victory. He asked Alexander to give him sufficient occasion for this carillon within the next few days: 'At least 20,000 prisoners would be necessary.' Besides, he shrewdly added, this would help to take the enemy's eye off 'what is coming to him next quite soon.'¹⁴⁵

Bracken lunched with Churchill on the fifth and they toasted each other in brandy as the sensational news flooded in throughout the meal – Rommel's whole line retreating in disorder, thousands of prisoners captured including nine Italian generals and the German general Ritter von Thoma, commander of the *Afrika Korps*, who had turned up shell-shocked and dishevelled in the English lines, as near to being a deserter as made no difference. Still reeking of alcohol and cigar-smoke, Bracken related an hour later to the weekly meeting of the Political Warfare Executive how he had proposed that now, 'in the hour of our strength,' was the time to unshackle the German prisoners of war who had been in chains since Dieppe. The sun had gone out of Winston's face at that. 'You want me to grovel in the mud to these scoundrelly Germans?' he lisped. 'No,' Bracken said he had replied. 'At this moment they're grovelling to you in the sands of Africa.'¹⁴⁶

This was true. Montgomery dined the *Afrika Korps* commander in his mess and pumped him for information. Von Thoma's only plea was to be housed in a different compound from the Italian generals, as Alexander's latest telegram scoffed. A letter came from King George VI, congratulating the prime minister and above all the British Army on the victory.¹⁴⁷

At midday on November 6 Churchill met with his chiefs of staff in high excitement. Wearing his blue rompers, he showed the king's letter proudly to Harold Nicolson, a Conservative Member of Parliament who came to lunch. 'Every word in his own hand!' he commented. The king had concluded his letter with the words, 'I am so pleased that everybody is taking this victory in a quiet and thankful way. . .'

The last few days had drained the prime minister. Churchill now seemed suddenly very tired – to the visiting M.P. his eyes looked glaucous and lifeless, with just a flicker of surprise in them as though to say, 'What the hell is this man doing here?'

When Bracken came in, however, the prime minister gave him the order that all church bells were to be rung on the coming Sunday. This evinced

some pettifogging hesitations from the other lunch guests – Lady Lambton, Sir Edward Marsh, Miss Seymour, John Martin, and Lady Furness were there besides Nicolson.¹⁴⁸ The bells might be rusted, one warned, or their ringers might be away in the army, as another chimed in.

Winston dispelled these small-minded misgivings with a wave of the hand. 'We are not celebrating final victory,' he said. 'The war will still be long. When we have beaten Germany it will take us two more years to beat Japan. Nor is that a bad thing.'¹⁴⁹

'Ring out the bells,' confirmed General Sir Harold Alexander's telegram from Cairo that night. 'Prisoners estimated at 20,000, tanks 350, guns 400, motor transport several thousand. . . Eighth Army is advancing.'¹⁵⁰

The words conjured forth grim, heroic images of tin-helmeted Tommies advancing through the pall of smoke and sand-haze, with bayonets fixed, to the accompanying skirl of bagpipes and the rattle of drums and machine-gun fire. A victory, a famous victory at last. In secret telegrams to Moscow, Washington, and Algiers the prime minister repeated Alexander's triumphant words around the world.

Before Alamein the British had never had a victory, he would write – launching into history one of those easy, harmonic sentences that make practised writers sigh with envy; after Alamein, nary a defeat.

The cost to the empire had been high, indeed appalling; some 13,560 of its finest men had laid down their lives since this battle began, of whom Lieutenant-General Sir Leslie Morshead's brave 9th Australian Division, bearing the brunt of the infantry fighting, had given nearly three thousand.¹⁵¹

In northern Africa a military avalanche was beginning.

Hitler's armies, it seemed, were in full flight and that was not all. Operation TORCH would start in less than two days' time, and British Intelligence knew that the Führer and his High Command were still quite unaware of this immense amphibious operation.¹⁵²

27: *A Little Airplane Accident*

THE ALLIED forces for TORCH were approaching North Africa. Some two hundred ships carrying 110,000 American and British troops were converging on a score of landing beaches. The landing operations would begin simultaneously at Casablanca, Oran, and Algiers, in the darkness before dawn on November 8, 1942.

Important political problems still remained. President Roosevelt had ordered General de Gaulle kept out of the loop. At the end of October, Churchill had sent his Major Morton over to Carlton Gardens to speak soothing, if non-committal, words of encouragement, but the Free French leader had once again expressed himself 'specially hurt' at being deprived of inside information. The American belief was that TORCH would encounter less resistance if de Gaulle and his troops were kept at arm's length.¹

Indeed, the Americans entertained hopes of winning over the Vichy French forces in Africa to the Allied cause.² They had selected General Henri Giraud as the nominal senior French officer in TORCH; but even this choice caused unexpected problems, since a letter arrived from Giraud, still in southern France, on October 27, demanding to be given supreme command of *all* forces, including the American and British, within forty-eight hours of TORCH beginning. On November 1, a second letter arrived, stating that he could not possibly leave France before the twentieth. Robert Murphy was so wedded to Giraud that he consequently appealed to Washington to postpone TORCH by at least two weeks, arguing: 'I am convinced that the invasion of North Africa without [a] favorable French High Command will be a catastrophe.'³

'The gallant French generals,' mocked Sir Alexander Cadogan, permanent head of the foreign office, 'when hearing how near the operation was, have cold feet & ask for three weeks' delay.'⁴

In chorus, Eisenhower, Marshall, Stimson, and Roosevelt himself all shouted Murphy down. The diplomat thereupon sent a vague message to Giraud assuring him that all would be well; he made no reference to the imminence of TORCH, or to the fact that the English were involved. Sulking, Giraud agreed to come out of France by submarine and join the venture.⁵ On November 3 Churchill 'revealed' this, as he thought, to Roosevelt.⁶

In the same message he included a request that the president's proposed message to Pétain – about TORCH – should indicate less kindly sentiments; Roosevelt agreed to tone it down.⁷ This was a further indicator of how raw British foreign office feelings toward Vichy France were, compared with Washington's. To a message to General Alexander, congratulating him on Montgomery's victory, Churchill appended these lines: 'KINGPIN [Giraud] is proposing to embark tonight in one of our submarines to go to Gibraltar and meet IKEY [Eisenhower]. He will definitely head the movement in the TORCH area under the Supreme United States Command.'⁸

IN WAR there are no 'definites.' No less an officer than Admiral Darlan himself, the Vichy French commander-in-chief, turned up in Algiers at one P.M. on November 4, ostensibly to visit his son Alain, a young naval officer (a French agent of the S.I.S. immediately reported his arrival). Darlan Junior had contracted infantile paralysis, the affliction which had crippled Roosevelt too; the president suggested to Admiral Leahy that they send a letter of sympathy to the Vichy French admiral; later he would invite the son to Warm Springs, Georgia, the clinic which he himself had made famous.⁹

Hearing of Darlan's arrival, even Churchill expressed delight.¹⁰ To Eisenhower, leaving for Gibraltar, he remarked: 'If I could meet Darlan, much as I hate him, I would cheerfully crawl on my hands and knees for a mile if by doing so I could get him to bring that fleet of his into the circle of Allied forces.'¹¹ Eden and the foreign office were less keen.

There was much hard lying in London and Washington after TORCH, and jiggery-pokery with the Allied archives since then, to conceal the background of Darlan's arrival.¹² Churchill learned from his codebreakers two days later that Hitler's man at Vichy had assured Berlin on the sixth that Darlan was in Algiers only because 'his son is dying there.' A well-placed source there had reported that Darlan had been there incognito since the fifth. British Intelligence now learned that at the end of September informed circles in France were stating that Darlan was no longer certain of a German victory – 'and there are signs that he is thinking of changing sides.'¹³

In fact the five-star admiral's presence in Algiers was not coincidental. Roosevelt and Leahy had contrived it in order to eclipse Britain's protégé, de Gaulle, with a *fait accompli*. One French source, visiting London from Algiers, told Cadogan that the Americans had been playing with Darlan all the time. 'I wouldn't put it past them,' remarked the F.O. head angrily. 'But if it could be proved, I would have a God Almighty show-down with them.'¹⁴

Darlan's move to Algiers, just four days before TORCH, created a new situation. He could issue, on the spot, the one order demanded by every French officer with whom Murphy and Clark had clandestinely spoken: an order absolving them from the oath they had sworn to Marshal Pétain.

Without it, these legalistic officers had all refused to transfer their loyalty to the Allies. Bringing in Darlan would save thousands of lives in the push toward Tunis. Leahy entered in his diary the belief that the subsequent raucous press and radio campaign against the admiral was 'instigated and supported by a group of Jews and communists' in the United States who feared his fascist attitude.¹⁵

When Lord Halifax, on Anthony Eden's instructions, urged on Leahy the need for the 'eventual elimination' of Darlan's 'fascist' regime, Roosevelt's man disapproved; and when Darlan was, only weeks later, 'eliminated' Leahy expressed powerful disapproval of the deed and real sorrow for the widow who was about to lose her son as well.¹⁶

GENERAL EISENHOWER and his staff left Britain in a gaggle of five B-17s on November 5 to set up headquarters in the damp, dismal subterranean tunnels hewn by the British into the Rock of Gibraltar. Churchill formally gave him operational command of Gibraltar – a historic abdication of power, and a violation of the ancient treaty under which Britain acquired the colony. 'The symbol of the solidity of the British empire,' mused the bumptious general in a memo, 'the hallmark of safety and security at home, the jealously guarded rock that has played a tremendous part in the trade development of the English race! An American is in charge, and I am he.'¹⁷

Through an oversight, no word of Eisenhower's arrival was at first sent back to London. Worried, the prime minister repeatedly telephoned Bedell Smith, who had remained at Norfolk House. When Ismay and Bedell Smith at last came round to bring him the news of Eisenhower's safe arrival, Churchill cried out with alarm: 'Don't tell me he's drowned!'

His composure restored by the news they brought, he then assured them: 'I never had the slightest idea that it would be otherwise.'¹⁸

In his belated message of safe arrival Eisenhower said that, if the weather was good enough for Giraud to transfer as planned from the submarine to a flying-boat, he hoped to get him to North Africa before H-hour. 'I should like once again to express to you personally my grateful thanks for your constant support and encouragement during the last few months,' he wrote. 'We are of good heart. . . .' It was now, at four-thirty P.M. on the sixth, that Eisenhower learned from Marshall of Admiral Darlan's presence in Algiers.¹⁹

Uneasy about double-crossing de Gaulle, Churchill again asked the president for permission to inform him of TORCH and its American character; he reminded the president of the solemn undertakings which Britain had given in 1940 recognising de Gaulle. 'I am confident his military honour can be trusted,' he pleaded, though adding, 'I will however take all precautions' – a reference to de Gaulle's being kept under surveillance. He was sure, he said, that de Gaulle and Giraud would 'join forces politically, though under what conditions I cannot foresee.'²⁰ Roosevelt flatly refused.²¹

'I am still sorry about de Gaulle,' the prime minister responded on the sixth. 'Of course, we control all his telegrams outwards. But we are ready to accept your view. All goes well.'²² 'We are not telling de Gaulle anything,' he instructed his minister in Cairo, 'until TORCH is lit.' This was an American show, he apologised, and Roosevelt had insisted on this secrecy.²³

During the night the British submarine P-219 had embarked Giraud from unoccupied France. Since Giraud too loathed the English, the submarine wore the American ensign, and had Captain Jerauld Wright USN as her temporary commander; an American flying-boat would take this four-star general, now boasting the code-name KINGPIN, off the submarine and fly him on to Gibraltar – not to Algiers, as originally planned, since both of Eisenhower's political advisers, H. Freeman Matthews of the state department and Harold Mack of the foreign office, both felt that their puppet general needed straightening-out before proceeding to North Africa.²⁴

Churchill had gone down to Chequers to await the start of TORCH: like Hitler in his heyday, the Allies had learned the value of springing strategic surprises on weekends. Once or twice that Saturday November 7 Eden phoned, and reported that all was well. Then ugly fissures began to appear in the edifice. The admiralty phoned at eleven P.M., and read over a telegram that had just come from Admiral Cunningham, the naval commander of TORCH: 'KINGPIN arrived here (Gibraltar) but very difficult to deal with.'

For a time on this Saturday, the foreign office deliberated on whether to hold back all de Gaulle's outgoing cypher telegrams for twenty-four hours

to guard against his sending messages to his generals in North Africa which he might subsequently regret – namely to open fire on the Allied forces.

Churchill told Eden he would return to Downing-street at midday on Sunday, for lunch with de Gaulle. He wanted to get to the bottom of this ‘difficult’ general’s intentions. If de Gaulle turned up for this luncheon engagement, the risk of his behaving foolishly could probably be discounted, and he need never know of the twenty-four delay to his telegrams. If however he stood Winston up, one F.O. official warned, Britain must ‘fear the worst.’ Other officials thought however that ‘mad though he is’ de Gaulle was unlikely to tell his generals to make war on the Allies.²⁵

AT EISENHOWER’S tunnel headquarters a bizarre problem was developing.

Churchill would later read a first-hand account by a Coldstream Guards colonel: on General Giraud’s arrival there, he said, Eisenhower and Clark made it plain that they knew nothing about France and cared even less. They did not know what to do with Giraud, or any of ‘these Frenchmen’; neither American, the colonel pointed out, spoke French.²⁶ Upon arrival Giraud, an imposing figure even in plain clothes, had been taken to the Convent to dine with the governor, Lieutenant-General Sir Noël Mason-Macfarlane. Giraud expected to be given the immediate supreme command, as the hapless Murphy had once indicated to him.²⁷ The *honneur* of France, he said, would be satisfied with nothing less. In a fraught argument lasting for several hours, Eisenhower and Clark told Giraud that he would not be allowed even a walk-on role, and that de Gaulle was not being consulted either. Did they say de Gaulle? Giraud bristled and called him a ‘frightful egoist.’ ‘Pot calling kettle black,’ decided Eisenhower’s aide.²⁸

Giraud’s demands for top billing had the makings of a Whitehall farce, were not lives and the fate of nations at stake. ‘Some hours passed,’ Churchill later related, using restrained language in a secret session of the Commons, ‘in persuading him to reduce these claims to the bounds of reason.’²⁹

Telegrams arrived from Murphy in Algiers, demanding: ‘Where is Giraud?’³⁰ The answer was only that he would arrive ‘shortly.’

Cheated meanwhile of his ambitions, Giraud went to bed after midnight in a bitter mood; they all agreed to meet again in the governor’s house the next morning.³¹ Eisenhower stayed up, dictating a long and strained account of this haggling for the benefit of Washington and London. Giraud was refusing to allow his name to be used, he reported, or to participate in any way except as overall Allied supreme commander:

KINGPIN said that there was no possibility of his guaranteeing non-resistance in our attacks tonight, and [he] would not make any attempt to do so. He seems to assume, however, that we will get ashore and that thereafter he would appear in Algiers in the uniform of a French general and take command.

Eisenhower conferred with Sir Andrew Cunningham, naval commander of TORCH. The admiral called Giraud's demands preposterous – Giraud just wanted to avoid being associated with the shedding of French blood.

'This is the way the matter stands,' dictated the general at two-thirty A.M., 'and we are proceeding with the execution of plans.'

There were already reports of 'considerable resistance' to the American landings which had now – it was now Sunday, November 8 – begun.³²

In Eisenhower's headquarters tempers ran high, and as Giraud slept his angry sleep, there was a macabre *entr'acte*. Around four-thirty A.M. the governor came in, bringing his A.D.C. Major Anthony Quayle (later a famous actor). Over cups of hot Nescafé they discussed how Giraud's arrival had complicated the promising scenario created by Admiral Darlan's coming over. Eisenhower said he had no use for Giraud in TORCH even as a spectator. As a West Pointer, he was a ruthless general and the records show that he had ordered several assassinations in TORCH already.*

'All felt something had to be done with him [Giraud] – even a little airplane accident,' typed Eisenhower's A.D.C. in a secret note that night; to which proposal the British governor made a response which the Fates may well have borne in mind a few months later. 'Mason-Mac,' the aide recorded, 'said he had a good body-disposal squad, if needed.'³³ He had a secret service background; and he was on intimate terms with Churchill.³⁴



The invasion of French North-West Africa which Churchill had pushed through against the opposition of Roosevelt's cabinet and generals, had begun around one A.M. on November 8, 1942 with the Mediterranean landings in the east and centre, and at four-thirty A.M. at Casablanca on the Atlantic.

* As President, Eisenhower would order the Central Intelligence Agency to assassinate Patrice Lumumba, Marxist prime minister of the Congo; he was shot on January 17, 1961.

In Algiers, Robert Murphy set out shortly after midnight to inform General Alphonse Juin, Vichy commander-in-chief in Algeria, who had also been kept ignorant until now.³⁵ He informed the pyjama'd general at his Villa des Oliviers, that 'half a million' American troops were about to land, 'at French invitation.' It seems that no lessons of Hitler's bloodless pre-war triumphs had been overlooked by the Allies. Juin asked who gave this invitation, and Murphy mentioned the name of Giraud.³⁶ Juin pointed out that Darlan was in Algiers and outranked them all. They both agreed to wake the admiral; Murphy was mindful of the authorisation that Roosevelt had given him, as recently as October 17 and no doubt with precisely this eventuality in mind, to strike whatever bargain with Darlan would prosper the military operations. Around one A.M., Juin phoned Darlan, who was staying with Admiral Fenard at the Villa El Alaoun. Darlan came straight over.

Murphy repeated to him that 'at the appeal of the French general Giraud,' Allied forces were about to disembark. Darlan turned purple and stated that he would resist any invasion by force. Lying, Murphy now claimed that they had decided on this operation to forestall an Axis invasion.³⁷

'I have known for a long time that the British are stupid,' Darlan exclaimed. 'But I always believed Americans were more intelligent. Apparently you have the same genius as the British for making massive blunders!' If the Americans had only waited for a few weeks, he added, they could have mounted a joint Franco-American invasion of southern France as well.

Murphy formally called upon Darlan to order a cease-fire. Darlan responded, after some thought, 'I have given my oath to Pétain, and preserved allegiance to the Marshal for two years. I cannot revoke that now.'³⁸

He did dictate a message to Marshal Pétain, but when General Juin tried to take it over to the admiralty building for transmission he discovered armed desperadoes, a gang of d'Astier's subversives, surrounding the villa; it took some time for police to arrive to liberate them. As confusion reigned, Darlan became resigned, and told Murphy: 'Giraud is not your man. Politically he is a child. He is just a good divisional commander, nothing more.'

IN THE English countryside, Churchill's mood was ebullient as he waited for these night hours to pass. 'Any news?' he would ask Elizabeth Layton, his duty secretary. 'Well, ring up and ask again, that was twenty minutes ago.' At one A.M. the duty captain reported that one American troop transport, *Thomas Stone*, had been torpedoed 120 miles off Algiers, but had got all her landing-craft away. At two-thirty A.M. the word was that the land-

ings by the eastern assault force had succeeded at all three beaches at Oran. As each titbit came, Churchill telephoned Eden. 'No word yet received from Western Task Force which is scheduled to begin landing in about five minutes.' 'Thomas Stone, U.S. Transport. Seven hundred of the personnel got into twenty-four of the landing-craft and set off for their BLUE Beach.' The news was disjointed, and Eden noted, as the hours passed, that the American landings were running into fiercer French opposition than expected. Winston and others crowded into the study at Chequers, recorded Miss Layton; the air was thick with jokes and laughter, he was trying to dictate through it all, and making her laugh too. Once he began to bark at her, then quickly caught himself: 'No, no,' he said soothingly. 'Quite all right, *quite* all right. Tonight you may rejoice. Tonight there is sugar on the cake.'³⁹

Churchill derived much of his information about the day's events from 'C's' radio monitors. The Vichy high-grade cypher yielded a 6:30 A.M. situation report radioed by the French defenders at Casablanca:

Important landing at Safi, important attack at Fedahla and a Commando raid at Mehdiya. At 0800 hour 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron left Casablanca for action off that port and off Rabat. There were at this time 5 submarines between Casablanca and Fedahla, 2 towards Safi. [Comment, not clear if these submarines French or allies.] Aircraft based Port Lyautey operating Mehdiya–Fedahla. Aircraft based Casablanca operating to westward of this port. All batteries taking part in action.

Casablanca at noon reported 'internal situation "remarkable for its discipline," bulk of land and air forces being concentrated in counter attack at Fedahla. Naval officer-in-charge in constant touch with General Noguès.' Heavy fighting continued at Casablanca, but at one P.M. the defenders were heard reporting that the French navy had broken off its defensive action after *Fouqueux* and another unnamed unit were sunk, and *Albatross*, *Milan*, *Brestois*, and *Frondeur* seriously damaged. At four P.M. Casablanca radioed to Vichy that there had been a violent bombardment of their battleship *Jean-Bart* and that *Primauguet*, her boiler damaged, was stopped at the harbour entrance. The Allied forces, this signal continued, had established a bridgehead three miles square at Fedahla.⁴⁰

As for Oran, a cypher signal to Vichy reported the 4:30 A.M. situation: 'In attack on harbour 2 British units destroyed, many prisoners taken. Bo

Sfer and most of Areu occupied. Landing near Fegalo. Defence troops proceeding to counter attack to eastward and westward.' At 8:30 A.M Oran had reported to Vichy: 'Destroyers *Tramontane* and *Tornado* out of action and missing: and "3/4 of the air force" out of action.'⁴¹

At eleven o'clock the naval codebreakers reported that Oran had been heard signalling in plain language at 2:50 A.M. that 'one thousand Americans' had landed at Les Andalouses, and that at 3:32 a general attack on Oran had been reported to Vichy. Algiers had reported at 3:10 that motor launches had been driven off and at 3:58 that a general attack had been launched.

At 5:25 Algiers had reported to Marshal Pétain that landings were taking place on the coast between Tunisia and Southern Morocco and that British troops were involved.⁴²

Admiral Pound phoned to ask whether he might now announce that a British admiral, Cunningham, was commander of the naval side of TORCH. Churchill scribbled on the message, 'Not yet.'⁴³

As for Giraud, his pigheadedness had lost him the few friends he had. 'Meanwhile,' Churchill noted that morning, 'we have had to fight a battle which is still going on at all the landing places. We have got nothing out of him so far, and all the trouble has been ours. If Giraud has been playing for time, his bargaining power is much reduced by what is taking place. I am not prepared to agree to any effective diminution of General Eisenhower's authority at this stage.' He proposed that they now tell Washington, 'We support Eisenhower in not giving way to Giraud's exorbitant demands.'⁴⁴



It was therefore time for the historic showdown with de Gaulle. Back in London a few hours later, he invited Eden and Desmond Morton to join him for the crucial Sunday lunch with the general at No. 10. He began their pre-lunch meeting with the less-than-totally-honest assurance, 'The operations in French North Africa [are] an American enterprise,' and blamed Roosevelt for having had to keep de Gaulle ignorant. Eden found the general less *blesé* (wounded) than usual. No doubt coached by him in the proper manners for this meal, de Gaulle was conciliatory, arguing that it would be wrong to split the Free French into two camps and even agreeing to serve under Giraud if need be, saying he thought Giraud an excellent choice as leader – that 'he himself did not matter,' and 'he was ready to put himself

under any other Chief who carried with him the mass of the French people.⁴⁵ Expecting the general to be shocked and angry, Churchill consoled him with word that the Gaullist general Paul Legentilhomme would become the new High Commissioner in Madagascar: 'This would show that the British were not abandoning Fighting France.'

The altercations in Gibraltar revealed General Giraud in a less flattering light. Telephoning Eden later this day, Churchill snarled that 'all Frenchman are either grasping or crawling.'⁴⁶

Giraud finally got off his high horse and agreed to Eisenhower's original scheme – that he proceed under American command to North Africa and attempt to rally such French forces to his flag as he could.⁴⁷ Churchill now sent a warm message to the Frenchman reminding him of their talks in Metz in 1937.⁴⁸ A reply came through Eisenhower, reporting the French general's pleasure at the message: 'Like you,' said Giraud, 'through difficulties and trials, I have never had any doubt of the final victory. I am certain today that, thanks to the efforts of all, Alsace and Lorraine will remain French' – which was setting this ruinous war's aim in a rather narrower focus than that of the Allied high command.⁴⁹

THE HAZARDS of this new theatre gave Washington sleepless nights. Henry Stimson looked at the maps, and saw how easy it would be for the enemy to pinch off the Straits of Gibraltar.⁵⁰ Cordell Hull agreed: suppose Hitler and Franco had entered into a secret compact to this effect all along? Giraud was willing to offer French territory in Morocco to Franco if he would keep out of hostilities. When the British ambassador informed Franco of TORCH he took it well and, after speaking with the American ambassador, went off for a day's hunting. 'All's well that ends well,' Churchill said to Ambassador Winant over dinner. Bedell Smith found him elated by Alamein and TORCH, and talking 'even more frankly than customarily,' and for most of the night. 'For the present at least,' Smith notified Marshall, 'he has given up with some reluctance the idea of a British operation in Norway as being too difficult and too bloody.' Churchill's glare, he added, had reverted to Turkey, which he believed he could bring into the war 'at almost any moment,' provided that the Allies supplied the tanks and modern weapons for her forty-five divisions. All this indicated that the prime minister was rapidly cooling toward ROUND-UP – the cross-Channel invasion – except perhaps to deliver a final coup de grâce to a tottering Germany. After this dinner-

table conversation Bedell Smith sent a suitably-worded warning across the Atlantic to General Marshall.⁵²

All this time the news from North Africa was tantalisingly thin. Before the American guests left No. 10 Downing-street, Bracken dropped in with 'C,' bringing a report on the Darlan situation from the codebreakers; it was being forwarded to President Roosevelt direct.⁵³ The admiral had radioed at eleven-thirty A.M., 'Algiers will probably be taken this evening.'

There were other messages which have vanished from the files. That same afternoon Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham, the naval commander of TORCH, had taken in to Eisenhower, with Churchill's blessing, the startling news from Algiers that Admiral Darlan wanted to negotiate, and where and when could he meet with Eisenhower? Darlan was refusing to deal with any Frenchmen. Churchill, said Cunningham, had this message for Eisenhower: 'Kiss Darlan's stern if you have to – but get the French Navy!'⁵⁴

THIS PUT the supreme commander in an awkward spot. He had only just broadcast, through gritted teeth, a glowing *laudatio* on General Giraud and the importance of the position he was to hold. The local French forces however showed allegiance only to Darlan, who had brought with him the majestic aura of Marshal Pétain. Darlan still had the authority to order one hundred thousand French troops in North Africa to cease fire when he chose, but Eisenhower would look foolish if Giraud was now dropped. Believing himself unheard, here in the depths of the Rock, Eisenhower vented his grief about the encumbrance that Giraud had become. 'Jeeeesus Che-rist!' he shouted. 'What I need around here is a damned good assassin!'⁵⁵

On the following day Mark Clark would at last fly over to Algiers taking General Giraud with him. The Frenchman was given a frosty reception by his fellow officers. Fearing for his life, he went into hiding in the home of Jacques Lemaigre-Dubreuil, a businessman and oil merchant.⁵⁶



As the autumn weeks of 1942 smouldered into history, and the German army tightened its grip on Stalingrad, Stalin's temper turned sour. Propelled by a sense of indebtedness, even of military inferiority, Churchill had become frank to the point of folly. He ordered his diplomats to sign a secret agreement with Moscow on September 29, 1942 allowing a complete exchange between their two countries of new and unknown weapons,

including those still to be invented.⁵⁷ The prime minister had told the Soviet ambassador about TORCH under the pledge of absolute secrecy, and Ivan Maisky had replied picturesquely that 'as an old conspirator he could be trusted with a secret.' (On October 15 the foreign office had however to confront Maisky with surveillance reports revealing that the ambassador had twice told British journalists about TORCH, and had lectured them that Moscow would not accept the operation as a 'second front.'⁵⁸)

On occasion, as he had while in Moscow, Churchill even betrayed to the Soviet dictator the secrets he had gleaned from ULTRA. Late in September the Naval Section at Bletchley Park compiled a report on Hitler's preparations to start naval warfare in the Caspian Sea as soon as the army had crossed the Caucasus; the Nazi admiral there would have a fleet including Italian submarines and MTBs. Churchill followed, through his codebreakers, the movements of individual German harbourmasters across Nazi-occupied Russia toward their intended Caspian destinations.⁵⁹ He asked 'C' whether he had passed these important data on to the Russians. Then he changed his mind, telling him on September 30 not to send anything further about this to Moscow until they had talked. 'I think of making it the subject of a personal message to Stalin.'⁶⁰ He dictated a telegram passing this information on to the Kremlin, revealing casually that it came 'from the same source that I used to warn you of the impending attack on Russia a year and a half ago.' He again spoke of his readiness to send twenty British and American squadrons to aid the Soviet air force on the southern front.⁶¹

THE TERMS of war were however turning against Hitler. The rainy season was upon his attacking armies. His mountain units were choking to a halt in the narrow footpath-capillaries of the Caucasus. The decrypts now indicated that Hitler had perforce suspended his plans to expand into the Caspian Sea; Churchill informed Stalin of this 'latest information' on October 8, a message to which he received a few days later merely a terse 'Thank you.'⁶² On October 19 the Soviet dictator suggested to his ambassador in London that Churchill was deliberately holding back to ensure the defeat of the Soviet Union so that he could then 'come to terms with Herr Hitler's or Brüning's Germany' at their expense: how otherwise could they explain Churchill's recalcitrant attitude on the Second Front in Europe, the dwindling arms deliveries, and the preservation of Rudolf Hess, the Deputy Führer, in Britain ('whom Churchill is clearly holding in reserve')? Finally,

there had been no systematic bombing of Berlin during September, although Churchill had promised this while in Moscow.⁶³

Stalin probably sent this message to Maisky in the belief that Churchill's clever secret service would read it to him. Alarmed by this ugly mood, on November 5 Churchill informed the Kremlin of the rout of Rommel and the imminence of TORCH 'on a very great scale.' 'Let me further express to you, Premier Stalin . . . our congratulations on the ever-glorious defence of Stalingrad,' he continued. He concluded with 'all good wishes for your anniversary' – namely that of the Bolshevik revolution. Two days later, Churchill passed to Stalin a new warning, fresh from ULTRA, that Hitler had abandoned his plans to capture Baku, the oil centre on the Caspian, and that he was hoping to wreck it by air bombardment instead. 'Pray accept this from me,' he told the Soviet dictator. It earned a marginally warmer response. 'Many thanks for your warnings concerning Baku,' replied Stalin. 'We are taking the necessary measures to combat the danger.'⁶⁴

THE LANDINGS in North Africa partially melted this ice between them.

Stalin sent a more cordial message to London on that same Sunday.⁶⁵ His ambassador brought it round to No. 10 on the ninth. In high spirits Churchill delivered what Maisky called 'an impassioned and quickfire monologue' about North Africa. Spain had kept out, as expected; and the Vichy French had not declared war on the Allies, indeed their opposition in Algiers and Morocco had been less vigorous than anticipated. In his view the Allies would occupy the whole of North Africa 'in a matter of weeks.' They had put ashore 250,000 troops in the first wave, he claimed. Two armoured divisions had been landed at Algiers and were charging toward Tunis at full speed. 'What a pity,' he remarked, 'that TORCH was not launched until November 8.' Ten days sooner, he explained, and Roosevelt would have swept the mid-term elections – a remark which revealed to Maisky the extent to which western politicians were beholden to party politics. 'I tried to hurry him up,' continued Churchill, 'but he could never steel himself for it.' He now played down the Dieppe raid as one of a number of British 'dirty tricks' designed to deceive the enemy. Attuned to Stalin's views, he emphasised that TORCH was not the Second Front – merely a springboard for it. Now they would seize Sicily and Sardinia, and step up the bombing of Italy; this alone might be enough to force Italy out of the war, he suggested.

He then turned to Turkey. He had set himself the task, he said, of dragging her into the war in 1943 (at this point in the monologue, felt Maisky,

Eden indicated some scepticism). As evidence of his political insight, however, Churchill read out his telegram to Roosevelt of August 26, in which the forebodings of both the British and the U.S. chiefs of staff over TORCH were spelt out, and Churchill had offered to take full responsibility. 'And I was right, wasn't I!' he exclaimed in triumph. 'It will be the same with Turkey too.' He added with a leer, 'The Turks are devilishly afraid of you, you know. We're going to have to reassure them somehow.' Whether or not Turkey came in, he promised, he intended to invade the Balkans – 'This will be our Second Front in 1943.'

The Soviet ambassador asked the obvious question – did that mean that the British plans for a Second Front in France had fallen through?

Churchill [reported Maisky to Stalin] grimaced and answered that generally speaking the France plans had not fallen through, but that the Italy – Balkans plans seemed to him more attractive, for they were easier to effect and promised more immediate results.

Maisky disagreed, but the P.M. enlarged upon the hazards of launching any invasion of France. 'But not a word of this to Stalin for the moment,' he added ingenuously, 'for it is only a rough outline.'

Maisky laughed gaily, and reported it nonetheless to the Kremlin, while asking Stalin not to let on, 'or else Churchill won't be so loquacious the next time.' When he brought up JUPITER – invading northern Norway – he found that Churchill had lost all interest in it, in favour of the Balkans. Their interview concluded with words of praise for the Battle of Stalingrad: 'You have won the campaign against Hitler this year,' the prime minister said.⁶⁶

AT THE following three-hour cabinet, Churchill basked in the afterglow of TORCH. He finished by asking his colleagues to congratulate the C.I.G.S. for the fine work done by the army – the only occasion that General Brooke received any mark of appreciation from the prime minister. In a message sent over to Oliver Lyttelton in Washington Churchill jubilantly suggested that TORCH allowed an entirely new outlook on ways of attacking Hitler in 1943. He was quite unwilling to accept the American proposal for invasions of Sicily and Sardinia as being the limit of their actions in 1943; Stalin, he said, would hardly be content with that. He wanted their forces to invade the Italian mainland or, 'better still,' southern France (which was surely an echo of Darlan's recent offer).⁶⁷

Only Field-Marshal Smuts struck a discordant note at the cabinet meeting. He pointed to the importance of Tunisia, the French colony blocking the path of the TORCH forces to Italy. Hitler knew it too, and after Rommel flew to East Prussia at the end of the month, borne on a cloud of defeatism, Hitler rushed one of his best commanders, Colonel-General Hans Jürgen von Arnim, from the Stalingrad front to Tunis with orders to form a bridgehead and hold on there as long as possible, with no other mission than to delay the Allied exploitation of their new North African springboard. British Intelligence discounted this possibility however, and advised Eisenhower's headquarters on November 11 that in the considered opinion of the Joint Intelligence Committee there were only 500 German troops in the whole of Tunisia, to protect airfields: 'No evidence [of] any large scale movement [of] German troops indicating intention form bridgehead Tunisia.'⁶⁸



Notwithstanding Churchill's bland assurances to Ivan Maisky, the resistance which the Vichy French forces offered to the American landings at Casablanca, Oran, and Algiers, was more than token. They had put up a spirited defence of Algiers for most of the first day, and Darlan had not finally ordered General Juin to call a cease-fire until seven P.M., after Juin informed him that further resistance was useless. When Robert Murphy, with Churchill's secret blessing, offered to Darlan a draft cease-fire agreement covering all French North-West Africa, the admiral had replied that they were halting hostilities only in Algiers.⁶⁹ At Oran, further west, the fighting had continued for two more days, and at Casablanca even longer.

Darlan continued to play for time until the tenth, when General Mark Clark flew to Algiers and struck a deal with him; Darlan now agreed 'in the name of Marshal Pétain' to extend the cease-fire to the whole territory. Pétain disowned the Clark–Darlan agreement, and ordered the fighting to continue. In Morocco the French navy and shore troops defended the coastline vigorously, and after three days General George S. Patton Jr had still not taken Casablanca. The Americans would lose five transports – one each on November 9 and 11 and three on the twelfth – totalling 53,000 tons.⁷⁰

Casualties would have been heavier but for Darlan. It was he who now persuaded General Auguste Noguès to end the resistance in Morocco; he also induced General Pierre Boisson, Governor-General of French West Africa, to surrender that territory with its important port of Dakar with-

out offering a shot in anger. In the strategically far more vital port of Tunis, Darlan had less luck: since the Americans were not in sight there, Admiral Jean Esteva demurred. To Churchill's disappointment, Darlan also failed to persuade his old adversary Admiral Jean de Laborde in Toulon to bring over the French fleet to Algeria; 'Comte Jean's' negative reply ('Merde') needed no interpretation.⁷¹ These were minor blemishes, however, in an otherwise convincing picture of co-operation between Admiral Darlan and the Americans. Appointed the new French High Commissioner for North Africa, Darlan assumed authority there 'in the name of' Pétain. This esoteric arrangement enabled Eisenhower's forces to expand rapidly into Morocco, Algeria, and part of Tunisia without much French opposition.

In London, Anthony Eden expressed pain and anger at Eisenhower's dealings with Darlan, which proceeded without consultation with him or his office, let alone with de Gaulle. In Washington too there was the devil to pay. There was a cacophony of noisy complaint from what Cordell Hull called the 'starry-eyed circles' – a clique around Frankfurter and Morgenthau. Wendell Willkie joined this anti-Darlan camp.⁷² Stimson declared that any criticism of Darlan would be treasonable; this did not still the criticism. A powerful media campaign clanked into action, and the administration drew in its horns. Roosevelt would publicly endorse Darlan at his press conference on November 18, but by that time his statement would necessarily repeat the alibi-word 'temporary' to the point of redundancy.⁷³



In an open car Churchill drove in triumph with Clementine to the City of London on November 10, 1942 – TORCH plus two – to speak at the Lord Mayor's luncheon at the Mansion House. At the suggestion of the King's Remembrancer, loudspeaker vans had announced Winston's coming, and the P.M. and his staff made a triumphal progress indeed along the Strand and Fleet-street, up Ludgate-hill and past St. Paul's Cathedral; there were large and boisterous crowds, with hardly enough police to control them. The luncheon itself was 'an unusually sumptuous repast,' given that there was a war on, and feelings were unfettered.⁷⁴ Montagu Norman, Governor of the Bank of England, remarked loudly how very much he preferred Gentile to Jewish Lord Mayors – his neighbour, a cabinet minister, squirmed in embarrassment having sighted 'a very Jewish looking old boy' right opposite them.⁷⁵ It was on this glittering, white-tie occasion that Churchill,

referring to their victories, said: 'Now this is not the end; it is not even the beginning of the end, but it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.'⁷⁶

The chiefs of staff had sent in a rather milk-and-water plan of action for the coming year, featuring landings on Sicily and Sardinia. The capture of these two islands was unlikely to impress Stalin. 'Is it really to be supposed,' the prime minister minuted his chiefs of staff, 'that the Russians will be content with our lying down like this during the whole of 1943, while Hitler had a third crack at them?' On the contrary, he said, the Allies must do what they could to cross to the mainland and 'fight in the line' against the enemy in the remaining months of the current year.⁷⁷

That evening he held another banquet, this time at No. 10. He had invited eighty members of his Government to hear an advance reading of the King's Speech. As he dressed for this dinner he sent for General Brooke to make certain that the war office was taking all steps to exploit their North Africa victories.⁷⁸ In the dining room his guests heard the speech read before dinner, as had been the custom in earlier years, the doors being closed after all the servants had withdrawn. 'After dinner,' wrote John Martin, 'an excellent feast . . . there were speeches by Smuts, Attlee, and the P.M.'

THERE WAS one fly in the ointment that evening. The prime minister took Eden aside and showed him an intercept just telephoned through by their codebreaking agency: Oshima had just reported to Tokyo that TORCH had taken the Germans by surprise, and they would now reinforce their air units in Sicily and Tunis. Pétain had consented to the use of Tunis 'on the ground that the French Possession had been attacked.' Hitler had summoned the Italian foreign minister and French prime minister to see him in Bavaria; he was going to try to persuade France to declare war on the Allies. 'It seems that Laval, Ribb[entrop] & Ciano are to meet at Munich,' noted Eden, who had met all these characters. He now began to share Churchill's worries about the French fleet, including three battleships, an aircraft-carrier and thirty destroyers, which had lain at anchor in Toulon since 1940.⁷⁹

After receiving the travel-stained Laval, Hitler was taking action even as Churchill was wining and dining his parliamentary supporters: he ordered operation BROWN, the immediate occupation of southern France ('in accordance,' this now being the fashionable phrase, 'with the wishes of the French government'). The operation began at once. By the following day German forces had seized the whole of the rest of France except for an enclave around the French fleet's base at Toulon. From Laval he had also

demanded immediate right of entry for his forces into Tunisia. Too late the Allies now realised Hitler's Tunisia plan. Within a few days thousands of his best troops were pouring into the new Axis bridgehead there, far in advance of the arrival of Eisenhower's troops.

TO HIS audience at the Mansion House, Churchill had delivered what one observer called 'a reasonably sober' speech.⁸⁰ 'I have not become the king's First Minister,' he had said, 'in order to preside over the liquidation of the British empire.' He also remarked that 'we should not chatter ourselves out of India.'⁸¹ When Cripps put to the war cabinet the suggestion that they invite a moderate Hindu politician, Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, to London to float his plan for a provisional Indian government of Hindu-Moslem unity, Churchill responded with what Amery called a 'terrific tirade against the whole conception of Indian self-government.' The prime minister, in Amery's words, went off the deep end 'in a state of frantic passion on the whole subject of the humiliation of being kicked out of India by the beastliest people in the world next to the Germans.' He threatened, if pressed further, to stump the country rousing the Tories against this shame. His listeners sat mutely around the cabinet table studying its surface intently.⁸²

'This is, after all,' wrote Amery, informing the viceroy of this, 'in essence a one-man government, so far as the conduct of the war is concerned, subject to a certain amount of conversation in cabinet.' 'His greatness,' he added prudently, 'is such that we have to accept him as he is.'⁸³

Thus the deadlock in India would remain for the duration, which was just as Churchill wished.



'Altogether,' wrote the prime minister's principal private secretary, John Martin, 'it has been a triumphant and most cheering week for the P.M. – a well deserved triumph.'⁸⁴

The Battle of Alamein, Britain's first great land victory, had repaired Winston's injured pride; after all, he had himself appointed these generals. The evident success of TORCH, coming immediately thereafter, had left him feeling immortal. He was afloat in a sea of euphoria. He remarked to General Walter Bedell Smith that with TORCH now 'in the bag' they should divert the remaining forces arriving in North Africa to other targets. Bedell Smith alerted Eisenhower at Gibraltar to this new danger. Irritated, Eisenhower

declared that he was ‘unalterably opposed’ – the situation in Tunisia was now touch and go. ‘We should plan ahead in orderly fashion on strategic matters,’ he agreed, ‘but for God’s sake let’s get one job done at a time.’⁸⁵

His Majesty the King reopened Parliament on Tuesday, November 11. Churchill announced to the House the promotion of Montgomery to full general. Answering his July critics, the ‘fainthearts’ (the weaker brethren, as he had called them to the king), he said:

See then how silly it is for people to imagine that governments can act on impulse or in immediate response to pressure in these large-scale offensives. There must be planning, design, and forethought, and after that a long period of silence, which looks – I can quite understand it – to the ordinary spectator as if it were simply apathy or inertia, but which is in fact steady indispensable preparation for the blow.

He now suggested that although he had implied there would be a Second Front in 1942, this had been necessary to deceive the Germans.⁸⁶ Talking with Eden on the ‘phone afterwards, he boasted of how well he had spoken, and added with a chuckle that the subsequent debate had been about ‘the unsatisfactory character of almost all Frenchmen.’⁸⁷ The Fleet-street newspapers, particularly *The News Chronicle*, were positively fulsome.⁸⁸

It may have stilled some critical voices at home, but not those abroad. Montgomery’s entire offensive was engaging only four German divisions, and by postponing the Second Front Churchill was allowing Hitler to deal with his enemies piecemeal. The prime minister sent round to Eden the latest position-paper by the chiefs of staff, which they had admittedly drafted before TORCH blossomed into success. ‘It is certainly thin gruel,’ noted Eden, ‘so far as next year’s operations are concerned.’⁸⁹

LINGERING IN the background of all these celebrations, like a mulish gate-crasher at a party, was de Gaulle. Under Eden’s nagging, Churchill telegraphed to Washington on the eleventh reminding Roosevelt that Britain did have obligations to de Gaulle. For the first time he suggested that they avoid creating rival French governments, backed variously by London and Washington.⁹⁰ Ducking the issue, Roosevelt replied that they must drive it home to ‘all three of these prima donnas’ – de Gaulle, Giraud, and Darlan – that whatever they decided was subject to approval by Eisenhower alone.⁹¹ This effectively remained his policy for the next two years.

Among the Americans there had ever been an element of callous cynicism. After one unhelpful session with Darlan, Juin, and Murphy on November 12 General Mark Clark reported to Eisenhower: 'We can always get rid of [the] uncooperative *YBSOB*'s later' – Clark's private acronym.* For a while Clark contemplated setting up Juin as the supreme authority – and locking up all the rest.⁹² On the thirteenth, Eisenhower flew to Algiers with the British Admiral Cunningham to confer with Clark and Murphy on this unappealing situation. Clark again advised dealing only with Darlan. It was a hot potato, but Allied lives were being lost. Darlan had already ordered a local cease-fire three days earlier. As it was a purely military matter Murphy stood aside. Before flying back to Gibraltar that night Eisenhower formally acknowledged with his own signature the provisional deal that Clark had struck with Admiral Darlan. He did this without consulting either Churchill or Washington. The deal (the Americans called it a 'protocol') recognised Darlan as head of state in French North Africa, administering the country politically, with Giraud as his military commander-in-chief; in return the French formally allowed the Allies to operate in their territory.⁹³

Reliance on Darlan brought rapid benefits. The French troops heeded his call for a cease-fire. General Marshall had originally expected to take six weeks mopping up North Africa, but he now predicted to President Roosevelt that he could do it in two. How long would the deal last? 'You can walk with the Devil as far as the bridge,' commented the president to his staff, quoting what he averred was an old Bulgarian proverb, 'but then you must leave him behind.'⁹⁴ Stalin would quote to the prime minister a not dissimilar proverb, namely that they should use 'even the Devil himself and his grandma' if military circumstances dictated.⁹⁵

Churchill telephoned Eden on the thirteenth about these French developments.⁹⁶ Single-mindedly, he remarked that if Darlan could bring over the French fleet, he might earn a seat on the bandwagon. 'If he fails to,' observed Eden's secretary, 'as he has, he deserves nothing from us.'⁹⁷

The foreign office's attitude toward Darlan was malevolent and already bordered on murderous. Far from shot and shell, the career diplomats were aghast at the soldier Eisenhower's handling of the affair. By dealing with four different Frenchmen – Darlan, Giraud, Juin, and Noguès – they felt that the Americans had let Britain in for a barrellful of trouble. Cadogan reflected that there would be grounds for gratitude if Darlan handed over

* 'Yellow-bellied s.o.bs.'

the French fleet and Tunisia: after which they could ‘throw him down a deep well.’⁹⁸ ‘We shall do no good till we’ve killed Darlan,’ observed the same diarist – Eden’s most senior permanent official.⁹⁹ ‘This Judas will not hang himself,’ scribbled Brendan Bracken to Eden. ‘On the contrary he will bask in office. . . The Hoare–Laval business may look clean by comparison. . . We must get a time limit to the Quisling sailor’s rule.’¹⁰⁰

Yielding to these nagging voices, Churchill sent to Eisenhower a similar easy disclaimer: ‘Anything for the battle, but the politics will have to be sorted out later on.’ He copied it to President Roosevelt.¹⁰¹

THE GREAT Churchill brain was firing in many directions. The chiefs of staff would have been content to wait for the Red Army to exhaust the Germans, in other words until 1944. This was not good enough. He telegraphed to Stalin, ‘You know how anxious we are to take off you some of the undue weight which you have steadfastly borne in these last hard months.’¹⁰² He began to explore ways of knocking Italy out of the war, possibly by bombing Rome.¹⁰³ Roosevelt cabled him asking that they now examine their Mediterranean strategy for the coming year.¹⁰⁴ Churchill telephoned Eden several times on the twelfth, then asked him down to Chequers for ‘staff talks’ with Smuts, Mountbatten, ‘Pug’ Ismay, and the chiefs of staff.

It became something of a celebratory weekend, at which Churchill kicked over the traces and thoroughly enjoyed doing so.¹⁰⁵ Eden motored down to Chequers on Saturday singing lustily to himself most of the way. The prime minister received him, not for the first time, in the bath; sponging himself down, he discussed who should be the next Viceroy of India. They lunched alone together; afterwards Churchill began to talk of reconstructing his government and sent for pen and paper, saying that he particularly wanted to end the uncertainty generated by Sir Stafford Cripps.¹⁰⁶

Among the guests this weekend were Benno Moisiewitch and his wife, who had raised money for Clementine’s ‘Aid to Russia’ fund. The secretaries listened from the gallery as the pianist played one of Chopin’s *Ballades*, a favourite of Winston’s, on the piano below.¹⁰⁷ Smuts and Eden retired firmly to bed at midnight. Besides, Eden was having trouble with his health. ‘Cocaine,’ he noted in his diary, hinting at the problem, ‘makes me feel giddy.’¹⁰⁸

THE OSTENSIBLE purpose of the get-together had been to make decisions on the Mediterranean and future strategy, but the weekend dissolved in alco-

holic jubilation and produced little else. 'Feet came off the ground,' heard Admiral Tovey, commander-in-chief of the Home Fleet, 'and heads went into the clouds.' In his view no real 'business' had been done. To a fellow admiral he quoted a poker player who once told him that the secret of success was 'patience in adversity and calmness in prosperity.'¹¹⁰

The professional soldiers and sailors disapproved of these high jinks: 'This sudden strong dose of success has gone rather too violently to people's heads,' observed Tovey, 'even among the high-ups, and not least amongst those affected is the P.M.' Discussing the numbers of U-boats sunk, Dudley Pound revealed that seven were definite and six probable; Churchill however urged that they publish grossly inflated figures; when Brooke informed him that, despite the exaggerated figures circulating elsewhere, only twenty thousand prisoners had been taken so far in the North African fighting, Churchill again insisted that they officially announce only the larger figures.¹⁰⁹ He also wrote this weekend to Lord Selborne, minister of economic warfare, directing him to step up S.O.E. operations in the newly occupied regions of France 'in order to make the relations between the torpid French and the German invaders as unpleasant as possible.'¹¹¹ He wanted more 'Lidices' to inflame people against the Nazis. Thinking ahead, he now spoke to his generals of entering Europe through the Balkans or Italy; nobody relished the idea of a frontal cross-Channel assault.¹¹²

Confirming their Mediterranean decisions in a note to the chiefs of staff, which he copied to Roosevelt in a telegram at the end of this weekend, Churchill said that the intention now was to strike at the soft 'under-belly of the Axis' from bases in North Africa, using American bombers against Italian targets, supported by British night bombers whenever the weather was unsuitable over Germany. They should do everything they could, he told Roosevelt, to make Italy feel the weight of the war, with intensive bombing designed 'to terrorise and paralyse the population,' as he put it.¹¹³ He also asked Admiral Pound to persuade the United States navy to release twenty or more destroyers to escort another convoy to North Russia late in December - the Americans, he argued, could easily spare these destroyers from the 'excessive escorts' they were using for their convoys in TORCH.¹¹⁴ Roosevelt declined, explaining that they had lost many destroyers in the Pacific recently. The Royal Navy also strongly disapproved of what Winston was up to. 'The P.M. and some others,' wrote Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay, 'have been inclined to think all is over bar the shouting.' Churchill was impatient to get on with the next move, by 'cutting the tail of TORCH.'¹¹⁵

THE OTHER horrible problem which seized Churchill that weekend was Darlan. The public could not see why he was needed. Allied Forces HQ propaganda had spoken of overwhelming Allied might; it had exaggerated the numbers of American troops landing, and had inflated the prowess of Giraud; to compound this poor handling of public relations, there was a blackout on news from North Africa from November 10 to the fourteenth.¹¹⁶

The unexpected news of General Eisenhower's formal deal with Admiral Darlan arrived at Chequers that weekend, at eleven A.M. on Sunday November 15. It was just before the start of the conference on their future Mediterranean strategy.

The foreign office telephoned through the text of a telegram from Eisenhower announcing his agreement with Darlan. Giraud's name, he explained, had proven worthless; only Darlan's counted for anything, which was why they had made his 'pact with the Devil.'¹¹⁷ A fierce debate began at Chequers on the wisdom of Eisenhower's move. Eden, wedded as he was to de Gaulle, 'didn't like it a bit,' as he wrote in his diary, 'and said so.'

The discussion revolved around the wisdom of allowing Darlan to take charge of the French in North Africa. 'Eden opposed,' Brooke observed. 'P.M. for it.'¹¹⁸

Eden thereupon left the house, without joining in the remaining discussion on their future strategy and Italy. The meeting continued without him.

The Darlan problem was only just beginning. Broadcasting from London for the Columbia Broadcasting System that Sunday, Ed Murrow, one of those journalists who most readily call to mind the quip about the prerogative of the harlot, delivered the first fearsome denunciation of the admiral. In Washington, Morgenthau announced that he agreed with Murrow.

Henry Stimson warned that anybody criticising Darlan now would be a traitor to the cause. Shocked at the news, de Gaulle's staff in New York appealed to the Office of War Information. The columnist Walter Lippmann, who had championed de Gaulle's cause in Washington for two years, denounced the deal as contrary to Allied war aims; others winced at the prospect of Darlan importing anti-Semitism to North Africa under the American umbrella. One Washington correspondent told Eisenhower's staff later that the noisiest criticisms over Darlan came from a vociferous one per cent, 'mostly from sensitive Jews of press and radio who wish to make certain we were "fighting a war to make the world safe for Jews."¹¹⁹

That same Sunday Churchill sent a telegram to President Roosevelt about Eisenhower's dealings with Admiral Darlan. It had not failed to impress him that Cunningham and others on the spot had endorsed Eisenhower's decision, but he asked to be consulted in future. 'Great care must be taken that we are not double-crossed,' Churchill warned. 'There were some disquieting evidences in our *MAGICS* two days ago. On the other hand we have these men in our power and should be vigilant lest they escape from us.'¹²⁰

The British newspapers on Monday morning November 16 joined the American clangour. They fairly bristled with caustic reports about the 'collaboration' between Eisenhower and Darlan, and Churchill's Alamein victory was all but forgotten.

GENERAL DE Gaulle came to see Churchill at 12:45 P.M., before lunch. The press uproar undoubtedly fed his arrogance, even though Eden found that the general 'behaved with great restraint and dignity.' De Gaulle held a trump card and knew it. He refused to be party to a pact with the traitor Darlan and declared that he would issue a communiqué to that effect.¹²¹ Seemingly unruffled by de Gaulle's withering remarks, the prime minister guided him downstairs to the basement-level garden room for lunch.

Churchill had also invited the American minister in Dublin, David Gray. Winston's feelings for Southern Ireland were ambivalent. Not many Dubliners knew that their Special Branch collaborated throughout the war with Winston's security authorities.¹²²

Gray, an uncle of Roosevelt by marriage, would report that Churchill was in fact more admired in Ireland than any other Englishman. 'The Irish,' he wrote, 'like courage and justice.'¹²³ The room's chintz curtains and white steel stanchions, put in to support the low ceiling, gave Gray the feeling that he was in a ship's cabin, and when Churchill appeared wearing rompers he assumed this was some sort of battledress. Gray inquired whether the P.M. would ever intervene in Southern Ireland. Churchill's reply, in substance, was: 'At great disadvantage we have conducted the war at sea without the [southern] Irish bases which would have been so valuable to us, and I believe now that we can win the war without the help of Mr. de Valera's Eire.'¹²⁴ Gray said that De Valera had recently predicted to the correspondent of a Tucson newspaper that after the war Britain and the United States would be at each other's throats. Churchill replied that it would probably take two years after the collapse of Germany to defeat Japan, and this alone would hold the present Grand Alliance together.¹²⁵

From the documents, despite their circumlocutions, it seems that American diplomats feared that Churchill would at some time invade southern Ireland. Gray had referred in a letter to Winant in January to the need to avoid any 'ill-considered or unnecessary action' being decided at Westminster.¹²⁶

Explaining his outspokenness on the Irish question, at this luncheon with de Gaulle, Gray wrote afterwards to Winant about the need for Americans to sit on the P.M.'s head, as he put it:

I have a hunch that if we conciliate Churchill . . . as most of the people in his entourage seem to feel it necessary to do, his genius and that of the White House might succeed in devising some original and perhaps startling solution that would settle this unhappy question for a long time to come.¹²⁷

Inevitably it was General de Gaulle who provided the main drama of this meal. Seated to the left of Churchill, this Gallic volcano erupted throughout with often unintelligible mutterings. Mrs Churchill artlessly asked him what the French would have done if the British had sunk their remaining fleet. The general turned to Winston and replied, eyes flashing: 'We should probably have shot you.' As hostess, she found it perplexing that her husband's guest chose to speak in such terms in their own house.¹²⁸

They reverted to Darlan. 'The prime minister,' reported Gray,

handled the situation with a patience and gentleness which I had not heard ascribed to him. He told de Gaulle that it was obvious that the military command in North Africa, dealing with an acute situation, had an obligation upon it to avail itself of every means that would save American lives and gain priceless time.

De Gaulle was intransigent. 'This war,' he said, 'is supposed to be based on moral principle. In treating with Darlan, moral principle is vitiated. The French people are left entirely confused. Are you dealing with the France of Pétain, or the France of the Fighting French, or the France of Darlan?'

Gray responded, leaning across Churchill. '*Mon général*,' he said, 'from the American point of view there is only one France. That is not your France or the France of Vichy, nor the France of Darlan, nor yet occupied France, but it is the France for which we fought in the last war and which will be

restored at the end of this war. But believe me it will be the French people themselves who will decide how that restoration is to take place!

This was Roosevelt's doctrine too, as he shortly again made clear in his reply to Churchill's telegram.¹²⁹ The Frenchman again rounded on Mrs Churchill, but Clementine spoke passably fluent French, and she used it to educate this mannerless and ungrateful young general.

After this luncheon, Clementine Churchill loathed de Gaulle; her hatred of the general became the bane of the foreign office. Cadogan would observe in a note, later excised from his diary record: 'She has poisoned the PM's mind & goes about London screaming abuse of de G.'¹³⁰ Writing to the president, Gray used prophetic language, 'You will have to deal with de Gaulle. Your difficulty will be the kind that you might have with Joan of Arc. De Gaulle has a mission and the temperament of a prima donna, he has no fear and so no prudence. In his own honest eyes, he is France.'¹³¹

On the same day as this luncheon, on November 16, Churchill agreed to a very different message to Roosevelt, drafted by the F.O.; it urged that any agreement with Darlan be strictly temporary. The telegram spoke of the deep feelings roused among the ordinary British by the revelation of the dealings with Darlan, who had an 'odious record,' and it used terms like 'Quislings' and 'turncoat.' Any deal with the admiral, the telegram stressed, should be 'a temporary expedient, justifiable solely by the stress of battle.'¹³² The hand of Eden was unmistakable in drafting this item.

At the six P.M. cabinet, Field-Marshal Smuts argued that Eisenhower had acted properly, and the president should decide how and when the dealing should be ended.¹³³ Returning home to Pretoria via Algiers, Smuts had a long talk with Eisenhower and Cunningham on the morning of the twentieth. They told him that the most recent Allied statements about Darlan had had an unsettling effect on the other French leaders, who were beginning to suspect that they were being misused by the British. The French General Noguès, who controlled all Morocco, was threatening to resign. 'Nothing,' reported Smuts, 'could be worse than [the] impression that we were merely using leaders to discard them as soon as they have served their purpose.' This of course was what Eden, Cadogan, and the F.O. had proposed. 'There can be no doubt,' emphasised Smuts, 'that Darlan and his friends have burned their boats and are doing their best to fight the Axis and consolidate [the] French behind us in this fight.' It would be a 'great mistake' to create the impression that Darlan was to be discarded at an early date, and he urged that Roosevelt be so advised. The difficult military situ-

ation might demand Darlan's retention for a long time to come.¹³⁴ Churchill replied with a letter of congratulations to Eisenhower, expressing the hope that he was not too 'preoccupied' with the politics of Algiers, and assuring him that Smuts had given him the inside picture.

'I am earnestly hoping that we can all get eastward as quickly as possible,' he added, as a gentle prod to the supreme commander.¹³⁵

AS DARLAN'S position strengthened, so did the concerns of the foreign office. In a public statement on the eighteenth, Roosevelt had publicly adopted Churchill's (or rather the F.O.'s) phrase, that Darlan was only a 'temporary expedient,' which resulted in a pained letter from the admiral to the American commanders in Algiers and their remarks to Smuts. Darlan had protested to General Mark Clark about 'the view that I am "only a lemon which the Americans will drop after they have squeezed it dry."¹³⁶ Winston furnished Eisenhower with a helpful answer to this letter – though he took care that Eden did not see it.¹³⁷

A few days later Eden's representative on Eisenhower's staff in Algiers, W. Mack, sent a private handwritten letter to Sir William Strang at the F.O. counselling a more flexible approach to the problem: he understood, he reported, that Darlan's letter to Mark Clark had appealed to the prime minister so much that he had ordered that there 'could be no question of treating him like a lemon,' and that 'he deserved a pat on the back.' Darlan's co-operation with the Allies was one hundred per cent: the facts spoke for themselves, and 'one must give him credit.' He added, prophetically, 'No one expects Darlan to be allowed to end his days in peace. There are too many who want his blood.' He drew Strang's attention to a phrase in Darlan's message to the fleet at Toulon, in which he had urged them to come to Oran 'where you will be received as friends by the Allies.' 'The PM's message may have helped induce this phrase.'¹³⁸ Eden must have choked on reading this letter, not least because it was the first he had heard of any Churchill 'message' to Darlan. Using 'C's secure link, he instructed Mack to return immediately to London for consultation.¹³⁹

Whatever Darlan wished, he could not guarantee that the French fleet would come over. He had expected Admiral Jean Pierre Esteva, commanding the French garrison in Tunis, to do so, but on November 17 Vichy was heard signalling to Esteva orders to allow Hitler's forces to establish their bridgehead in Tunisia.¹⁴⁰ Blinded by their own optimism and propaganda, the Americans had believed that the French and Arab populations of North

Africa would rise in revolt against Nazi and Vichy tyranny after TORCH began. The truth was different, as the local French attitude varied from indifference to blazing hostility to the Anglo-American presence.¹⁴¹



At the weekend staff conference at Chequers on Sunday, November 15, 1942, the chiefs of staff had asked Churchill to study the long-term review of Anglo-American strategy which they had drawn up and put forward his own suggestions. He did so at ten P.M. on Monday the sixteenth, presiding over his first defence committee meeting in fact since July 13.

Much had happened since then – the raid on Dieppe, the failed PQ convoys, the awkward visit to Moscow, the invasion of North Africa. Churchill paid particular attention to the proposal to create an ‘enormous bomber force’ of four to six thousand aircraft. He was worried by the implications; it would involve transporting to England one and a quarter million American personnel. The resulting transportation bottleneck, he suggested, would rule out other large scale military operations. The Allies could not then open land operations in France during 1943 as he had promised while in Moscow. The chiefs of staff could offer only minor amphibious raids during the period that the Allies were building up this ‘gigantic bomber force.’ The third result he feared would be to encourage the ‘Japan first’ elements in the United States. Field-Marshal Smuts agreed, and Churchill said that the chiefs of staff paper would have to be redrafted.¹⁴² Meanwhile they must make ‘every effort’ to resume their PQ convoys to North Russia in January 1943; he had undertaken this in a telegram to Stalin. Admiral Pound said he hoped to start a convoy of thirty ships from Iceland on December 20.¹⁴³

There was one dark cloud on the horizon, the continuing success of the German submarines against the Allied shipping lanes. In February 1942 the German navy had introduced a fourth wheel into their ENIGMA cypher machine, and this effectively stopped Bletchley Park’s Hut 8 from reading their signals for ten months.¹⁴⁴ Now, in the autumn of 1942, the enemy’s U-boats had returned to the North Atlantic in force, communicating in a new cypher key, SHARK, which Bletchley Park could not yet read. The U-boats had sunk twenty-nine ships in convoy during October, and fifty-four more sailing independently. The November figures would increase to thirty-nine and seventy respectively – a total of 721,700 tons. Churchill established an Anti U-Boat Warfare Committee, and this met under his chairmanship on No-

vember 18. In December however, the German cypher was broken, enabling the admiralty to route convoys around the U-boat packs. On December 13, Pound informed Washington of this breakthrough.¹⁴⁵ In December, the ship sinkings dropped to nineteen in convoy and twenty-five sailing independently, and the next months saw them reduced still further.



Parliament did not give Churchill an easy time over Darlan. On November 19, Eisenhower appealed to the Combined Chiefs of Staff for an end to the political delays in agreeing the Protocol with Darlan.¹⁴⁶ The problem was Anthony Eden. It wounded and irritated Churchill deeply that the foreign secretary and his office continued to stand by de Gaulle. After tea on the twentieth he telephoned Eden several times, and the foreign secretary snarled at him about the hateful Eisenhower–Darlan document. The prime minister was anxious to give Roosevelt his agreement to the protocol, while Eden insisted they first subject the text to considered criticism. ‘We wrangled away at intervals throughout the evening,’ recalled Eden in his diary. They eventually agreed to send no message to Washington at all. ‘One of our telephone talks lasted over half an hour,’ Eden complained to his diary. ‘I cannot get W. to see the damage Darlan may do to the Allied cause if we don’t watch it. He can make rings diplomatically round E[isenhower].’

At one point in their ‘shouting match’ Churchill, making no secret of his feelings, had remarked,

Well Darlan is not as bad as de Gaulle anyway. That man hates us and would give anything to fight with the Germans against us.¹⁴⁷

Eden blamed ‘this nonsense’ on Clemmie and her row with de Gaulle at that luncheon – ‘I suspect because Clemmie misunderstood him.’¹⁴⁸

First thing the next morning, November 21, Winston telephoned Eden to say that he had now heard from Roosevelt, who was happy to leave full discretion to General Eisenhower; could he telegraph at once that we agreed? Eden sulked, and said that he preferred the amendments that he had suggested, and that he was sorry the prime minister hadn’t agreed to his sending them to Washington. Churchill became impatient: ‘Do you agree or don’t you?’ ‘I should like a chance to read Roosevelt’s reply and consider it,’ said Eden. ‘Then you don’t agree,’ snapped the prime minister. ‘Very well, cabi-

net at 12!' It was indeed an odd relationship that was developing between the prime minister and his heir-apparent. An hour later he rang up Eden again, to ask him to stay on to luncheon, and he inquired solicitously about Anthony's cough.¹⁴⁹

The cabinet, called at twelve, produced a furious row between them. Only Lord Salisbury dared to oppose Winston, as he ended with a tirade against de Gaulle, snarling once again: 'He has been battenning on us and is capable of turning round and fighting with the Axis against us.' Cadogan was horrified at this slander, and noted in his diary afterwards: 'Tiresome he may be, but sound on essentials.'¹⁵⁰

Eden remained unconvinced: 'I am certain that Darlan has outwitted our people,' he recorded, 'and that [this] process will continue.'¹⁵¹

As promised, they lunched in style after the cabinet at Bucks, with 'Bobbety' (Lord Salisbury) joining Winston and Eden for a plate of stout-and-oysters, and steak-and-kidney pie, washed down by two bottles of claret. 'W.' Eden was relieved to find, was 'in splendid form, certainly seemed to bear no malice for our set-to.'¹⁵²

WINSTON'S MIND had already moved on. In his imagination he was in a landing-craft leading the assault on the beaches of Sicily. On November 23 he wrote to Colonel Julius G. Holmes of Eisenhower's staff criticising the current arrangements to move thirteen divisions into North Africa; even though, as he said, all enemy opposition had ended 'except in the Tunis tip.' He added: 'We are naturally looking forward to operations in the nature of BRIMSTONE' – an operation to hurl Allied troops across the Straits from Africa to Sicily. Everybody was being far too timid again. He criticised the admiralty and other planning staffs for not wanting to launch BRIMSTONE until after TORCH. 'I never meant the Anglo-American Army to be stuck in North Africa. It is a spring-board and not a sofa.'¹⁵³

Over these weeks British and American foreign and military policy drifted violently apart. Criticism of the Darlan deal mounted. Churchill had to issue a 'D-notice' to newspaper editors forbidding them to attack the Americans for using Admiral Darlan. The Mirror Group skirted round this veto by agreeing that he should be used but discarded immediately. On the twenty-second they mischievously changed the phrase to 'squeezing him like a lemon' and throwing him away.¹⁵⁴

Inspired by Fleet-street, the clamour mounted at all levels of London society. Pamela Churchill wrote privately to Harry Hopkins: 'All sorts of

different types of people are united in their horror of the appointment [of Darlan]. . . You get the same reaction from the factory worker as you do from the more advanced politically minded people.' She wished, she wrote, that if there were some good reason for Darlan's appointment, it could be made public, 'cos just in black and white it is very difficult to swallow.'¹⁵⁵

The split of opinion closely followed the Anglo-American divide. A British Intelligence officer based at Gibraltar assessed: 'At the moment the Americans are treating the French, one and all, as poor deluded folk who have been rescued from their waywardness by a Salvation Army, and an American one at that.' The French would soon realise their error, he predicted; they would end up 'disliking our Cousins far more than us.'¹⁵⁶

In London this manufactured outrage over Darlan increased, as U.S. Ambassador Winant reported to Roosevelt, primarily 'in Parliament, trade unions, Jewish organisations and other groups.' He found the foreign correspondents like Raymond Daniell of *The New York Times* and Ed Murrow of C.B.S. 'difficult to reason with.' It did not help when Darlan, announcing that he was assuming the reins of government in North-West Africa, proclaimed that he would 'represent France in the world;' this language was hard to reconcile with Roosevelt's statement that the 'arrangements' made with Darlan were temporary and local only. Winant informed the president that de Gaulle was seething with rage.¹⁵⁷ The misgivings about Darlan would not go away. Even the king was perplexed, and after discussions with his courtiers he mused in his diary, 'I wish I could understand this Darlan business. We must use him now, but for how long?'¹⁵⁸

The fact remained that Darlan was delivering on his promises. The Governor of French West Africa turned over Dakar to the Allies, together with the battleship *Richelieu* and three French cruisers. After another strained meeting with de Gaulle on the twenty-fourth, the rift between Churchill and Eden's foreign office widened further. The record showed the prime minister becoming more enamoured of Darlan than ever; he told de Gaulle that it was 'most unfair to call this man a traitor.'¹⁵⁹

Two days later Churchill pained Eden by snapping that Darlan had already done far more for the Allies than his man, de Gaulle.¹⁶⁰

Eden reminded him on the twenty-sixth that Britain had publicly agreed with President Roosevelt's use of the word 'temporary,' and he added the warning that Darlan was becoming dangerously entrenched in Algiers. Darlan himself, he said, had written to Mark Clark on November 21, that to him 'temporary' meant 'until the liberation of France is complete.'

It was an unsatisfactory state of affairs, Eden advised, and Britain could not safely allow it to continue once the military situation allowed her to 'take steps' to change it. The same went for generals Boisson and Noguès, he argued. 'We are dealing with turncoats and blackmailers,' he insisted, 'and until the French administration and armed forces in North Africa are in better hands,' – meaning of course those of de Gaulle – 'it would not be safe to arm them with modern weapons.' Dealing with these men would undermine Britain's moral authority in France, and give heart to the 'filthy race of Quislings.' 'I feel strongly that if we do not eliminate Darlan as soon as the military situation permits, we shall be committing a political error,' Eden advised the prime minister. He enclosed a telegram which he proposed to send to Lord Halifax, discussing at length 'by what methods Darlan is to be eliminated,' and 'how to get rid of Darlan.' They could pave the way, he suggested, by making impossible demands of him, to force an open break.

Churchill refused to be swayed. He preferred to wait, he said.

Eden red-inked: 'So be it – for the moment. AE, Nov 29,' and put the letter back into its jacket.¹⁶¹

On the weekend of November 27 to 30, Churchill invited generals de Gaulle and Catroux down to Chequers. He showed the Frenchmen a film of the popular welcome accorded to the American troops in Algiers.

De Gaulle suggested that it was not for Darlan that the crowds had been cheering and making their 'V'-signs. Flattering the prime minister, de Gaulle put it to him that Roosevelt was losing the moral leadership of Europe, and that it was essential that Churchill himself now take this mantle upon his shoulders – the world was waiting for a clear word from London.¹⁶²

Just as Admiral Darlan had always promised, on the twenty-seventh his officers scuttled the French fleet at Toulon – no fewer than seventy-three warships – to prevent Hitler getting his hands on them. Churchill read into this sombre act the first sign of overt resistance by France to Germany.¹⁶³ He rang Eden up the next morning, expressing delight at the news. He hoped that it would lessen the parliamentary concern about Darlan.

Eden however wanted Darlan right out of the picture. He told Oliver Lyttelton, lunching with him in the flat at the F.O. on the last day of November, that Darlan was the one 'serious blot' on the horizon. There could be no doubt now: he was seriously worried about the attitude of the Americans and his own prime minister toward the Vichy French admiral.¹⁶⁴

Whatever Churchill's personal views on Darlan, over in the foreign office the assassin's pistol was now, figuratively speaking, taken out and oiled.

28: *Getting Rid of Darlan*

ON NOVEMBER 21, 1942, Churchill called a cabinet. That was nothing unusual, but this was a Saturday. He wanted to read out a telegram from Stalin. It announced that he had started a major offensive on the Stalingrad front. His armies had torn a fifteen-mile wide gap in the enemy line.¹ Hitler was still far more interested in North Africa, however. He had rammed 31,000 troops into Tunisia and more were arriving every day, along with dive bombers and tanks. Within two weeks of this cabinet meeting, Eisenhower was warning that he might have to retreat.

On the last day of November Churchill celebrated his sixty-eighth birthday. Apart from Brendan Bracken, who braved the glares of Clementine to attend, it was an all-female family party – daughter Sarah, wife of the popular Austrian Jewish entertainer Vic Oliver; her sister Mary, and Randolph's wife. 'It was most gay and pleasant,' Pamela wrote. 'I have never seen Winston so happy as he is when he has all his family around him.' She had moved into a 'wonderful new apartment' in Grosvenor-square, which she had just finished fixing up, and she had brought her little boy home to live with her.²

Winston's problems with his son Randolph paled in comparison with those of Leo Amery, the India Secretary. On the seventeenth, German propaganda announced that Leo's son John was working for Dr Goebbels in Berlin; he was housed in style at the Adlon Hotel. Under pressure from Bracken, all the newspapers except *The Times* and *Daily Mirror* agreed to suppress this juicy story. Driving over to Harrow for the annual school concert, Winston spoke 'very nicely' to Amery about the family tragedy and said, when the latter offered to resign, 'Good God, I wouldn't hear of such a thing.'³ After listening to his son broadcast on the nineteenth from Hitler's capital – surely an unimaginably bitter experience for a cabinet minister –

Leo, ever conscious of his own concealed Jewish ancestry, noted, 'It was just the ordinary anti-Semitic tripe that is poured out by the German propaganda headquarters.'⁴ (John was brought back after the war and hanged as a traitor.)

Churchill could afford to be magnanimous. Alamein and TORCH had pushed his Gallup approval rating to ninety-one per cent.⁵ He was on a roll. Lyttelton asked him to see a rather difficult person; asked why, he said, 'Oh, just [give him] a whiff of the old gas!'⁶ Beaverbrook grouched to Amery that Winston 'undoubtedly did himself a little too well' – a reference to the eating and drinking.⁷ He criticised Churchill for his dictatorial attitude, and arrogance, which he felt derived from his late ascension to supreme office.⁸

RETREATING ACROSS Libya, Rommel was not yet defeated. Somehow, victory had slipped through General Montgomery's fingers. Keeping watch from Bletchley Park, the codebreakers were baffled. On November 9 the Panzer Army *Afrika* had been down to eleven tanks, a figure which had improved to only fifty-four a month later, while Montgomery had 270 in Tenth Corps alone. 'From secret sources,' wrote the C.I.G.S., on the eighteenth, 'it is plain that Rommel is at present in a very bad state, lacking reinforcements, tanks, ammunition, transport and petrol.' Montgomery's dithering, wrote one specialist whom Bletchley Park had sent out to Cairo, 'seemed to cast doubt on the whole point of our work.' He would write of the frustration, and dismay, felt in Bletchley Park's Hut 3 at Montgomery's 'painfully slow' advance from Alamein to Tripoli.⁹

On November 29 Hut 3 phoned Churchill with intercepted signals showing that Rommel had suddenly flown out of Africa, feeling 'in duty bound to report on the situation' to Hitler.¹⁰ Meanwhile the winter rains descended on northern Africa. Brooke felt that Eisenhower did not appreciate the urgency of pushing on into Tunisia. Those studying the ULTRAS saw little cause for rejoicing. 'There may be a battle at Agheila,' wrote Sir Alexander Cadogan at the foreign office, 'but we already knew something about that from our "best source." I am only rather puzzled about Tunisia: hope it's all right.'¹¹ Churchill's mind was already far from Africa and fixed on the cross-Channel venture, which he now insisted (in a message to the invasion's naval commander Admiral Ramsay), must come in the summer of 1943.¹²

It was easy for him to keep up the pressure. He was Winston Churchill – but not everybody else could take the strain. His secretary, the formidable Mrs Kathleen Hill, became ill late in November, and one of the other two

secretaries suffered a nervous breakdown.¹³ Her departure left Elizabeth Layton holding the fort, midst crises large and small: his Gold pen had ceased to function: his eyeglasses were no longer the right prescription.¹⁴ Throughout November and December, the war's other things – Darlan, Tunisia, Stalingrad, de Gaulle, Cripps, U-boats, the bombing war – crowded in upon those around him. He was reshuffling his cabinet which always had him in an excitable mood.¹⁵ He refused to think about anything but the war. When Field-Marshal Smuts went over to say good-bye to Eden, they talked about post-war planning, and Eden lamented that it would not be easy, because 'W.'s mind had a [full-] stop in it at the end of the war.'¹⁶

CHURCHILL NOW no longer needed to fear Sir Stafford Cripps, and he prepared to shuffle him out of his pack. After the stout-and-oysters luncheon that followed the cabinet meeting on November 19, he had taken Eden back to No. 10 to re-examine the proposed government changes. They were all designed to neutralise Cripps. He told Eden that since Lord Cherwell (the 'Prof.') wanted John Llewellyn out of the ministry of aircraft production, the M.A.P., he would give that ministry to Cripps and send Llewellyn over to Washington to handle Supply.¹⁷ He telephoned Lyttelton in the United States later that day and told him of the changes, including Cripps' new post which he camouflaged rather transparently thus: 'You know Staffordshire, the county, of which Stafford is the capital. You know where it is on the map, ah, M–A–P,' and more of the same. Lord Halifax suspected that the Americans would see all this as evidence of Churchill re-establishing the Tories' domination.¹⁸ No doubt Winston had conducted this game of musical chairs to make a niche for Cripps. The reshuffle put British noses out of joint in Washington, particularly that of Arthur Salter, who was heading the ship-procurement mission.¹⁹

Cripps resigned from the war cabinet on November 22 and accepted the M.A.P. Meeting him that day Churchill, according to Cripps' secretary, wept several lifelike tears and said that Stafford's acceptance of the new ministry was the noblest act of self-negation in public life that he had ever encountered. He had pulled off another masterstroke. 'Nearly all of Cripps' mystique is now gone,' wrote fellow-socialist Hugh Dalton, 'and he has missed all his chances – never really very good – of resigning with credit. He has I think been very skilfully played by the P.M. He may of course be quite good at M.A.P., but seldom has anyone's political stock, having been so outrageously and unjustifiably over-valued, fallen so fast and so far.'²⁰

Completing this reshuffle, Eden became Leader of the House, as Smuts had urged; and Herbert Morrison, a little Cockney Londoner of socialist leanings but with an honest soul and greatly admired on both sides of the House, entered the cabinet as Home Secretary.

HEADING NORTH, Churchill left London on December 3, 1942. His desk diary said '8:15 P.M. leave for trip. . .' but the words 'to Yorks [Yorkshire]' had been crossed out. Wherever he went, it mattered not: he was out of London. Angrier than ever at seeing Admiral Darlan's future in North Africa now seemingly assured – nobody was using the word 'temporary' any more – Eden drafted a strongly worded telegram to Lord Halifax expressing his dismay. Although it conflicted with his own views, Churchill meekly initialled it, and it went off on the fifth.²¹ Eden instructed Strang to produce an equally firm draft minute about Dakar – he refused to see the Allies being 'squeezed' by the Governor-General of West Africa, Pierre Boisson, and he also declined to put any more pressure on General de Gaulle. Churchill complained that the F.O. was failing to square up to de Gaulle; but fearing to antagonise his young heir apparent he shortly phoned him to congratulate him on the draft, which he called 'a very good piece of work.' Eden decided that the P.M. was incalculable; his bark was worse than his bite.

It was the fearsome English weekend, when everything ground to a halt. Eden had gone to the 'uttermost region' of Sussex, as Cadogan observed with exasperation, while 'the P.M. *might be* reached (somewhere in the N of England) by field telephone about 12:45 P.M. "What a way to do business!"'²² The next day there was a teenage party in Mary's honour at Chequers; since it was the anniversary of Pearl Harbor, Winant also came.²³

They all returned to London on Monday, December 7. Churchill held a cabinet at five P.M. and took 'a snap decision at the end to unshackle [the German] prisoners,' as Cadogan recorded, wringing his hands at this administrative shambles. 'Everyone talking at once, whispering, and passing notes.' The P.M. asked Eden to stay behind, and suggested postponing the debate on Darlan scheduled for the tenth. Eden warned that the House would smell a rat. Annoyed, Churchill called his leadership of the House 'febrile' and scoffed that not one person in a hundred was worried about Darlan.

They argued, but got nowhere. What Eden described in his diary as a 'great wrangle' followed; but he and Attlee faced Winston down. After Eden left, there was a two-minute silence while Winston glowered mutely at

them. Describing it, Chief Whip James Stuart told Eden afterwards that he felt he ought to offer the P.M. a bar of chocolate!



Because feelers had started to reach the foreign office, Churchill had begun expecting Italy to make peace with Britain. He was ready to do so. Bomber Command's air raids had played their part, although it was said that Harris was bored with them because Italian towns didn't burn as well as German – 'too much marble and stuff.'²⁴

The Vatican expressed pained surprise at the bombing raids. D'Arcy Osborne, the British *chargé d'affaires* at the Vatican, made the tart observation to His Holiness that the Italian air force had hastened to join in the 1940 blitz on London, applying the lessons of the Italian general Giulio Douhet in his book on air power; that Italian civilian casualties were still low compared with Rotterdam, Warsaw, and other Luftwaffe targets; that damage to artistic property was inevitable; and that there could be no distinction between Mussolini and his people.²⁵ These arguments would probably not have moved world opinion if Harris had destroyed St. Peter's or the Sistine Chapel, and the U.S. envoy to the Vatican, Myron Taylor, urgently recommended to Roosevelt that the United States follow an independent line.²⁶ He had already asked Churchill in September 1941 to make a statement discouraging such raids.²⁷ Churchill's ambition to call down fire and devastation upon Rome burned ever brighter, as will be seen particularly in our next volume. On November 30, 1942 Taylor phoned Roosevelt's office to ask whether he might tell the Pope that the United States would take this independent line; this would, he said, enhance their reputation with the Italian people. 'I am sure the British will never be in such a favorable position,' added Taylor, 'because even the Italian public are without enthusiasm for them.'²⁸ Roosevelt however declined.

The usages of war would have made it improper to bomb Rome if the military command and government had left the city. This step the Italians now proposed and executed. On December 18, 1942 London received word from D'Arcy Osborne: the Vatican had informed him that the Italian supreme command and headquarters staffs were leaving Rome, as was Mussolini's headquarters as commander-in-chief. 'In these circumstances,' the envoy communicated to London, 'the Pope would protest if Rome were bombed.'²⁹ When Eden arrived at No. 10 before lunch that day, he found

Cardinal Hinsley, head of the Roman Catholic church in England, with the prime minister, having brought over the same message from the Vatican. Eden revealed that he too had just heard from the apostolic delegate in the same vein. 'This seemed to us all,' recorded Eden, 'to open up engaging possibilities which it was agreed I should follow up.'³⁰

The cabinet discussed this opportunity of luring Italy out of the Axis three days later, at Churchill's suggestion. Then noble anti-Fascist sentiments stirred in ministerial breasts, and the cabinet decided to lay down horrendous conditions to enable the war to continue: if Mussolini accepted, it would render him contemptible; if he did not, bombing could begin.³¹

The chiefs of staff wished in any case to bomb the railway lines running through the city, with all that that might imply in collateral damage.³² The soldier Smuts, whose opinion was asked by cable, also opposed giving immunity to the city. 'The possible bombardment of Rome must be a great factor in the Italian mind,' he cabled from Pretoria.³³ In Washington, where the Vatican had made a similar *démarche*, Cordell Hull also came out against sparing Rome.³⁴ There for the time being the matter rested: in practice, though for other reasons, Rome was embargoed from aerial attack; no assurances were given – but no bomber squadrons were sent either.

The unofficial approaches from Italy continued all winter. Eden reported that among those trying for a separate peace were the Italian minister in Lisbon, perhaps acting for the foreign minister Count Ciano, behind the Duce's back; the Governor of Montenegro; and the consul-general at Geneva, acting on behalf of the Duke of Aosta. Eden righteously decided that to pursue any of these contacts might weaken the perception that Britain was out to destroy Fascism. The prime minister, less certain, noted merely, 'There is certainly no hurry, but the cabinet shd. be informed.' Eden was against dealing with anybody like Count Dino Grandi, the former ambassador to the U.K. Again, Churchill noted, 'We can discuss this at leisure.'³⁵

A few days later Eden learned that the Duke of Aosta was offering to lead an uprising against Mussolini with the support of the Italian navy. There followed however a slew of conditions – the Italian navy to remain intact: the monarchy to be preserved: the air force to be held down. Eden was 'not greatly impressed,' even though Churchill himself inclined toward keeping open this line of communication.³⁶ In cabinet on December 3 he talked, to Eden's disquiet, about negotiating with Grandi. To the anti-Fascist Eden a Grandi ruling in Rome and a Darlan in North Africa did not make for an attractive Mediterranean picture. He arranged for an M.P., Walter Elliott,

to ask a Question in the House which enabled him to stress that Britain did not recognise Darlan in the role for which he was casting himself.³⁷

A FEW weeks later Eden circulated a note on secret feelers from more trustworthy anti-Fascist elements in Italy. The S.O.E. was in touch, he reported, with Marshal Pietro Badoglio and the eighty-year-old Marshal Enrico Caviglia; Badoglio was offering to 'take over' at the right moment and establish a military government. He proposed sending an emissary to Cyrenaica to talk this over with the British. Eden agreed that the S.O.E. should try to get this emissary, a general, out for talks, but with no strings attached.³⁸

Displaying little of Eden's anti-Fascist fervour, Churchill always displayed a certain fondness for Spain and Franco. Lunching with the Spanish ambassador, the Duke of Alba, on November 25, he revealed the desire to see a Spain that was '*fuerte, próspera y feliz*' – strong, prosperous, and contented. He expected France and Italy to be ruined by the war, 'which will result in Spain occupying a position such as it had not had for centuries.'³⁹

Twice during December he again received the duke before the latter's return to Madrid for Christmas. 'Before I came home,' remarked the duke to the Japanese ambassador there at the end of the month,

I had personal interviews with Churchill on the 6th and 11th December. He said, 'The war is 50 per cent over. In the battle of North Africa we used 850 ships, 600 of which were troop transports. On the way not a single ship was attacked. . . British and Americans are again rulers of the waves. America's entry into the war, accompanied by the assurance that we would get plenty of arms, makes our victory absolutely beyond doubt.'

The duke reported that Churchill was predicting that North Africa would be in Allied hands by March 1943, and that they would then strike into Italy from Sicily, while in another direction they would plunge forward through the Balkans and Turkey. The duke had also commented, reported the Japanese ambassador, upon Churchill's admiration for the Japanese: 'You know, in Government circles here in London,' the prime minister had allegedly said, 'there are plenty of people who remember the Tokyo–London alliance and who say it was a mistake to have forsworn it for the sake of America.'

The only dispute that the Duke of Alba could discern between London and Washington was on global strategy. Churchill had felt that the Americans were making a mistake in pressing the war against Japan: 'These Japanese have a lot of stamina. I fought in the Boer war and other wars too and have

known well warriors of various climes, and judging from what I have seen of Japanese prisoners, I can only express admiration for the fine military spirit of the Japanese race.' As for the Germans, he had scoffed, they had passed their peak. He expected Britain's relations with America to freeze over after the war, the duke had told the Japanese diplomat in Madrid.

A few days later Churchill was shown an intercept of this embarrassing message from Madrid; he disclaimed 'paternity' of the words that the Spanish ambassador had 'fathered' on to him. He told Halifax to show a copy to Roosevelt, knowing that he would have seen it anyway, and to assure him that there was 'hardly anything' in it of what he had actually said.⁴⁰



The foreign office allowed the prime minister no rest over Admiral Darlan. Churchill did little to repair de Gaulle's bruised feelings. The general demanded air time to broadcast against Darlan; Churchill glanced at the script and forbade its transmission.⁴¹ Eden and Churchill remained at loggerheads. The foreign secretary called Eisenhower a dunderhead for having fallen for the admiral and his wiles; an F.O. official said that Churchill, being 'half-American himself,' had approved the gangster mentality behind his use – 'the end sanctified the means.' Seeking back-up from Roosevelt, Churchill had several intimate talks with Bedell Smith in the last week of November, and arranged for the general to dine alone with the president in Washington and put the Darlan matter before him.⁴²

Thus Churchill went one way and the foreign office and Brigadier Menzies, head of the secret service, another: 'C' had brought the former air force general François d'Astier de la Vigerie out of France to join de Gaulle's forces; he arrived by Lysander plane in England on November 17, and would play a sinister role in the events related later in this chapter. De Gaulle told Eden that the general was bringing 'something of interest' from General Alphonse Georges for the prime minister to hear; this was probably just bait – Winston had a soft spot for the elderly Georges. De Gaulle mysteriously recommended Eden also to see d'Astier, as he had matters of interest to report. While Eden did so, on November 23 at 3 P.M., Winston asked Major Desmond Morton to see the newcomer first, saying he would receive him later if he felt inclined to.⁴³

Eden and de Gaulle came to see him with Morton the next day; d'Astier may have attended, but the prime minister's appointment card mentions

only the other three.⁴⁴ It is now known that Menzies authorised de Gaulle's officials to use his M.I. 6 radio liaison channels to contact d'Astier's brother Henri in Algiers (Churchill had shut down the clandestine wireless link between London and the local Gaullists in Algiers with the onset of TORCH).⁴⁵ Henri d'Astier, now officially Darlan's deputy minister of the interior, had his finger in many pies in the Algerian capital: we first glimpsed him as one of Murphy's five main contacts there; he was also a monarchist and on intimate terms with the Comte de Paris, a pretender to the French throne who was living in North Africa, and who some hoped would replace Darlan.

There were further contacts between Gaullist and anti-Darlan elements during early December. On his way back to Cairo, General Catroux spoke at Gibraltar with General Emile-Marie Béthouart and an emissary of Giraud.⁴⁶ Béthouart afterwards asked the Governor of Gibraltar, Mason-Macfarlane, to transmit this message to General de Gaulle in London:

Henri d'Astier wishes me to confirm his message regarding the urgent confidential communication of highest importance which he wishes to make to you.

Inveterate conspirator though he was, Mason-Macfarlane nevertheless refused to forward the cryptic message without Eisenhower's consent.⁴⁷

ON DECEMBER 1, 1942 the new German troops arriving in Tunisia counter-attacked the British. By the sixth, Eisenhower was talking of retreat.⁴⁸ Brooke recorded, 'I do not like much the way things are going there.'⁴⁹ In his view Eisenhower was far too busy playing politics with Darlan and General Pierre Boisson, the one-legged governor-general of French West Africa, while all this time Hitler was beefing up his forces in Tunis and Bizerta, the country's naval base. Eisenhower wrote privately to Churchill on December 5 to bring him up to date.⁵⁰ Eden continued to be 'much troubled' by the Darlan developments.

The admiralty shared none of his concerns. The First Sea Lord wrote to Admiral Cunningham, the naval commander-in-chief, in Algiers, assuring him that the chiefs of staff had never doubted that Eisenhower was doing the right thing. Cunningham too now liked Darlan; he responded that Eisenhower was easy to deal with, but 'the hesitations and hair-splitting of our foreign office' were worrying him. Eden should not allow his General de Gaulle to upset the Algiers apple-cart. There had been a big parade at

the city's war memorial on Wednesday, Cunningham added. 'It may amuse you to know that the representative of *perfidie Albion* got quite an ovation from the large crowd present.' So had Darlan, he wrote.⁵¹

While this political tempest was raging in London, Eisenhower got on with the job. Darlan signed an accord with Boisson, turning over Dakar to the American forces. At 12:55 P.M. on December 7 Eisenhower reported this in a simple message to London, boasting, 'Dakar is with us.' That he had succeeded where de Gaulle had been humiliated in 1940 just added insult to injury. The F.O. put it about that American commercial interests in Africa were being pushed under military cover.⁵² Churchill sent a generous telegram to Eisenhower, repeating his support of the general's dealings with Darlan, while 'feeling sure you will avoid formal long term commitments.' 'Anyhow,' he continued, 'please think of me as a fairly solid fortification covering your rear and go for the swine in front with a blithe heart.'⁵³



Despairing of his prime minister ever seeing reason on Admiral Darlan, Eden had decided upon his 'elimination' in favour of one of the more consistently pro-Allied French generals like Béthouart.* Dining comfortably with Charles de Gaulle at the Savoy on December 8, he asked the Free French general outright whether, 'if Darlan could disappear from the scene to-morrow,' de Gaulle could reach an agreement with the French authorities in North Africa and unite the French empire in the war. Cadogan and the French general Catroux were also present at this little cabal.

De Gaulle did not mince his words in his reply: Darlan was the only obstacle, nobody else mattered. As soon as he disappeared, his regime would fade away; the 'mystique' of Vichy would then give way to the 'mystique' of Gaullism. Any change, he added however, would have to be effected by Frenchmen, not by foreigners.⁵⁴ That was an interesting point.

Eden dictated a memoir on this dinner conversation, but it evidently revealed too much; first his own hand, using red ink, and then another hand, using black, obliterated one particular sentence of the typescript

* In the spring of 1956 the F.O.'s minister of state Sir Anthony Nutting advised Eden, the prime minister, on 'neutralising' Egyptian leader Gamel Abdel Nasser. In a heated phone call to the Savoy Eden told him he did not want Nasser neutralised: 'I want him murdered.' Keith Kyle, quoting a 1986 interview with Nutting, in *Suez* (London, 1991), 99.

record; next to these blacked-out lines Eden noted in the margin, with almost teutonic thoroughness: ‘Too secret to record. AE.’^{55*}

Cadogan, also present, made a note as well. ‘Get rid of Darlan,’ he quoted de Gaulle as saying. ‘My answer is, Yes, but how?’



Unaware of these plottings, Churchill continued to stand by Darlan. He announced that he would address a Secret Session of the House on December 10 to set the record straight about Britain’s relations with the French.

He devoted great care to preparing this speech; in it, he emphasised that Eisenhower had struck the deal with Darlan with his blessing – but it was a purely temporary expedient, to save British and American lives. ‘In war,’ he said, ‘it is not always possible to have everything go exactly as one likes. In working with allies it sometimes happens that they develop opinions of their own. Since 1776,’ he added with a trace of irony, ‘we have not been in the position of being able to decide the policy of the United States.’⁵⁶

‘I hold no brief for Admiral Darlan,’ he declared; and he continued: ‘Like myself, he is the object of the animosities of Herr Hitler, of Monsieur Laval, and of the Hon. Member for Ipswich’ – Richard Stokes, who was one of his sharpest critics in the House.†

He reminded the Members that until the onset of TORCH Roosevelt had maintained an intimate relationship with Vichy France, particularly through his ambassador, who was until recently Admiral Leahy – now his chief of staff. He asked the House to understand the intricacies of the French mentality, reminding them: ‘The Almighty in His infinite wisdom did not see fit to create Frenchmen in the image of Englishmen.’ In a nation where the *droit administratif* rendered any officer who obeyed a command of his lawful superior absolutely immune from subsequent punishment, disobedience was anathema: he rubbed this point in, saying that many Frenchmen regarded General de Gaulle ‘as a man who has rebelled against the authority

* See our illustrations section. Eden also softened the draft wording, in his own handwriting, from ‘I asked General de Gaulle whether if Darlan *could* disappear from the scene *tomorrow*. . .’ to read: ‘I then asked General de Gaulle whether if Darlan were to disappear from the scene. . .’ The official Avon papers contain only the sanitised printed text circulated by Eden to the cabinet (Public Record Office, file FO.954/8, fols. 330–2).

† Churchill omitted this jibe from the text printed in his 1951 memoirs.

of the French State.' 'All our information,' he continued, 'showed that the real red rag to the bull would be de Gaulle.' That was why the Americans had refused to allow him into the theatre.

Giraud was, on the other hand, a national hero: Churchill related how a British submarine wearing the American flag had picked him up from southern France and delivered him to Gibraltar on the afternoon before TORCH began – and how Giraud had then demanded to become Supreme Commander himself. It was thanks to Admiral Darlan, he continued, that the French troops facing them in North-West Africa, particularly at Casablanca, had put their rifles away. 'It makes a lot of difference to a soldier whether a man fires his gun at him or at his enemy; and even the soldier's wife or father might have a feeling about it too.'

Bringing his speech to an end, he delivered a scathing attack on Aneurin Bevan and his consorts in the Labour Party, stating that it was a 'poor creature with a jaundiced outlook and disorganised loyalties' who could find in this African episode nothing to excite his interest except the deal done by Eisenhower with Darlan. 'The struggle for the Tunisian tip is now rising to its climax,' he advised the House, 'and the main battle impends.' That and the coming battle in Cyrenaica were to be fought entirely by British soldiers. He invited the House to treat with proper reprobation 'that small, busy, and venomous band who harbour and endeavour to propagate unworthy and unfounded suspicions.'⁵⁷

The speech was a great debating success: well-crafted and researched, beautifully turned on the lathe of Churchill's rhetoric; biting and sarcastic, yet affording to the Members a privileged insight into the problems facing the Anglo-American alliance; and even spiced with hints at the treacherous deeds of the much-lauded General de Gaulle – it converted the House at one stroke. The caterwauling in the printed press died down.⁵⁸

AFTER THE war Churchill sold this speech to *Life* for a substantial sum, while making the necessary financial provisions to ensure that he paid no income tax on it.⁵⁹ Before it was published, in February 1946, he instructed the magazine's editors to remove the passage revealing Britain's horrid difficulties with de Gaulle, and they were also omitted from the collected speeches published twenty years later.⁶⁰

In this particular passage he had spoken of how his government had recognised de Gaulle in 1940, and financed the Free French movement and had loyally aided the general since then. To console him for the snub dealt

to de Gaulle at TORCH, Churchill had given him control of Madagascar, which would have greatly preferred Darlan. 'However,' he continued,

now we are in Secret Session the House must not be led to believe that General de Gaulle is an unfaltering friend of Britain. On the contrary, I think he is one of those good Frenchmen who had a traditional antagonism engrained in French hearts by centuries of war against the English.

Everywhere he went, he had left a 'trail of anglophobia' behind him. Speaking to the *Chicago Daily News* in August 1941 de Gaulle had suggested that Britain coveted France's colonies, and he had even charged that England was afraid of the French fleet.

'What in effect England is carrying out,' de Gaulle had sneered, 'is a wartime deal with Hitler in which Vichy serves as a go-between.'

In July 1942, the prime minister continued, de Gaulle had wished to visit Syria, and gave his word to be of good behaviour. 'No sooner did he get to Cairo than he adopted a most hectoring attitude and in Syria his whole object seemed to be to foment ill-will between the British military and Free French civil administrations.'

His remarks about de Gaulle infuriated the foreign office. Eden's secretary noted that the speech 'left an unpleasant taste in the mouth.'⁶¹

Word of Churchill's rebukes inevitably reached the editors, and on Sunday December 13 the *Sunday Pictorial* again talked of using Darlan until he was 'squeezed like an orange,' to freshen up the cliché.⁶²

CHURCHILL WAS reinforced by the knowledge that both Roosevelt and Stalin considered that Eisenhower had done the right thing in bringing Darlan into the Allied camp. Writing to the president, Stalin referred to it as a great achievement, and he described Eisenhower's policy on Darlan, Boisson, and Giraud as 'perfectly correct.'⁶³

Churchill cabled a report on his secret speech to Roosevelt, and then to Eisenhower, writing: 'I have never seen the House so unanimous as it was to-day in Secret Session.' 'I explained the whole story to them and they understood it as well as you and I do ourselves.'⁶⁴ He used the same positive language a few days later to Lord Halifax: 'I have never seen the House so unanimous,' he again dictated, 'and I am not conscious of any political difficulties. Of course there are certain sections of the press and public who want to have the advantages of Darlan without Darlan.'⁶⁵

Three days after the speech he repeated these reassurances to Eisenhower's London representative, Colonel Stirling. At the secret session, he said, the Members of Parliament had not asked him even one Question. He was minded to make a public statement. Learning that the admiral had written a letter to him on December 4, which Eisenhower had yet to forward, the prime minister expressed great pleasure. 'Prime minister intimated,' Stirling told Eisenhower, '[that] he would like to receive such a letter but would prefer to see it first.'⁶⁶

Eisenhower duly forwarded the Darlan letter to London on December 14.⁶⁷ It rehearsed the history of France's relations with Churchill and justified his conduct since they had last met at Briare on June 12, 1940. 'Darlan,' Churchill had besought him at that time, taking him aside, 'I hope that you will never surrender the Fleet.' 'There is no question of doing so,' the admiral had answered, as he now reminded Churchill. 'It would be contrary to our naval traditions and honour.' He had repeated those words on several occasions since then. He admitted to harbouring a 'great bitterness' toward England because of the events of July 1940 at Mers el-Kébir. The scuttling of the French fleet at Toulon proved that his orders had been obeyed to the very end, observed Darlan. All that mattered now was to defeat the Axis, he said – 'The French people when liberated will later choose their political regime and their leaders.' Churchill ordered the letter circulated to the cabinet; whether to reply would, he said, need thought.⁶⁸

EDEN PERHAPS listened to all this – the secret speech, the Darlan letter – with only half an ear. He had made his own dispositions. There had been further conspiratorial transactions at Gibraltar. On December 12 Mason-Macfarlane (the British governor with the 'excellent body disposal squad') met the Gaullist generals Catroux and Béthouart on the Rock. Both insisted that Admiral Darlan and General Noguès must be disposed of. Major Beaufort, an emissary from Giraud, asked to see the governor on December 12. 'He was emphatic that Darlan must be got rid of eventually,' Mason-Macfarlane reported to Eisenhower. 'But he agreed that this was *no* time to make a putsch which could only have disastrous consequences.' Beaufort wanted the Allies to force Darlan to resign and to nominate an Allied puppet as his successor.⁶⁹

Eden had been trying for weeks to shoehorn de Gaulle's men into Algiers. On November 14 he had informed his man there that de Gaulle wanted to send a mission under René Pleven to 'explain' their viewpoint; Pleven

had assured him that he would not 'start an agitation,' but Eisenhower discouraged any such visit. General d'Astier, whom the S.I.S. had flown out of France, was a different matter altogether, and on December 2 de Gaulle asked Churchill to enable this d'Astier and three experts to visit Algiers.

They recruited the American admiral 'Betty' Stark's assistance and he wrote to Eisenhower ('Dear Ike'), saying that d'Astier had struck him as 'a gentleman and soldier of the first caliber' – indeed, when he had argued that Eisenhower was right to accept Darlan's assistance, the French air force general had replied smoothly that 'it was a pleasure to meet someone whose ideas coincided almost exactly with his own.' Eisenhower no longer resisted, telling Eden that while Darlan 'would be glad to receive' the general, a large party would not be welcome. 'Ike' now replied to Admiral Stark, his own misgivings echoing through every word, that if General d'Astier just came alone for 'a quiet meeting' with his brother Henri and others, 'it might be all right.' Thus 'Ike' himself authorised the French bagman's arrival in his city. Reading several messages from Mason-Macfarlane about the conspiratorial meetings in Gibraltar, Sir Algernon Rumbold minuted on one of them, on December 15, 'We shd. perhaps wait to see how Gen. d'Astier de la Vigerie gets on in Algiers. A. RUMBOLD, 15/12.'⁷⁰

Years later, some faceless official somewhere may well have noted, 'We should perhaps wait to see how Mr Oswald gets on in Dallas.' That is how these things are decided; and that is the only kind of note that the historian can expect to find in official archives when foul play is afoot.

STILL PREVENTED from travelling to Algiers, de Gaulle fulminated against Giraud and Darlan. The American beatification of Darlan only raised his hackles further, and the British public did not like it either. Reporting the war memorial ceremony, the *Sunday Pictorial* featured photos of the Grenadier Guards parading past Darlan with the caption, 'Pictures we are ashamed to print.' Clementine lunched at the Dorchester with Lady Bonham-Carter, whose son was in that regiment, and suggested that the tabloid press was not exactly helping, particularly that 'horrid newspaper' the *Pictorial*.⁷¹

Another issue in Anglo-French relations, but one of scarcely less importance, was the future of the Vichy French fleet bottled up at Alexandria under the command of the French Admiral Godfroy. Admiral Harwood wrote telling him of Churchill's 1940 pledge that after victory was achieved he would re-establish the greatness and glory of France.⁷² But neither bluster, bluff, nor blandishment could lure this squadron over to the Allied side.

The First Sea Lord admitted to Admiral Cunningham that Godfroy had the whip hand, since he could scuttle those ships any time he chose. The cabinet, said Pound, had wanted to tell Godfroy that if he did he would be shot.⁷³ On December 14 the prime minister sent a personal minute to Cunningham, advising that although this situation could not drag on indefinitely, there was no harm in waiting until the fighting in Tunisia was over. 'We can then proceed against the malignants in due course. We certainly ought not to go on paying them out of British funds.' Godfroy and his 'accomplices' were to be warned that they would be 'held responsible' if they scuttled their ships.⁷⁴

Reporting to Marshall on December 18 on Darlan's difficulties in finding suitable officials to replace Vichy French office-holders in North Africa, Eisenhower asserted that the admiral was doing his best.

THERE WAS another complication in all this. Since early December 1942 Roosevelt and Churchill had been preparing to meet in French North Africa. A courier was coming to London with a secret message from Roosevelt, but for two or three days his arrival was delayed by weather. Churchill phoned Eden several times, on tenterhooks. 'P.M. is getting more and more restive,' observed Harvey, Eden's loyal secretary, on December 21.

Just before Christmas Eve, Roosevelt's courier arrived in London with the letter from Roosevelt: it proposed a meeting in Africa in mid-January, and it specifically asked that their foreign advisers Eden and Hull be left at home. ('This means,' said Churchill, spelling it out to Eden, 'that Roosevelt does not want you there.')

⁷⁵ The two leaders did however plan to invite both Giraud and de Gaulle. This raised a further problem: what should they do about Admiral Darlan, as French high commissioner? How could they avoid being photographed with him, even shaking hands with this 'Quisling'? Could they force him to resign before then?

Eden and his underlings had made their own dispositions about the tire-some admiral. Brigadier Menzies had now flown out to Algiers in person.⁷⁶ General d'Astier had also been there since the nineteenth, sent out by de Gaulle to 'advise' on ways 'to hasten unity in the war effort.'⁷⁷ De Gaulle had been, as a foreign office memorandum later put it, 'sufficiently encouraged' by Mason-Macfarlane's Gibraltar talks* to despatch d'Astier to Algiers 'on a secret mission.' As an afterthought, the same foreign office hand later

* See page 647.

crossed out the tell-tale word *secret* in the memorandum. In Algiers, Eisenhower afforded to General d'Astier the minimum of courtesies; to pre-empt Gaullist criticisms that the Americans had impeded him, Eisenhower reported to his superiors on December 22 that he had felt that d'Astier's personal conversations with his brother Henri might throw light on a complicated situation, but that the general had declared that his was an 'official mission.' 'Temporary difficulty,' reported the supreme commander, somewhat helplessly, 'was encountered in soothing his wounded feelings and in assuring local people that he did not mean to attempt a *coup d'état*.'

Giraud was furious with this interloper and urged Eisenhower to send him packing: with a military crisis in Tunisia they could not afford complications in the rear. 'Because of these things,' explained Eisenhower to London and Washington, he had decided that the general would now return to London 'promptly.' He noted that d'Astier stated he had orders to appease local Gaullists so that they would not hinder present operations, but Eisenhower found this hard to reconcile with the continued propaganda blare from Gaullist radio at Brazzaville. Before returning to London, earlier than expected, the French general had given his brother written instructions to 'suspend strictly personal attacks' on the Darlan regime. In the light of events, the alibi purpose of such a document seems transparent.⁷⁸

The foreign office spread an anodyne view of d'Astier's reception in Algiers. 'He appears to have made a favourable impression,' they informed Moscow and Washington, 'in spite of initial mistrust of his mission.'⁷⁹ Eisenhower's version was less positive. Informing his own Washington superiors of this visit from 'de Gaulle's lieutenant,' he narrated all the general's indiscretions, and emphasised how patient he, Eisenhower, had had to be with him.⁸⁰ He nevertheless signed a *laissez-passer* for General d'Astier, unaware that he had imported \$38,000 in American banknotes, earmarked for Gaullist circles in Algiers, which he transferred to his brother Henri.⁸¹

The Algerian capital smouldered with mutual suspicion. The Gaullists angrily told J.E.M. Carvell, the British consul-general, that if Darlan and his men were not removed soon, Britain's remaining supporters there would lose faith in her.⁸² On December 20 Carvell warned Whitehall that the Darlan situation was deteriorating — 'Several people have hinted that it will not be very long before Gaullists will make an attempt on his life.'⁸³

Asked by the foreign office whether these supporters should be brought out to England, General de Gaulle replied that his General d'Astier would discuss this in Algiers; he preferred to wait for his report.⁸⁴

ON DECEMBER 16 Churchill had sent to Eisenhower a long and cheery message reassuring him that BONIFACE – his name for the ULTRA intercepts – showed that the enemy in North Africa were running into supply difficulties. Though still noticeably reluctant to impose his will on the Americans, as he had on his long-suffering British generals, Churchill lectured Eisenhower on the need to burn up the enemy's reserves 'even if we sustain equal losses.' As for the irksome Darlan matter, he had made arrangements, he said – the appointment of a British political adviser – to relieve the burden on Eisenhower's shoulders.⁸⁵

At a cabinet meeting a few days later, Churchill set out his proposals to attach to Eisenhower's staff an English counterbalance to Murphy, with the title 'His Majesty's Government's Political Representative.'⁸⁶



The attitude of Brigadier Menzies and the British security services toward Darlan was plain from the letter that one official wrote to the Intelligence attaché at the U.S. embassy in London: this protested that the American adoption of the 'Quisling' Admiral Darlan was undermining 'the morale of all patriots in occupied countries.'⁸⁷ Churchill refused to agree; on the contrary, in cabinet on December 21 he argued that they must force de Gaulle to come to terms with Darlan. Some ministers thought that his arguments took no account of de Gaulle's psychology. The Gaullists had made it clear that they would not serve under Darlan, said Eden. Churchill still demurred. 'The Prime Minister doubted,' the cabinet minutes stated,

whether General de Gaulle realised that the French administration in North Africa under Admiral Darlan might develop in such a way that it would overshadow the Fighting French movement. He thought that it was neither in the public interest nor wise on General de Gaulle's part to maintain his present aloof attitude.⁸⁸

Sooner or later, Churchill suggested, the general would have to get off his high horse.⁸⁹

As the differences deepened between Eden and No. 10 over Darlan, Churchill read a signal that Admiral Cunningham had made to Pound, warning of the dangers of 'this policy of drift.' In fact the admirals were united in

support of their fellow sailor. Cunningham saw him as the only Frenchman who could hold North Africa together. 'If he goes,' he advised, 'we shall have a number of nonentities scrapping for office and shall bitterly regret the change.' Cunningham recommended an immediate declaration that Britain was backing Darlan. Churchill read this, liked it, and ordered it circulated to the cabinet and defence committee; he also sent a copy to Eden on December 23, marking it: 'Foreign Secretary, please comment.'⁹⁰

This may have brought matters to a head.

In Algiers the witches' cauldron was already beginning to bubble. Meeting the foreign office representative, W.H.B. Mack, on the afternoon of the twenty-third, General d'Astier demanded the restoration of 'some kind of secret communication' between de Gaulle's headquarters in London and the Gaullists in Algiers (Churchill had also ordered radio communication interrupted with the onset of TORCH).

Eisenhower smelled a rat; he warned d'Astier that 'he could not tolerate any underhand activity.' This, he explained to Mack, was the only way to win the confidence of all the French. It was essential, he continued, to pursue an honest path. Anticipating that fewer scruples might hamper the man from Perfidious Albion, d'Astier confided 'most secretly' to Mack that General Giraud was 'ready to cart' (*i.e.*, abandon) Admiral Darlan when the right time came. The Englishman doubted that any of this was true: Giraud had repeatedly said that he and Darlan were working in loyal co-operation.⁹¹ Evidently d'Astier was playing a deep, and dirty, game.

On December 23 Darlan invited Murphy and Admiral Cunningham to dinner and proposed a toast to British victory. Afterwards, he took Murphy aside, into his study, and told him that he knew of at least four plots to kill him. He pulled out a list of possible successors: surprisingly, it included de Gaulle; for de Gaulle to take over now, amplified Darlan, would be premature – perhaps he could succeed him in the spring of 1943.

To Murphy it seemed a surrealistic scene, as though the admiral were discussing the fate of somebody other than himself. In the morning, they met for the last time. Much of their talk centred on the ticklish Jewish question in Algiers – *i.e.*, the need to relax the security measures enforced by the *ancien régime* against the Jews without inflaming the Arab majority.⁹²

BY LATE December 1942 the British losses in TORCH totalled some 460 killed, of which two hundred were infantry, four armoured, and 77 artillery. Wounded and missing increased the British casualties to 3,273.⁹³ Eisen-

hower had planned to spring his final assault on Tunis on December 22–23; the main Battle of Long Stop, near Medjez el Bab, began on Christmas Eve. The rain poured down, it was bitterly cold at night, casualties were appalling, and on the twenty-sixth he called a retreat. The torrential rain ruled out any offensive in the near future. As soon as the armoured vehicles and trucks left the roads, they became bogged down. There was talk of a two-month delay. Reading of this on December 27, Churchill noted to the chiefs of staff, 'This affects all your plans and movements.'⁹⁴

Christmas Eve at Chequers had been a cheerless feast. On December 24 Eisenhower's friend, the American Major-General Everett S. Hughes, came to give Churchill a globe, a gift from General Marshall. Hughes found him dressed in his rompers, and 'pleased as a boy' about the gift, though he remarked: 'Stalin has a bigger one.' For a while he played with it, then had a photographer brought in. He now announced: 'Stalin has a bigger one – but it is artificial and apt to fall to pieces at any moment.' Hughes reflected that there was something of the urchin in this sixty-eight-year-old prime minister. ('That's what makes for wars,' he also mused).

Thoughts of his own mortality had occurred to Churchill that day. When Eden arrived at Chequers, Churchill emphasised what a key role Roosevelt played. Whatever might happen to him, he continued, or even to all three of them – Roosevelt, Churchill, and Eden – there were enough 'resolute men' to carry on and see the business through. In the United States, however – here, he paused and their conversation turned to the vice-president, Henry Wallace. Churchill remarked that he had been astonished to hear Wallace tell an off-colour joke. 'It was several moments before I saw it,' he explained to Eden. 'But then, I had no reason to expect it.'⁹⁵

EDEN HAD already left for home when two telegrams arrived at Chequers, just before midnight that Christmas Eve. They were from the consul-general in Algiers.

The first read, 'Admiral Darlan was shot five times this afternoon. His condition is not yet known. No announcement has been made here.' The second stated simply, 'Darlan is dead.' A third, despatched by Intelligence sources in Algiers at 9.21 P.M., confirmed:

Darlan was fatally shot by a young Frenchman who came from France two months ago. Act took place at 16:00 hours local time inside Palais d'Été, his residence. Political sympathies and identity of the *same* [re-

placed by ‘*assailant*’] not yet known. He is under arrest. Strict censorship imposed; an announcement is, however, anticipated tonight. Giraud and Allied Commander-in-Chief returning from forward area.⁹⁶

Churchill telephoned the appalling news through to Eden.

The foreign secretary’s cynical handwritten note betrayed only a minimal distress: ‘We agreed,’ he noted, ‘that the event could be turned to profit, *and*. * I have not felt so relieved by any event for years. I have never believed that D. was indispensable for N. Africa, but it would have been a problem to shift him. Now even the Americans must surely take Giraud.’



This episode – the brutal assassination of Darlan, shot by a heavy-calibre revolver from behind – marked a new *baisse* in Anglo-American relations. Several subsequent British consular telegrams from Tangier and Algiers concluded with the sentence, ‘Please do not show this telegram to any United States official.’ Other items had to be edited for American eyes.⁹⁷

At the time the fatal shots rang out, in mid-afternoon, Eisenhower was in Tunisia, visiting the front with Giraud. Murphy telegraphed a first report to Washington barely ninety minutes after the murder, then drove over with Mark Clark to the hospital to pay their last respects to the dead head of state. The French and Americans concealed news of the death from the British for several hours.⁹⁸ Just a mile or two away from the murder scene, the head of the British secret service was sitting on the sun-drenched roof of a little house with Wing Commander Fred Winterbotham, of Bletchley Park, taking coffee with two French agents who had just been flown out of France. As news of the killing came Brigadier Menzies showed no surprise.⁹⁹

Admiral Darlan had been shot in the Summer Palace, just outside his office. The French autopsy report states that he was rushed into the Maillot hospital and put on the operating table, but died at 3:55 P.M. before they could prepare him. A 7·65-millimetre bullet was extracted from his skull; it had been fired from behind at point-blank range, less than fifty centimetres.¹⁰⁰ ‘Whether the assassin was of German or Italian inspiration,’ the Allied propaganda station Radio Algiers announced, ‘is not yet known.’¹⁰¹ In fact the assassin had been caught red-handed, reported Murphy; he was a twenty-year-old student of French Algerian descent, Fernand Eugène Bonnier de

* The word ‘*and*’ is crossed out.

la Chappelle. On his person were found some of the dollar bills which General d'Astier had brought five days before: not much, just chump-change.

WRITING IN his diary, Eisenhower's friend Lieutenant-General Everett S. Hughes tersely called the killing 'somebody trying to give us a Christmas present.'¹⁰² When the first news reached Washington, Stimson, Marshall, and Hull sent an immediate telegram to Darlan expressing their 'best wishes for a speedy recovery,' although they appreciated that it might well not find the admiral alive.¹⁰³ Lord Halifax pleaded with the foreign office to stop journalists from saying 'the obvious thing' about Darlan's killing, namely that it had cut the Gordian knot of political difficulties.¹⁰⁴

While the foreign office was jubilant, Chequers was less directly affected. Churchill spent a quiet, good-natured Christmas Day, as a secretary wrote. '[He] left us in peace most of the time and just sat up in bed reading a book and looking like a benevolent old cherub.'¹⁰⁵ At the F.O., Eden wrote a diary note that differed little in cynicism from the previous day's: 'Much telephoning on the consequences of D.'s murder & the action that must follow in various spheres. The consequences all uniformly good so far as I can judge. It looks as tho' Giraud will be chosen.'¹⁰⁶ From Algiers, Carvell cabled that the governor-general had asked for a successor to be named at once to prevent an Arab rising. Some spoke of Noguès, others of de Gaulle.¹⁰⁷ Eden instructed his office to inform Eisenhower's headquarters that, as seen from London, Giraud seemed to be the only possible appointment.¹⁰⁸ Mack telegraphed that the assassin was believed to have Gaullist and Royalist leanings. 'There is no evidence so far that his action was other than individual.'¹⁰⁹

General de Gaulle's reaction to the killing of his rival was ambivalent, indeed opaque. Speaking with Charles Peake, the British representative to his French National Committee, he called it a 'detestable crime' and suggested that Darlan's disgruntled followers were to blame. De Gaulle expressed a fear that the murder would 'usher in a period of assassination.' General d'Astier had just returned to London, said Peake; he claimed to have privately met Darlan, Giraud, Fenard, and Darlan's deputy General Jean-Marie-Joseph Bergeret. 'All had shown real eagerness for de Gaulle to co-operate with them,' Peake recorded, 'and had paid tribute to the influence of his Movement in Metropolitan France.' Murphy, d'Astier described with evident distaste, had thrice in one day urged him to visit Darlan – he had generally behaved more like Darlan's lackey. De Gaulle now saw no obstacle to co-operating with Giraud.¹¹⁰ The foreign office was delighted at

the gullible Charles Peake's account, and called the general's attitude 'highly satisfactory.' A few days later, still diverting suspicions from himself, General d'Astier suggested that General Bergeret, whom he called 'a first class crook,' might himself have 'murdered Darlan to further his own ends.'¹¹¹

Nazi propaganda shed no tears over Darlan. Churchill was shown a transcript of Luxembourg radio's ten A.M. broadcast: 'The death of the French traitor Admiral Darlan,' mocked the commentator, 'comes very conveniently for the English.' 'With a sharpness unusual for "Allies,"' the voice recalled, 'the English and the Americans declined to recognise each other's French mercenary,' meaning de Gaulle and Darlan. The radio concluded that Churchill had now applied 'a radical solution of the Darlan problem.'¹¹²

THE KILLING had outraged Britain's allies, and split her own leadership. Roosevelt called it a 'murder of the first degree.' Cordell Hull branded it 'an odious and cowardly act' – words which evoked intense foreign office indignation.¹¹³ The Royal Navy was quietly troubled; they had respected Darlan as an adversary and appreciated him as an ally. Writing privately to Admiral Cunningham, the First Sea Lord observed that the murder was 'rather a tragedy' for the Allies, because Darlan had meant to play fair with them. 'I did not myself hear the B.B.C. broadcast about Darlan,' Pound added, 'but I am told that it was in the worst possible taste.'¹¹⁴ Cunningham recommended an official British condemnation of the killing. Pound brought this suggestion to Churchill's attention, but it was ignored. 'I agree,' noted Eden. 'There can be no question of any such statement, by me anyway!'¹¹⁵ That was the universal sentiment in the foreign office. When Eden's man in Tangier reported that the American service attachés had attended the requiem mass held for Darlan there, William Strang noted: 'A pity.'

Even so, it would have looked bad for the British in North Africa to abstain completely from the public mourning. Their legation in Casablanca, like the American, flew its flag at half-mast. Eisenhower obliged British troops to file past the dead admiral's bier and all the Allied commanders to attend the military funeral. The state funeral included a march-past by French, British, and American contingents, attended by Eisenhower, Giraud, and Noguès with Admiral Cunningham and their staffs.¹¹⁶

This was not an end of the perfidy. Protesting that he had been promised immunity by his paymasters, the young gunman Bonnier was permanently silenced by a French firing squad at seven A.M. on the twenty-seventh, less than three days after firing the fatal shots.¹¹⁷ Before meeting this evidently

unexpected end, he named two accomplices, the Abbé Louis Cordier, who had given him a gun, and Henri d'Astier under whose roof both his brother (the general) and the Abbé had been living.¹¹⁸ French police pulled them in with a dozen of the usual suspects in Algiers for questioning.¹¹⁹

As for General d'Astier, evidently the bagman in the killing, he returned from Algiers to London on Christmas Day, and actually came to lunch with Churchill two days later, as witnessed by the Chequers police detail's log – the only time d'Astier's name figures in the ledger.¹²⁰ De Gaulle had been due to fly to Washington for his first meeting with President Roosevelt; but now Churchill persuaded the American headquarters in London to delay the general's flight to Washington by forty-eight hours, and Roosevelt made quite plain that in the circumstances his invitation to de Gaulle was withdrawn. Churchill had de Gaulle come down to Chequers instead.

Eisenhower had appointed General Giraud to step into Darlan's shoes. In a long discussion that December 27, the prime minister urged de Gaulle to work with Giraud, but the curmudgeonly general refused to concede that Giraud was qualified for any political role.¹²¹ Eden was pleased however. 'Talk with Winston too about De G. and Giraud,' recorded Eden this day. 'This seems to be going well.'¹²² Curiously, he did not mention d'Astier's presence in his diary note. Churchill, who had no grounds to suspect d'Astier, cabled the next day to President Roosevelt:

I had some long talks yesterday with General de Gaulle and d'Astier, the latter just returned from Algiers. De Gaulle holds it of first importance to create a strong, united, National French authority. He is anxious to meet Giraud, in whom he sees the Commander who will lead the French troops to the liberation of France after North Africa has been cleared. He considers that Giraud is more suited for military than for political functions. He is quite ready to work with Noguès but apparently less so with Boisson, though I cannot think he would be obstinate about it.¹²³

The prime minister hoped to bring de Gaulle and Giraud together, and a message went this same day from 'de Gaulle' at Chequers to Giraud, bearing more than a hint of Churchill's hand in the drafting, with stirring references to the 'mind and soul' of Frenchmen, and to 'the liberation and the salvation' of France. The telegram described Darlan's assassination as 'an indication and a warning.' 'I propose, my General, that you should meet

me as soon as possible on French soil,' the message read, and suggested either Algeria or Chad. It went to the U.S. embassy and Roosevelt, and then via Marshall and Eisenhower to Giraud.¹²⁴ De Gaulle's reluctance to meet Giraud when the time came two weeks later may be seen as proof that he had very little to do with the authorship of this message, which went via American embassy channels to Giraud in Algiers. 'I strongly favour,' the P.M. explained to President Roosevelt the next day, 'a meeting between de Gaulle and Giraud as soon as possible, before rivalries crystallise.'¹²⁵

THE RUMOURS linking the British secret service or more particularly the S.O.E. with Darlan's assassination hardened.¹²⁶ The Free French openly boasted that the hit-man was one of theirs.¹²⁷ The French military in Algiers shortly obtained evidence that the British secret service was operating an assassination ring there; on December 29 they told the Americans that the British had put generals Giraud and Bergeret and even Robert Murphy on their hit-list. British Intelligence had only recently warned Churchill that the Irish-American Murphy was an anti-British firebrand.¹²⁸ Admiral Cunningham was deeply shocked to hear of the plot, and urged Eisenhower to protest to his superiors. Eisenhower did so, by cable to Washington:

The French authorities report they have definite evidence of existence here of assassination ring for eliminations of KINGPIN [Giraud] and others in Government and including Murphy. Unfortunately some French officials seem suspicious that some portion of the British S.I. [secret intelligence] has in some way been involved in this type of activity. In spite of our emphatic denials they apparently think that such a move is plotted in order to set up de Gaulle here as the highest French authority.¹²⁹

The alleged British assassination plot rattled the Americans to the core. Eisenhower complained to the British chiefs of staff, and asked them bluntly to call off the dogs.¹³⁰ Admiral Cunningham also reported to London that the French in Algiers had uncovered an assassination ring: 'They have been led to believe the British Secret Service is behind it.' Moreover Eisenhower had reported these facts to Marshall. 'The story has obviously a German ring about it,' conceded Cunningham, covering his own rear, but the French were taking it seriously and had provided protection for the three men.¹³¹

Churchill's defence committee that night discussed the 'disquieting' although 'probably mendacious' reports about the S.O.E., 'including the

allegation that the British were responsible for the assassination of Darlan.' Across Cunningham's signal Cadogan minuted for Eden: 'A.E. This is disgusting nonsense, and Cunningham should receive very firm reply. Will you concert with 1st Sea Lord? P.M. was indignant at Dfce Cttee. . .'^{132*}

At the defence committee Churchill had asked the foreign secretary, of all people, to conduct 'a further enquiry.'¹³³ It must have been a cursory investigation, because the very next day the foreign office drafted for Admiral Pound a personal reply to send to Cunningham, authorising him to deny this charge.¹³⁴ The telegram took the line that

whatever French may have discovered it cannot incriminate any branch of British Secret Service, who do not indulge in such activities, and you may of course give General Eisenhower formal assurance to this effect.¹³⁵

THE DOLLARS had come from Britain, and the proposed murder weapon too – supplied by the S.O.E. specifically for this hit.¹³⁶ General d'Astier could not have made his flights from London to Algiers and back without British foreign office sanction. One may wonder too how he would have legally obtained thirty-eight thousand dollars in wartime London except through official channels. When Wing Commander Hulbert MP put down a Question in the House, asking whether the government would make a statement on the assassination, the foreign office went into several pages of internal contortions about the right answer to make, before Cadogan finally instructed Richard Law to reply, 'No Sir, there is nothing I can usefully say on this subject.'¹³⁷

At first Giraud, now High Commissioner, refused to release the arrested plotters. He was convinced of the evidence against them. A foreign office civil servant wrote the cryptic note, 'We have enough data to judge how real the plot was.' 'At the same time,' the F.O. note added, 'S.O.E.'s infn. [information] does not bear out the statement in Gen. Eisenhower's Tel. that only [a] few of our friends are involved, for they have received the names of a number of prominent sympathisers said to have been arrested.'¹³⁸

Whatever dirty fingers had manipulated the trigger, Darlan was dead. 'Let him rest in peace,' Churchill would write in his memoirs, at the end of a noble epitaph to the fallen admiral, 'and let us all be thankful that we have never had to face the trials under which he broke.'¹³⁹

* The next page of Anthony Eden's file is sealed until later this twenty-first century.

29: *All the Usual Suspects*

DURING 1942 BRITAIN had suffered a series of reverses; her empire was in decline; she had lost Singapore and Burma, but better times were coming, and people knew it.

Churchill had Parliament eating out of his hand again. As the New Year, 1943, opened, his popularity as prime minister stood at ninety-three per cent, two points up on even the improbably high November 1942 rating.¹ The Gallup Poll was now producing results which even Hitler and Goebbels, with their very different methods, would have found an embarrassment. Later in January 1943, Ambassador Winant remarked to Lord Halifax that Churchill struck him as being more self-possessed and contented than for a long time.²

The dramatic initial success of TORCH seemed to demand a revision of their strategy for 1943.³ Roosevelt was concerned at the slow progress which their chiefs of staff, meeting separately, were making. 'Always,' he recalled a few weeks later, 'there was the personal equation. Churchill and I were the only ones who could get together and settle things.'⁴

This was how the Casablanca summit meeting came about. In a telegram on December 2 Roosevelt expressed to him the optimistic view that by the time such a conference could be held, in the middle of January, Rommel's army might have been 'liquidated' – expelled from North Africa altogether. Roosevelt would have preferred a location south of Algiers or near Khartoum; as he explained, 'I don't like mosquitoes.' He thought that the conference should be held in secret, and he suggested that General Marshall and the other participants should not visit England first, in case Stalin gained the impression that the Allies were ganging up on him.⁵

Churchill had even begun toying with the idea of a Big Three meeting, at which he, Roosevelt, and Stalin would deliberate upon the future of the

world. He had been talking of such a tripartite conference ever since August: he had hinted at it to Stalin, proposing Iceland as a location.

Jealous of the limelight that would accrue to Churchill, Anthony Eden did what he could to discourage such a Big Three meeting. He criticised the autocratic tendencies which such summits gratified and engendered. 'We haven't a dictatorship here,' he grumbled to his staff, 'whatever the P.M. may imagine.'⁶ The papers of the time show that he himself was occupied at length with finding some way of getting Churchill to send him to Washington on a mission which would bolster his own prestige.⁷

Preparing for the new conference, on December 3 Churchill had confronted his chiefs of staff with his ambitions for 1943. 'After urging attacks on Sardinia and Sicily,' a weary General Sir Alan Brooke summarised, 'he is now swinging away from there for a possible invasion of France in 1943.' He met the chiefs again that evening and delivered a harangue on the need to engage the German army all the time. 'You must not think,' he rebuked Brooke, 'that in 1943 you can get off with your "Sardines,"' – as he called the islands of Sicily and Sardinia. 'No – we must establish a Western Front, and what is more, we promised Stalin we should do so, when in Moscow.'

'No,' Brooke retorted, '*we* did not promise.' As Churchill paused and glared, the C.I.G.S. reminded him how limited their forces still were.

ROOSEVELT'S GAZE had already leapt ahead beyond 1943 to the post-war world. By word of mouth, Oliver Lyttelton had brought to Churchill details of the president's visions. They were so sensitive that the president had refused to commit them to paper. Neither France nor Poland would be permitted to rebuild the armies which Hitler had defeated in 1939 and 1940; they would be invited to contribute to an international police force. Any German peace offer must be rejected, Roosevelt had said, as the Allies must be 'satisfied with nothing but complete surrender.' The Allied armies would then march into a defeated Germany and, over the following months, destroy every weapon, gun, and aeroplane, and all machine tools capable of manufacturing such things. The international force would police this arrangement. If Germany resumed such manufacture, he would after due warning 'bomb a selected town.' Roosevelt, said Lyttelton, had also spoken of the possibility of meeting with Churchill and Stalin, perhaps at Dakar, if the enemy looked like collapsing suddenly.⁸

The idea of Stalin's participation came to nothing. On December 4 Churchill formally invited him to join a three-power meeting somewhere

in North Africa.⁹ Maisky brought Stalin's response round to No. 10 three days later. Peering over his half-rimmed glasses, Churchill asked: 'Am I going to like this?' 'You will at least like the fact that it is well-founded,' responded the Soviet ambassador, which indicated that the invitation had been declined.¹⁰ Stalin explained that he was unable to leave the Soviet Union at this crucial time. 'At Stalingrad,' he reminded the prime minister, 'we have encircled a large group of German troops and hope to complete their destruction.'¹¹

'I fully understand the gravity of Stalin's reasons,' the prime minister said to Maisky. 'But it is all the same a shame that we shall not be meeting.' From having opposed the Second Front in 1942, he now assured the Soviet ambassador, he had become a fervent supporter; but he had his doubts about the Americans. During the London talks in April, Hopkins and Marshall had insisted on opening up that Second Front no later than September and they had promised to transfer sufficient forces for this purpose. During July, when Stimson came over, they had however admitted that by September 1942 they would still not have enough troops over; now even 1943 was beginning to look unlikely. He asked Maisky how many American divisions he thought there were in Britain. Maisky shrugged, he did not know. Pressed by Churchill, Maisky shrugged again and volunteered, perhaps four. Churchill laughed out loud and said, 'No. Just one. The rest have gone to Africa.'

Churchill asked Maisky to say nothing to Moscow yet, as he intended to write to Stalin later about it. Maisky 'laughed this off.' He reported to Stalin that he suspected that the British and Americans were just flirting with the Second Front idea; what they really wanted was to have an easy war.¹²

IT IS TRUE, as Churchill explained to Eden on this occasion, that Roosevelt was unable, or unwilling, to voyage further than the North African coast. He was also averse to meeting Churchill in England, explaining to him quite frankly on December 11: 'England must be out for me, for political reasons.' The president also had private reasons which he did not spell out for not wanting such a meeting in his own capital. He told his staff that he had had a bellyful of Churchill's showboating visits.* 'He wanted no more of Churchill in Washington,' Hopkins recorded.¹⁴ Besides, he wanted to see

* Ten years later, during his post-war premiership, Churchill generated the same inhospitable sentiments in President Eisenhower, as the latter's telephone conversations with John Foster Dulles reveal (Dwight D Eisenhower Library).¹³

American troops going into action. Africa was the obvious choice. Given Stalin's absence, it was agreed, there would be no need for them to bring either Hull or Eden along.¹⁵ As for the location, the president suggested to Major-General Walter Bedell Smith that he check out a few tourist oases. The president reassured Churchill, aware of his reputation: 'One of the dictionaries says, "An oasis is never wholly dry." Good old dictionary.'

The word 'oasis' soldiered around the corridors of Whitehall documents for some time. Brooke noted on December 23 'discussions as to where this oasis is to be found.'¹⁶

Brigadier Ian Jacob was sent out after Christmas to reconnoitre Casablanca, on the Atlantic coast, and he selected the Anfa Hotel, in an affluent coastal suburb. The building provided wide verandas with inspiring views over the Atlantic or inland to the white-painted buildings of the city. The sunlit sea, recorded Jacob, was a dazzling blue, and the red soil was dotted with palm trees, bougainvillea, and begonia.¹⁷



The news from Tunisia contrived to depress spirits throughout the remaining weeks of 1942. The rains poured down. As Christmas approached, the British, French, and American forces, undertrained and ill co-ordinated, were still struggling to advance into the Tunisian highlands. The British chiefs of staff sent a cable to the Combined Chiefs in Washington expressing their deep concern at this 'state of affairs.' General Eisenhower, they observed, was now estimating that if Rommel could withdraw his army relatively intact from Tripolitania into Tunisia, the Axis could concentrate twelve to fourteen divisions there by March 1. Disillusioned, Churchill began to suspect Eisenhower of incompetence. His fury ran surprisingly deep. When the American general asked for a signed photograph, the prime minister refused to provide one. Drawing the sting from this rebuff, General Ismay replied that Churchill was not happy to provide such a photo unless the American commander were to ask for it specifically privately. 'I fear you must all be going through a very trying time at the moment,' Ismay added. 'This wretched rain seems to have upset our apple-cart properly.'¹⁸

On December 28, at Churchill's first cabinet meeting after Christmas, he was oppressed by both the still-unsolved murder of Darlan and the worsening news from Tunisia. He presided over the defence committee later that day to review their strategy for the coming year. The alternative facing

them was either to hold fast in North Africa and concentrate all effort on launching BOLERO (the cross-Channel invasion of France); or vice versa.

The British chiefs of staff were seriously worried about the American command in North Africa. Meeting after dinner on December 28 the defence committee conducted its first review of the strategic situation .

There was little praise for General Eisenhower. 'We joined in deploring the Tunisian position,' wrote Eden afterwards, 'the lack of depth in our defences, the failure to reinforce or build up behind [General Sir Kenneth] Anderson, & Eisenhower's new plan to divert to attack in [the] south forces which should surely be made available to Anderson for defence or an earlier offensive.' Eden concluded that these Americans were 'very green.'¹⁹

The defence committee met again at ten-thirty p.m. on the twenty-ninth, and Churchill read out the message which his chiefs of staff had sent to Washington asking the Combined Chiefs to give Eisenhower 'appropriate instructions.' Churchill said that in his view the strengths of the German divisions given by Eisenhower's latest review were 'most misleading.'²⁰ He fretted that if the general were more of a soldier and less of a politician this stalemate in North Africa would never have arisen. He feared another Dunkirk – that General Walter Nehring's Afrika Korps might attack along the coastal flank, just as his own generals Alexander and Montgomery had at Alamein, with the same disastrous consequences to General Anderson's British First Army to the south as had befallen Rommel's Italians.²¹

The goodwill that Churchill had felt toward Eisenhower until TORCH had all but expired. The American expressed displeasure that the British had failed to live up to important promises which they had authorised him to make to the French generals in North Africa. On the first day of 1943 Churchill replied, denying that he had let Eisenhower down in this respect.

Revealing the underlying cause of his disquiet, he added: 'I am deeply concerned about the unfavourable turn in Tunisia, and our Staffs take an even more serious view.' Eisenhower's political concern was however very real – that an impression was gaining currency among the French that the Allies were indifferent toward their solemn engagements.²²

On January 5, Churchill approved a new telegram to the Joint Staff Mission in Washington criticising Eisenhower's strategy; but he ordered these criticisms withheld from the general himself pending the coming summit meeting at Casablanca.²³ His bitterness toward Eisenhower now was but a pale foreshadow of the rage that would seize him against the same general at the end of June 1944.

ON DECEMBER 30, 1942 the French authorities in Algiers had arrested a dozen prominent suspects in the assassination of Admiral Darlan. Among them were the Abbé Cordier; Henri d'Astier; and the city's chief of police, André Achiary. 'Reason given is, I understand,' W.H.B. Mack cabled to the foreign office, '[the] discovery of evidence that [a] murder plot has been hatched against not only Darlan but Giraud, Bergeret, and others, including at one stage Murphy.' Giraud, he said, accepted this 'story.' Mack advised the British government in a telegram to say nothing about it in public.²⁴ British Intelligence checked their files, and claimed to have found virtually nothing about the twelve. Churchill kept his own counsel. 'A bag of snakes,' he scrawled on Mack's telegram, and drew a ring round the phrase.²⁵

When Robert Murphy called on Giraud and Bergeret to discuss the arrests, Giraud pointed out that he had fifty thousand French troops fighting for the Allies in Tunisia. 'My life has been threatened,' he complained, 'as well as Murphy's. I cannot condone murder nor can I permit irresponsible persons in Algiers the liberty of conspiring to commit murder.'²⁶

On the last day of 1942 the well-informed British consul-general in Algiers sent an oddly worded message to the foreign office, demanding the release of the police chief and his associates, failing which irreparable damage would be done to the Allies' name, particularly in France. 'Does not a thief's code of honour,' he asked, 'include loyalty to friends?'²⁷

The Americans' loyalties were placed elsewhere. Eisenhower insisted on a public trial; the French warned that this would open a can of worms. Secretly stating their preliminary findings to Eisenhower's liaison chief, General Bergeret revealed that the police chief had confessed to having witnessed General d'Astier and the Abbé Cordier plotting the murder: he had seen the general arrive from London and hand over \$38,000 to his brother Henri. Of the hit-money only ten thousand francs (about fifty dollars) had been given to the young French assassin to aid his getaway, together with the two pistols – he had confirmed this in written testimony before facing the firing squad. The British plan, said Bergeret, had been to liquidate not only Darlan but also Giraud, Bergeret, and even the troublesome Robert Murphy, to clear the way for de Gaulle. 'This fact,' stated Bergeret, 'is brought out by a signed statement of the boy who did the killing and which was found in the possession of a police officer, who had kept it in anticipation of using it for the purposes of blackmail against d'Astier at some later date.' The Abbé had obtained the floor-plans of the Summer

Palace, and an ancient pistol. In the event, a better weapon was relied on, a Rubis 7·65 mm pistol. The French, added Bergeret, were going to put the twelve on trial within a week.²⁸ As for de Gaulle's henchman General d'Astier himself, he was beyond their reach, having flown back to London.

It was, as Churchill had observed, a bag of snakes. Probably suspecting the truth, Harold Macmillan, whom he had foisted onto Eisenhower's headquarters as his political representative, was horrified at the energy with which the Algiers French were pursuing their murder investigation.

On January 8 he warned the foreign office that General Giraud seemed convinced that there was a plot (here Macmillan deleted the words, 'organised by people of some importance in and about government circles') to murder the general himself and Robert Murphy. Learning on the tenth of the arrest of Henri d'Astier, the general's brother, Macmillan warned Churchill that, given the prominence of the d'Astier family in Gaullist circles, General de Gaulle was bound to take it very badly. Macmillan suggested that they advise him that the Allies could not interfere with the course of justice. On the eleventh, a member of Macmillan's staff suggested that the arrest of Henri had all the elements of becoming a 'Dreyfus case,' and rather significantly urged that the name of his brother General d'Astier 'should be not in any way' publicly linked with the assassination, in the courtroom, the press, or elsewhere. The British government should apply pressure to General Giraud to ensure that the prosecuting attorney complied, 'if and when the trial takes place.' Macmillan admitted that *prima facie* there did appear however to be a justifiable case for the arrest of Henri.²⁹

The wider ramifications were so disturbing that General Bedell Smith, Eisenhower's chief of staff, pleaded with the French military authorities in Algiers to hold off any trial until after the coming meeting between Churchill and Roosevelt.³⁰ Predictably, Eden reassured his officials that all this was just a foul plot to blacken the name of de Gaulle. Even Sir Alexander Cadogan would not buy that. 'Go easy,' he advised himself in his diary. 'I won't guarantee that De Gaullists aren't in the plot, and if [the] Americans can show, or think, that we're trying to shield potential murderers the Washington-London situation will become much more acute.'³¹



At the Casablanca meeting, SYMBOL, the Americans hoped to push through their strategic concept, attacking across the cross-Channel, against

the British preference, attacking the soft underbelly of the Axis, in the Mediterranean. The Americans wanted all forces regrouped, as soon as North Africa was securely in their hands, for a frontal assault during 1943 on France's Brest or Cherbourg peninsulas. Henry Stimson's view was that even if such an invasion failed, the losses inflicted on the Germans would cripple them throughout 1944. 'The British are afraid of this,' he dictated privately, referring to the invasion – this was why they wanted to proceed from Tunisia to Sicily, and to force Germany to defend Italy. To him this seemed too costly, given the proximity of German air power, and too indirect. Marshall felt the same.³²

The fighting in Tunisia had bogged down. Increasingly perplexed by Eisenhower's generalship, the British chiefs of staff signalled to Field-Marshal Sir John Dill, their representative in Washington, on December 29 the comment that the American general had now spread the British First Army (or rather one corps of it) along a front of sixty miles. 'Hitherto we have had the initiative and superior numbers,' this anxious telegram read. 'The former is now passing to the enemy, and during January his reinforcing power may well be greater than ours.' The Germans might launch an offensive; they might drive the Allies back into Algeria, and even defeat them.³³

Beset by the same fears, Churchill began agitating for Eisenhower to relinquish his command of the Tunisian front – but he feared offending the sensitive supreme commander. He discussed this dilemma with Ismay. 'On the one hand we say, "Do keep clear of politics,"' he mused, 'and on the other "Do keep away from the front."' He wondered what the Combined Chiefs of Staff would make of these British remonstrances. 'It is odd that we have not heard from them yet,' he told Ismay on the second day of 1943.³⁴

On January 5, as the chiefs of staff proposed sending yet another protest to Washington, the prime minister asked whether they realised how hurtful these strongly worded messages might be when taken together; they constituted, he said, 'a criticism of the C.-in-C.'s tactical proposals amounting to a want of confidence in his generalship.'

Their only hope was the nature of the terrain on the northern flank, and the Germans' lack of transport in Tunisia, which would prevent General Nehring from mounting the kind of large-scale, deep ranging thrust for which Rommel was famous. Anyhow I am not at all convinced that the proposed operations in the South will not be helpful. Notice in BONIFACE Rommel's anxiety on this score.

He wondered how the American chiefs of staff would respond to this severe criticism. 'I rather wish we had some knowledge of how they have taken it,' he concluded, writing to Ismay, 'before we fired this new broadside. . . Indeed I am disturbed at the American silence.'³⁵

There were also political strains on the alliance. Eisenhower had not been pleased with Macmillan's unannounced arrival at his headquarters. When the scion of the publishing family sent his first dispatch to London on January 9 he proposed that a political council should advise Eisenhower.

He had found General Mark Clark 'very friendly,' he said, and blessed with a stronger character and with a 'quicker, more intelligent brain' than Eisenhower. Everybody was glad that Britain's Cunningham was remaining there, and that Mark Clark would be taking over the U.S. Fifth Army.³⁶ (Others however would voice a divergent view, finding an anti-British bias in this wilful and ambitious general, and that Eisenhower was 'far too easily swayed and diverted' by Mark Clark to be a great commander-in-chief.³⁷)

DELAYED FOR several days by bad weather, Churchill was impatient to fly out to Casablanca for the meeting with President Roosevelt. He even debated going out on a cruiser; Admiral Sir Dudley Pound opposed this because of the threat from U-boats.³⁸ It was 1:30 A.M. on January 13 before the prime minister's *Liberator* finally took off for North Africa. He took his doctor Sir Charles Wilson (now Lord Moran), Harriman, 'Tommy' Thompson, and the valet Sawyers with him. They landed on a steel-mesh military landing strip at Medouina, near Casablanca, just before half-past ten A.M.³⁹

The Americans knew that Churchill's generals were better organised for such summit conferences as these, and they feared being outsmarted. The British had the advantage of knowing exactly what they wanted – to clear the Axis out of North Africa, to re-open the Mediterranean route to the Far East, and to stage an early invasion of Sicily – and they pursued these goals with single-minded determination.⁴⁰ The Americans, it might be added, were clear only as to what they did *not* want – they were reluctant to proceed any further into the Mediterranean, which they regarded as a murky cul-de-sac which Hitler might at any moment seal off at the neck, the Straits of Gibraltar. Admiral King was interested only in the Pacific, General Arnold only in the air war against Germany. General Marshall worried that the Mediterranean would become a strategic sinkhole which would devour the precious Allied resources collected for the cross-Channel attack; like King, he wanted the Allies to shift their emphasis to Japan.

UNDER GENERAL George S. Patton Jr., the American army had taken over the Anfa Hotel to house the conference. They had also seized eighteen surrounding villas to accommodate the main notables, and cordoned the area with barbed wire. Patton had requisitioned for himself a small but gaudy marble palace owned formerly, as Brooke's diary observed, by 'a Jew newspaper owner,' and thereafter by the German armistice commission.

Within this armoured perimeter everything was free, provided by the Americans – a cornucopia of wine, liquor, food, cigars, and other wartime unobtainables like candies, soap, and razor blades. It was a veritable oasis in this uncivilised wasteland of war. Walking on the beach, the conference officers could watch the Atlantic rollers roaring in or, like Brooke and his Director of Military Operations Kennedy, go bird-watching ('I think,' recorded Brooke one day, with the enthusiasm of a youthful trainspotter, '[we] located a pair of spur-winged plover').⁴¹ Once, the prime minister persuaded a group of American bluejackets with a guitar to play a sea shanty to him on the beach. They gathered around his limousine as he climbed back in, and serenaded him with *You Are My Sunshine*.⁴²

It was, wrote one of his staff, Paradise enow.⁴³ Winston plainly concurred. 'Conditions most agreeable,' he wired to the cabinet. 'I wish I could say the same of the problems. I think at least a fortnight will be required.'⁴⁴

Clementine had just cabled to him, 'My Darling, The Annexe & No. 10 are dead & empty without you – Smoky [the Annexe cat] wanders about disconsolate.' She assured him however, 'Everything is quiet – so far at this end "the secret" is water-tight.' Secrecy was a prime concern. President Roosevelt would become – even on Churchill's own appointment card – 'Quixote,' 'Don Q,' or 'Admiral Q.' The codebreakers intercepted a message from the Turkish ambassador in Washington informing Ankara that the two leaders were conferring abroad.⁴⁵ The Nazi *Abwehr* learnt that the location was 'Casablanca,' but the linguist in Admiral Canaris told him this was the White House. The Dominion prime ministers were equally in the dark. Churchill had as usual done nothing to inform them.⁴⁶ From Canberra, Curtin sent a message to Washington for Churchill; Lord Halifax could only tell the Australian Sir Owen Dixon that Winston wasn't there.

No, Churchill was at Casablanca, in Morocco, comfortably ensconced in Villa No. 3, the Villa Mirador, guarded by Royal Marines, and known officially as 'Air Commodore Frankland.' With an eye for their Cervantes, or possibly on Winston's waistline, the Americans dubbed him Sancho Panza.

General Patton called him 'B-1' in his diary, without offering a key, which was perhaps just as well.⁴⁷ The president lived in Villa No. 2, a modern California-style bungalow, surrounded by Secret Service men with guns.

'Churchill,' described Hopkins in a handwritten diary, 'has a house about fifty yards away' –

I went over to bring him back for a drink [with Roosevelt] before dinner. He was in fine form but looks older. We walked back and the three of us had a long talk over the military situation. The British Eighth Army is attacking tonight. The two staffs are in the big hotel across the street and just before dinner I found them all having a cocktail. The president invited the British and American chiefs to dine with him and Churchill and Averell. Much good talk of war – and families – and the French. I went to bed at 12 but I understand that the Pres. and Churchill sat up till 2.⁴⁸

Macmillan wrote in a letter of Winston's 'curious routine' of spending much of the day in bed, and all night up, which made it 'trying' for his staff. 'He ate and drank enormously all the time, settled huge problems, played bagatelle and b zique by the hour, and generally enjoyed himself.'⁴⁹

TO BROOKE's enjoyment, the American Admiral King became increasingly sozzled as this dinner wore on, and began arguing with Roosevelt and Churchill (over how best to use the French to control North Africa). The prime minister affected not to notice the 'condition' that King was in, wrote Brooke.⁵⁰ After a week he recorded impressions of Roosevelt's advisers that were so unfavourable that they were edited out of the published version, though he certainly aired them to Churchill at the time. 'Marshall,' wrote the C.I.G.S., 'has got practically no strategic vision, his thoughts revolve round the creation of forces and not on their employment. He arrived here without a single real strategic concept, he has initiated nothing in the policy for the future conduct of the war. His part has been that of somewhat clumsy criticism of the plans we put forward.' Admiral King rated little better in Brooke's esteem – he was 'a shrewd and somewhat swollen headed individual,' who lacked a truly global viewpoint. 'His vision,' recorded Brooke, 'is mainly limited to the Pacific, and any operation calculated to distract from the force available in the Pacific does not meet with his approval.'⁵¹

There was one other participant. Churchill had insisted that his son Randolph join TORCH, and Ismay had sent him out as Intelligence officer to

the Commando force. There was little or nothing for him to do, and Mountbatten had willingly packed him off to Casablanca to join his father; here he became attached to the British party, as Brigadier Jacob acidly commented, 'as a kind of fungus, his only function being to annoy everyone, constantly interrupt business, be present when the P.M. was talking on important subjects with Hopkins, Harriman, etc., and to play *béziq*ue when the P.M. should have been working or resting.' Jacob, having seen a fair amount of Randolph, decided that he had most of Winston's weaknesses without any of his compensating virtues: he was pugnacious, energetic, brazen, and intelligent, but had an impish tendency to disagree for the sake of disagreeing. Hitting the point that Clementine had feared, Jacob added: 'He seems incapable of settling down to do an honest job of work.' Winston's fondness for Randolph was evident, but they embarrassed others by their squabbling.⁵²

Macmillan would liken the Casablanca conference to a mixture of cruise and summer school, but this negative perception did the participants an injustice.⁵³ With thirty meetings packed into ten days, invigorated by a tropical backdrop that seemed so very remote from wartime London, they all worked very hard.⁵⁴ 'The dawns and sunsets were a joy to behold, and the oranges lovely to see as well as to eat,' wrote Ismay at this time. The climate, the sunshine, the beaches, the food – all these things fostered a new spirit of Anglo-American co-operation. 'It was very satisfying to argue vehemently and frankly round the council table all the morning, then to lunch together in intimate parties at small tables: so different from those ghastly official meals that are usually associated with Allied gatherings.'⁵⁵

One of their principal tasks was preparing for the next stage, the invasion of Sicily – an operation now code-named *HUSKY*. Churchill and the Americans preferred this Italian island to Sardinia, while Mountbatten and other British experts felt that there were reasons why Sardinia could be invaded three months earlier. 'I refuse to be fobbed off with a sardine,' Churchill, never one to fear flogging an exhausted pun, had again told his staff. He wanted *HUSKY* brought forward; he was afraid that if, as still seemed possible, they could clear Tunisia of the Axis armies during March there might follow three or four months during which the Allies were not in contact with the Germans on any front (except in the bombing war).

The British got their way at Casablanca. Churchill's men had come formidably well prepared.⁵⁶ Addressing them on January 13, he had coached them to be patient with the Americans. They were not noticeably to force the pace, but they were to make progress, he said, like 'the dripping of

water on a stone.’ The essential thing was to bring forward HUSKY as much as possible; not only that, but that there should also be some kind of cross-Channel assault that year, and ANAKIM, Wavell’s reconquest of Burma, in the autumn of 1943 as well.⁵⁷ Southern Europe, the ‘soft underbelly of the Axis,’ must come first. ‘This,’ he urged in a memorandum sent over to the Americans on the fourteenth, ‘surely remains our obvious immediate objective.’ Hitler’s unexpected occupation of Tunisia might of course delay them. ‘We know,’ said Churchill, drawing without attribution on his secret sources, ‘that Rommel is withdrawing into Tunis with the intention of standing on the Mareth position near the frontier.’ Churchill hoped nonetheless to clear the enemy out of Tunisia before the end of March.⁵⁸

What then? Told that the earliest date for HUSKY was the end of August – a delay on which Hitler was in fact banking – the prime minister stipulated early July for the operation instead. Applying this kind of pressure was what he was very good at, but he also told his chiefs of staff of his ambition to launch a cross-Channel operation in 1943, which seemed unrealistic.⁵⁹

THEY ALL dined together on January 14 – the two war leaders and their staffs. ‘Everyone,’ wrote General Arnold that night, ‘tried to keep [the] President and prime minister from making plans to get too near front. Both seemed determined. [They] could see no real danger.’ He quoted Churchill as exhorting the Combined Chiefs, ‘This is the most important meeting so far. We must not relinquish [the] initiative now that we have it. You men are the ones who have the facts and who will make plans for the future.’⁶⁰

Churchill sent a typewritten report to Clementine, assuring her that they were protected by a ring of anti-aircraft guns. ‘I have a very nice villa,’ he told her, ‘except for getting hot water, but this difficulty has now been overcome.’ DON QUIXOTE had arrived the previous evening. ‘I played a good deal of bezique with Averell [Harriman] who pretended to be entirely ignorant but has inflicted a number of defeats upon me.’ He was currently waiting for news of battle – he had ‘every reason’ to believe that the Eighth Army attacked last night. As for the conference, ‘It is wise [to] let everything develop quietly . . . and to allow opposite or divergent points of view melt themselves down. This can only be done by time and patience, but so far it seems a great change to me from my daily grind of papers and decisions.’

The conference opened in full session on the following afternoon, the fifteenth.⁶¹ The two Allied commanders, Eisenhower and Alexander, set out their plans; speaking with Roosevelt, Eisenhower even hazarded his own

guess at the date when the Axis forces in Tunisia would finally collapse: 'May 15,' he said (he later described it as his most miraculous guess of the war).⁶² Both Roosevelt and Churchill assured Eisenhower that they were loyally adhering to the strategy of an eventual cross-Channel invasion. 'General,' Churchill told Eisenhower, 'I have heard here that we British are planning to scuttle ROUND-UP. This is not so. I have given my word and I shall keep it. But we now have a glorious opportunity before us,' he added, referring to Sicily. 'We must not fail to seize it. When the time comes you will find the British ready to do their part in the other operation.'⁶³

For the next two days most of the progress was made in staff conferences and over the dinner table. The American Joint Planners, Brooke found on the seventeenth, would not agree that Germany was the primary enemy, and wanted to tackle Japan first.⁶⁴ They would retain their crudely anti-British stance throughout the war. In an attempt to resolve these differences, at five-thirty P.M. on the eighteenth Roosevelt called a second full session of the Combined Chiefs, with Churchill also present. To quell American fears, articulated during earlier sessions of this body, that Britain might pull out after the overthrow of Hitler, Churchill now solemnly committed the British empire to defeating Japan after Hitler had been defeated, asserting that Britain's 'honour is engaged.' At this session he again betrayed his obsession with bringing Turkey into the war.⁶⁵ He agreed privately with Roosevelt that Britain should 'play the hand' in Turkey, while the United States should continue to take the lead in China and French North Africa.⁶⁶

BY JANUARY 19 it would be plain to those left in Washington that Churchill was once again forcing the Americans' hand.⁶⁷ Two days later there was talk that Roosevelt and the Joint Chiefs had capitulated all down the line to the British.⁶⁸ General Stanley Embick, the anti-British head of the war department's Board on Future Strategy, was particularly upset by these decisions.⁶⁹

Idyllic though it was here at Casablanca, Churchill felt out of touch. He bullied London to flesh out the daily war reports with interesting titbits; he asked 'C' to ensure a regular flow of ULTRA intercepts and on the eighteenth he was already demanding to know why he was not being supplied with five times as many. Naval Intelligence began putting together for him an evening telegram based on the intercepts of each day. Bletchley Park was now deciphering thirty-nine thousand ENIGMA messages each month; the monthly tally would rise to ninety thousand by the year's end.⁷⁰ Even so Churchill felt starved of news. He received no account of the big R.A.F.

raid on Berlin of January 16–17, 1943 until about six P.M. on the seventeenth. The news of a second raid on Hitler's capital on the following night then came out to Casablanca in a rush of telegrams from Sinclair ('who always does his best,' wrote Jacob in a tart diary comment, 'to suck up').⁷¹ Concerned for Clementine's safety, should Hitler command reprisals, Winston dictated this message for No. 10: 'Personal and private. AIR COM-MODORE FRANKLAND wishes you to ensure that MRS FRANKLAND and the servants go down to the shelter in event of air raids warning.'

STALIN BY contrast had good news to report. On January 15 he announced that the Red Army was finishing the liquidation of the German troops at Stalingrad.⁷² Anxious not to be outdone, Churchill cabled to Stalin on the seventeenth about the great air raid on Berlin the night before: 'We dropped 142 tons of high explosives and 218 tons of incendiaries on Berlin last night,' he boasted, and he instructed Eden to send a further telegram reporting the second night's Berlin raid – if it had been on an 'appreciable scale.'⁷³

The Casablanca conference continued. Statesmen and staffs, they were still all eyeing each other like girls at their first high-school prom. Diaries crackled with caustic comments and feline sniping. Lord Leathers said that friendly and buoyant though Roosevelt was, he had nothing like Winston's grip on the problems facing them. Hopkins inspired more jealous than idle chatter; the British suspected that he exercised a hidden, baleful influence on American affairs.⁷⁴ Patton, a shrewd observer and prolific diarist, found him clever and intuitive – 'like a pilot for shark.'⁷⁵ Initially, he found himself warming to Churchill. General Marshall had instructed him to talk things over fully with the prime minister during one dinner invitation, and they got on better than he had believed possible. 'He strikes me as cunning, rather than brilliant,' decided Patton, 'with great tenacity.' Then he wrote, 'He is easily flattered – all of them are.'⁷⁶

CHURCHILL AND Roosevelt had decided to invite General de Gaulle out to Casablanca to meet and make friends with his rival, General Giraud. It was unlikely to go well. General de Gaulle had been only a colonel when Giraud already attained his third star. Before leaving Washington the president had repeated to his military staff that he had no confidence in the British foreign office, which was trying to foist a de Gaulle government onto the French people. The United States had the whip hand, he added: he would remind Churchill that de Gaulle was just a soldier, with no authority over France

until the French had had an opportunity to decide.⁷⁷ The British were in a different position, however, as Macmillan remarked to Murphy: Britain had already invested seventy million pounds in de Gaulle, and they were looking for a return on their investment.⁷⁸

The Americans had expended a similar effort in buttering up the French governors of North Africa. On January 17 General Charles A. Noguès, the Resident-General at Rabat in Morocco, came to confer with Roosevelt.⁷⁹ Churchill also saw him; in fact Patton remarked with irritation on the way that Winston hogged Noguès and invited the Americans in only later. 'B-1,' wrote Patton, chilling toward the prime minister, 'speaks the worst French I have ever heard. His eyes run, and he is not at all impressive.' According to Patton, Noguès told him that he would much rather 'play with' the Americans, as Churchill wanted to have the whole world run his way.⁸⁰

Roosevelt had already persuaded General Giraud to come to the conference. He invited the British to produce de Gaulle. Churchill accordingly wrote to the general: 'I shall be glad if you would come to join me here by the first available plane which we will provide, as it is in my power to bring about an immediate meeting between you and General Giraud under conditions of complete secrecy and with the best prospects.' De Gaulle did not respond (Macmillan suspected that it offended his pride to be invited by an Englishman to a French territory). Hours passed. 'I've got the bridegroom,' Churchill now cabled to Eden, 'where is the bride?'

Over the weekend he had sent a telegram inviting the general to come and meet Giraud, with a view to union. Eden put the idea to de Gaulle that Sunday January 17. The lofty, complicated Frenchman turned up his notorious nose, scenting a second 'Munich'; he was willing to meet Giraud, he said, but not at the *Diktat* of Roosevelt and the P.M. Eden informed Churchill of this snub on Sunday: 'despite long argument' he had been unable to persuade de Gaulle.⁸¹ Hideously embarrassed, Churchill discussed with Macmillan the options if they were not finally to sack the intransigent Frenchman. Macmillan persuaded the prime minister to make a final approach to de Gaulle, 'in spite of the rather humiliating position in which we had been placed *vis-à-vis* the Americans.' A 'shotgun wedding' seemed inevitable.

Churchill and Macmillan discussed this unhappy situation with the president and Murphy over lunch on the eighteenth. Roosevelt relished Winston's discomfiture. He cabled to Cordell Hull in Washington, 'We delivered our bridegroom, General Giraud, who was most co-operative on the impending marriage, and I am sure was ready to go through with it on our terms.

However, our friends could not produce the bride.' 'Lady de Gaulle' had got quite snooty, he continued, and was showing no intention of getting into bed with Giraud.

Soon the joke turned sour. A whole day passed with no news from London about de Gaulle's coming. Churchill's temper flared. In England however de Gaulle had gone to ground, 'fearing no doubt a dusty answer,' as Eden conceded. Time was running out. Roosevelt was anxious to leave – no later than the twenty-third – and Churchill had as yet unrevealed plans to fly on to Cairo, and then to meet the president of Turkey, to invite that country into his war.⁸³ He told Hopkins he was going to threaten to turn the Russians loose on the Dardanelles Straits, if the Turks proved recalcitrant.

De Gaulle's gauche behaviour overshadowed that evening, January 19. Winston took Roosevelt off for dinner.⁸⁴ 'Randolph arrived,' wrote Churchill's secretary in his diary; he quoted the bumptious son as shouting: 'Any news of that bloody chap?'⁸⁵ With visible impatience, Roosevelt asked who paid the general's salary. 'I should suggest to him,' he added, 'that salaries are paid for devoted and obedient service, and if he doesn't come, his salary would be cut off.'⁸⁶

Churchill took the hint. He informed Eden that his General de Gaulle was finished if he did not show up now. On January 21 Churchill drafted a flippantly worded programme, 'based on the assumption that the bride arrives tomorrow morning.'⁸⁷ The shotgun wedding image was hard to dispel or to deny. 'The Bride has not arrived,' pencilled General Arnold into his diary, 'so perhaps that will cause us a delay.'⁸⁸ Soon everybody at Anfa was referring to de Gaulle with unbecoming nuptial metaphors. He finally condescended to arrive from England at noon on January 22, 1943. A press conference had already been fixed for that day. Hopkins came into Churchill's bedroom late that morning to suggest postponing it until they got the measure of their respective Frenchmen.

ONE OF Churchill's staff had written, back at Downing-street, that seeing the P.M. in bed reminded him of his grandmother. She had the same slothful physical habits, and slow movements – negative traits which, when combined with an 'extremely masterful brain' demanded continual employment of a stream of helpers and servants fussing around her. Winston was the same: 'Sawyers brings the breakfast, then Kinna is sent for, to take something down; meanwhile the bell is rung for the Private Secretary on duty, who is asked for news, and told to summon someone, say C.I.G.S. or

Pug [Ismay]. Then it is the candle for lighting cigars that is wanted. Then someone must get Hopkins on the phone.'⁸⁹ On this particular morning in Casablanca, January 22, Hopkins was startled to find Churchill still in bed, despite the lateness of the hour, wearing his customary pink robe and already swigging at a bottle of wine for breakfast.

'On the one hand,' explained the prime minister, following Hopkins's gaze, 'I have a profound distaste for skimmed milk. On the other, I have no deep-rooted prejudice about wine: so I have reconciled this conflict in favour of the latter.' Throughout his life, he added, he had found the advice of doctors usually wrong, and he had no intention of giving up alcohol.⁹⁰

After sending Sawyers off to fetch his dentures, he agreed to delay any press conference and photographs until afternoon. 'I do not look my best at midday,' he said. 'I can put on a very warlike look whenever I want to.'⁹¹



In the forenoon of Friday, January 22, 1943, de Gaulle finally turned up at Casablanca. He refused at first to confer with Roosevelt that day, but spent the first hour with Giraud, vilifying Darlan, Peyrouton and Boisson. 'What a bunch those Frenchmen are,' commented General Arnold in his diary.⁹² Visiting Mack and Murphy, de Gaulle complained of having been excluded from TORCH, said he had 'rejoiced at Darlan's assassination,' and remarked upon the curious setting of this meeting – on French soil with only American troops in sight; he had been assured that Darlan's death would bring about a change in North Africa, but he now saw no sign of it. When he came in to see Churchill at six-thirty, the P.M. saw him alone and rudely told him that if he did not come into line he would have to go.

He threatened to make public that de Gaulle was the only real obstacle to French unity. Roosevelt, who saw the general only briefly, was more kindly and paternal. 'He reminded him about the American Civil War,' reported Churchill, 'where brother had fought against brother, yet had come together.' Roosevelt would recall a few weeks later that while Winston had been quite rough on de Gaulle his own posture, of a sorrowful Father-Confessor, had proven more effective. De Gaulle had said to him that he could not forget how the British had once overrun his country and France had been liberated by Joan of Arc; he felt that his role now was much the same as hers.⁹³ Roosevelt saw de Gaulle briefly at 10:15 P.M., and told Winston afterwards that he found the 'spiritual' look, the 'light' in the French

general's eyes, disconcerting. The president had never seen a man like de Gaulle before, he seemed quite unpractical; Roosevelt wanted a body of three, Giraud, de Gaulle and some unnamed third, to run French affairs — but not as a government. Churchill propounded his idea of *deux grands chefs*, of equal stature.⁹⁴

On the following morning, Saturday, January 23, Giraud refused to accept such a junior officer as de Gaulle as his equal. Roosevelt and de Gaulle had their first formal meeting in the president's villa. It was stiff and unsatisfactory. De Gaulle conceded that he and Giraud could perhaps get along together — if Giraud played the part of Marshal Ferdinand Foch and de Gaulle that of Georges Clemenceau. Roosevelt slyly remarked upon the difference between Joan of Arc on Friday and Clemenceau on Saturday. This was totally lost on de Gaulle.⁹⁵ He remained austere and inflexible.

He instinctively rejected Giraud, since he drew his authority from Vichy. Giraud, he implied, might join the French forces; but de Gaulle's forces would never join Giraud. Unlike Giraud, he attached emphasis to French national politics, and to his own ultimate ambitions, than to getting on with the war. Lunching with Giraud, de Gaulle made no overtures to him at all; instead, he demanded the dismissal of the Vichy-appointed governors like Boisson and Noguès. 'De Gaulle,' wrote Ismay, 'could scarcely have been more tiresome. He seems to get more and more *mystique* and more and more opinionated with the passage of time.' Roosevelt and Churchill discussed this situation with Hopkins, Macmillan, and Murphy at four P.M. Giraud was now asked to produce a statement of his talks with de Gaulle that morning and they confronted de Gaulle with it. Hopkins said that evening that Roosevelt was now so hostile to de Gaulle that he was ready to destroy him before American public opinion if he did not come into line.⁹⁶

AFTER DE GAULLE had left for his first brief meeting with Roosevelt late on January 22, Winston had prepared for the evening's state dinner with the Sultan of Morocco, though inadequately as it turned out. The ruler of Morocco was a diminutive Berber of thirty-two; he was like Roosevelt a head of state, but of course a Moslem. He arrived robed in white silk and bearing artefacts of solid gold for the president; these included a tiara for Eleanor — as Hopkins noted with an unkind chuckle it was of the kind that he had last seen being worn by circus girls on white horses. The sultan asked for twenty minutes alone with the American president before Churchill arrived, and he disclosed that a small deposit of oil had been found in Morocco. 'Would

you pardon a piece of advice,' Roosevelt drawled – 'After all, I am old enough to be your father. You will need oil to run your own factories and your own lighting plants and transportation systems, and so forth. You will need all that you have.' Astonished by the artful president's apparent selflessness, the sultan rose to his feet. 'No foreigner has ever given me advice like this before,' he said solemnly and repeated what had been said in Arabic to his Grand Vizier.⁹⁷

Churchill fared less well. British stock was not high around these parts, and his demeanour did little to improve it. The sultan had disposed that no alcohol was to be drunk in his presence, only orange juice and water.⁹⁸ The story of Winston's consequent ill-temper ricocheted around the world of diplomacy for weeks afterwards, losing nothing in the telling; like his nude bathroom 'audiences,' and his inebriated condition when he had received Sumner Welles in the admiralty in 1940, soon everybody heard of it. Roosevelt saw to that. He afterwards told Henry Stimson that he had placed the sultan on his right, as was proper, and the prime minister on his left; Churchill had failed to down more than one whisky-and-soda before the meal began, and 'therefore, according to the president, was morose and cross all through the dinner.'⁹⁹ Like other chronic alcoholics deprived of their sustenance, Winston became first glum, then sullen, then downright rude, to both the sultan and the Grand Vizier.¹⁰⁰ He did not conceal his *ennui*, although he had evidently contrived one diversion – a Royal Marine marched in and handed him a despatch which he perused with an air of gravity. Hopkins wrote the next day, 'I have a feeling Churchill cooked that up beforehand, because I saw the despatch later and it certainly wasn't one that required the Prime Minister's attention at the dinner.'

Soon after the sultan left at ten P.M., the prime minister rushed out of the room, to 'recover,' as he put it.¹⁰¹ The ruler of Morocco afterwards told a friend of the president that 'Mr Roosevelt was most charming and gracious,' but that he 'didn't like that man Churchill.'¹⁰² As Patton drove him back to his palace, the Arab monarch remarked to him: 'Truly your President is a very great man and a true friend of myself and of my people. He shines by comparison with the other one.'¹⁰³



HUSKY was to go ahead on July 9. That much was now fixed. The Combined Chiefs met for the third plenary session with the two war leaders

from five-thirty P.M. on January 23 in the dining room of Roosevelt's villa. It was to be the last meeting of the ten-day conference.¹⁰⁴ Here they agreed that if the losses in running the Arctic convoys ran at a rate which threatened the success of HUSKY, the convoys must be halted and Stalin must be told why. Defeating Germany still came before Japan; and operations in the Mediterranean before any cross-Channel offensive. 'Our ideas,' noted Brigadier Jacob in his diary, 'had prevailed almost throughout.'¹⁰⁵

After midnight Churchill and his journalist son settled with Roosevelt and Hopkins the final draft of a cable to Stalin reporting on this, their coming strategy: he was told only in general terms of large-scale amphibious operations in the Mediterranean, an Allied re-entry of the continent of Europe 'as soon as practicable,' and meanwhile – that old stand-by – an increase in the weight of the combined bomber offensive against Germany. 'We believe,' wrote the two leaders, 'that an increased tempo and weight of daylight and night attacks will lead to greatly increased material and moral damage in Germany and rapidly deplete German fighter strength.'¹⁰⁶

Some time after that, very late that night, de Gaulle was called in to this meeting at Roosevelt's villa – now joined also by Murphy, and Macmillan. They talked far into the night, trying to resolve the intransigence of the two French officers.¹⁰⁷ Murphy has recorded how Churchill, ablaze with fury at de Gaulle's continued stubbornness, wagged his finger in the general's face and shouted, with his dentures clicking, '*Mon général, il ne faut pas obstacler [sic] la guerre!*' – meaning evidently that if de Gaulle could not help the war he should not hinder it.¹⁰⁸ Finally Macmillan and Murphy drafted a formula on French military unity, Roosevelt and Churchill approved it, and they invited de Gaulle and Giraud to sign it. De Gaulle demurred. Roosevelt's log shows that the Churchills left Roosevelt at two-thirty A.M., 'the president retired a few minutes later.'¹⁰⁹

DE GAULLE dug his heels in. He said, according to Roosevelt, over and over again that he represented the spirit of France – the spirit of Joan of Arc which had driven the English out of France five hundred years ago. 'That spirit,' de Gaulle had declaimed, 'must be reincarnated.'¹¹⁰ Evidently the British had not got a bargain in purchasing his services in 1940. Macmillan felt that the problem had a narrower focus; he told Murphy that de Gaulle wanted to be 'top dog.' Hopkins, a seasoned negotiator, advised Roosevelt to box cunning, and *not* bludgeon de Gaulle too hard – to leave any beating that had to be done to the perfidious English. 'I told the Pres.,' he recorded

privately, 'I thot [*sic*] we could get an agreement on a joint statement issued by de Gaulle and Giraud – and a picture of the two of them.'¹¹¹

The Americans told Macmillan that it was up to Churchill to bring de Gaulle to heel. Later that morning, January 24, while Roosevelt was once again berating de Gaulle for his refusal to agree the joint communiqué, Churchill was brought in; Hopkins went off to haul in Giraud.¹¹²

De Gaulle sulked, looking bewildered; Churchill grunted at him, de Gaulle half agreed and half hesitated, and before the Frenchman could catch his breath, according to Hopkins's amusing note, Roosevelt suggested the all-important photograph. The lawn outside the Roosevelt villa was swarming with photographers and war correspondents who had been flown in the day before without the slightest idea who was inside.

De Gaulle and Giraud found themselves conducted into the garden by the Americans – the word 'frog-marched' suggests itself, but would be tasteless here; Roosevelt was carried out to a chair and loudly invited the two generals to shake hands. The two bickering Frenchmen did so with expressions of hideous joy, but to compound their agony some of the cameramen missed the historic moment and they had to do it again. The photograph shows them shaking hands; de Gaulle is nonchalantly puffing a post-coital cigarette; Churchill is wearing a pearl-grey Homburg, cigar, and puckish grin; the shotgun is, figuratively speaking, only just out of sight.¹¹³

IT WAS at this press conference that possibly the two most fateful words of the war were uttered. * The president reaffirmed the decision to spare no effort to bring about the 'unconditional surrender' of the Axis. He undoubtedly intended this as an emollient to the mud bath to which he had been subjected by Jewish, communist, anti-fascist, and other circles over the deal with Darlan two months before: there would, he implied, be no more deals.

Churchill, who had also suffered indirectly because of Darlan, endorsed Roosevelt's words, encouraging the newspapermen to convey a picture of the unity, thoroughness, and integrity of the political chiefs. 'Make them,' said Churchill, 'feel that there is some reason behind all that is being done.'

Even though there is some delay, there is design and purpose and, as

* The two most *lethal* words are surely Harry S. Truman's, beginning his signal IN-178 to Stimson, July 31, 1945: 'Suggestions approved. Release when ready but not sooner than 2 August' (H. S. Truman Libr., Naval Aide Files, box 5, Communications to Map Room).

the president has said, the unconquerable will to pursue this quality, until we have procured the unconditional surrender of the criminal forces who plunged the world into storm and ruin.¹¹⁴

Churchill is thus on record as having heartily endorsed Roosevelt's announcement. Unconditional surrender became the adamant *leitmotif* that shackled Allied wartime foreign policy.

The two words, so lightly spoken, soon gained capital letters. Learning four months later that both the British war cabinet and the exile governments in London were, during Churchill's renewed absence, debating possible armistice terms, Roosevelt instructed his ambassador to inform Eden of his concern: 'The president and the prime minister were in complete agreement that our joint present position is that there shall be no armistice but that the policy of Unconditional Surrender be the sole criterion of this time.'¹¹⁵ In August 1944, over a private dinner in Rome, Churchill would attempt to distance himself from the phrase, saying, 'The president announced the policy of "Unconditional Surrender" at Casablanca, while I did not agree with it. I said I would go along with F.D.R., but I always had reservations.'¹¹⁶ This was a lack of candour unusual in the prime minister.

What were the origins of the phrase? Roosevelt had already used it at a meeting of the Joint Chiefs on January 7 at the White House. The battle of Stalingrad was still in the balance. Concerned to rescue Stalin from what he sensed was a 'feeling of loneliness,' he had suggested that George Marshall visit him in Moscow, and when the general had asked him, 'What would I be expected to accomplish there?' the president replied in these terms: 'He was going to speak to Churchill about the advisability of informing Mr Stalin that the United Nations were to continue on until they reached Berlin, and that their only terms would be Unconditional Surrender.'¹¹⁷

American historians believe that on January 18 the prime minister had recommended issuing a press statement using the phrase; certainly the archives show that on the nineteenth Churchill notified his cabinet that he proposed to include in the communiqué a 'declaration of the firm intention of the United States and the British empire to continue the war relentlessly until we have brought about the "unconditional surrender" of Germany and Japan.' The use of quotation marks is as significant as his addition that Roosevelt had 'liked the idea' of making such a declaration (the logic in omitting Italy was to encourage an internal break-up).¹¹⁸ Whose 'idea' was it? The president's son Elliot believed that he had heard his father deploy the

same two-word phrase unopposed during lunch with Hopkins and Churchill on the twenty-third; Churchill agreed later in the House of Commons that the phrase did come up during these mealtime talks with Roosevelt.¹¹⁹

Thus it was not by happenstance that Roosevelt used the words during the press conference on January 24. He even referred to the American general Ulysses Simpson Grant: 'In my and the prime minister's early days he was called "Unconditional Surrender" Grant. The elimination of German, Japanese, and Italian war power means the unconditional surrender by Germany, Italy, and Japan.' The transcript shows that Churchill then spoke:

Tremendous events have happened. This enterprise which the president has organised – and he knows I have been his active lieutenant since the start – has altered the whole strategic aspect of the war. It has forced the Germans to fight under the very greatest difficulties. And I think that it gives us in a very marked way the initiative. Once we have got that precious treasure into our hands, we must labour hard to keep it.

'Hitler,' continued Churchill, 'said you never could tell what would happen because he wasn't dealing with competent military experts, but with military idiots and drunkards.* . . . That was a preliminary foretaste of the explanation which he will no doubt offer to the Nazi party for the complete manner in which he has been hoodwinked, fooled, and outmanœuvred by the great enterprise which was launched on these shores.'

Informing Clementine of their ten days of hard work, Churchill reported reaching complete agreement on the distribution of war resources between five or six theatres of war, and on the timing of their future plans. 'It is in every respect as I wished and proposed.' He had had nearly all his meals with the president. 'He came here and dined one night, the special ramps necessary for his movements being put in by the American Army Engineers. We had a very agreeable and successful evening, showing him our

* Churchill's reference was to Hitler's radio address to the German people on September 20, 1942, explaining the problem of predicting the Allied leaders' next moves: 'With paralytics and drunkards,' said Hitler, 'you can never tell what they'll be up to next.' It was a favourite jibe of the puritanical Führer. He had secretly told a Balkan diplomat five days before Dieppe that those mad British might venture anything. 'As lunatics like that drunkard Churchill, and Maccabees and numskulls like that brilliantined dandy Eden, are at the tiller [in England], we have to be prepared for just about anything!'

Map Room which . . . records all the movements, of both ships and troops wherever they may be, from day to day. And then Harry Hopkins produced five Negro soldiers who sang most melodiously to us.' 'Comic relief,' he added, had been provided by the attempt to bring de Gaulle to the altar where Giraud had been 'waiting impatiently' for some days. 'He thinks he is Clemenceau,' mocked Churchill, 'and wishes Giraud to be Foch, *i.e.*, dismissible at Prime Minister Clemenceau's pleasure! Many of these Frenchmen hate each other far more than they do the Germans, and all I have met care more for power and place than for the liberation of their country. . .'

IMMEDIATELY AFTER their press conference Roosevelt's motorcade left Casablanca, ostensibly for the airfield but in fact for Marrakech. De Gaulle delayed his return to London, as he refused to fly in an American plane since, he claimed, their pilots had no idea of navigation, and he had 'no desire to be landed in France.' Churchill also headed east. Patton's troops lined the route out to La Saadia where the president and prime minister would spend the night, a Moorish palace which was said to have been placed at the disposal of Kenneth Pendar, one of Murphy's youthful 'vice consuls' there, by the widow of an American millionaire banker, the late Moses Taylor.* The villa had six master bedrooms, each with a sunken marble bath. The state department had leased it at a peppercorn rent.¹²⁰ Mrs Taylor had ruled that her suite on the ground floor was not to be used; but in this suite the Secret Service installed their president, arousing later controversy. Lord Halifax would record her dismay upon hearing that young Pendar had entertained the two leaders at her villa. 'He had opened the whole house up,' wrote the ambassador, 'and given them the best of her cellar.' She would not have minded if newspapers had not described the villa as belonging to Pendar – and if she were not violently opposed to this president.¹²¹ She threatened to sue the federal government for allowing Roosevelt to sleep in her bed.

The villa stood in an olive grove, its courtyards aflame with orange trees and shrubs. From a sixty-foot tower atop the villa Roosevelt and Churchill watched the sun setting across the Atlas mountains far away (strong and willing hands had carried the president up the winding staircase, his useless legs dangling, in Sir Charles Wilson's phrase, like those of a ventriloquist's

* Brooke's notes identify Kenneth Pendar as being an American archaeologist and 'secret agent' in North Africa prior to TORCH.¹²³ This was evidently a preferred cover for such agents – Britain's late S.O.E. chief in Crete, John Pendlebury, was also an archaeologist.

dummy).¹²² 'How can God make such a beautiful sunset and then permit so much misery and war in the world?' one of them asked. All life is war, the other responded: it brings out the best in men; there is progress only in time of war. In peace, there is only complacency. 'There is no peace on earth,' he concluded, rounding off these remarks, 'save that in death.'¹²³

The next morning (it was now January 25) Roosevelt departed; Churchill accompanied him in his limousine, clad in bathrobe and slippers, and watched as the presidential plane took off on its first leg, to Bathurst, south of Dakar. Bathurst had been a British empire possession since 1620 – and all too evidently so, because Roosevelt found the natives still running around half naked, an unedifying spectacle as he told his cabinet upon his return, via Brazil, to Washington.¹²⁴ 'I think I picked up sleeping sickness,' he wrote, with feeling, to Churchill six weeks later, 'or Gambia fever, or some kindred bug, in that hell-hole of yours called Bathurst.'¹²⁵



We all have, scattered around our globe, points of the compass to which we return throughout our lives, as though to seek our bearings after life's great storms and gain intellectual nourishment. The Atlas mountains, roseate in the setting sun, were one such station for Churchill, over which he would shortly be flying further to the east.¹²⁶ 'He had been in Marrakech about six years ago,' Brooke explained to his diary, 'and did some painting then. So on this trip he brought out his paints with the determination to go back there to paint again.' Yes, for once 'Charles Maurin' had brought paints, palette, and easel with him. 'We are here in a fairyland villa in Marrakech,' he wired to Clementine. He was going, he said, to paint a little from the roof – a view of the 'pink gateway.' 'My friend has gone,' he added, referring to Roosevelt. 'We motored here together yesterday 250 kilometres, being guarded by sentries all the way. They all admit I had not overstated the beauty of this place. I hope to be with you by week-end. Winston.'¹²⁷

He painted the mountains all afternoon, before history's implacable embrace gripped him again; the only painting he completed in this war.

AS BROOKE walked out of the Mamounia Hotel to set out on a day's partridge shooting in the Atlas Mountains, a shout stopped him; Winston had ordered him fetched over to the Taylor villa. The prime minister was lying in bed, and Brooke found it hard to keep a straight face. Mrs Moses Taylor

had elected, with all the quiet good taste for which wealthy Jewish widows are renowned, to decorate her bedroom in a Moorish style: the ceiling was an ornate fresco of green, blue, and gold-leaf; the head of the bed on which Winston lay rested in an alcove of Moorish design, with what the Chief of the Imperial General Staff decided was a religious light on each side. The bed was covered with a blue silk, trimmed with six-inch-wide lace. The rest of the room was in restrained harmony with the ceiling. The centre-piece of this Palladium of decorative extravagance was the prime minister himself, wrap'd in his 'dragon' dressing-gown of green, red, and gold; his reddish hair was tousled, his cheeks were aglow with the religious lights, and a large cigar jutted from his jaw. Brooke would have given a large sum to take a colour photograph of him at that moment.¹²⁸

'We're off at six P.M.,' Winston said. Off? 'Where are we going?' Brooke asked. Churchill shrugged, then volunteered: 'I am either going to answer Questions in the House tomorrow – or I am going to Cairo.'

Brooke did what he could to head him off. The last time they were in Cairo, he reminded the prime minister, the latter had hogged both the ambassador's study and Lady Lampson's bedroom, the only two air-conditioned rooms in the embassy. Flying to Cairo now would hardly give the Lampsons enough time to alter the rooms for him again, snatch some sleep, and motor out to the airfield to meet them. The telegram sanctioning the Cairo excursion arrived soon after, and the partridge-shoot was off.

CHURCHILL HAD told Hopkins while still at Casablanca of his secret intention to fly on from Cairo to Turkey. When he had cabled this wish to London the cabinet unanimously disapproved.¹²⁹ The public frowned on Winston's jaunts, they implied, though choosing more judicious language; moreover, he might well embarrass the Turks: 'We do not want you to court either a rebuff or a failure,' the cabinet had said. Two days later they had received another telegram from him, insisting on going ahead.¹³⁰ Still the cabinet had frowned on the idea, sensing that Stalin would strongly mistrust any move by the British and his old enemies the Turks toward the Balkans. On January 25 however the still-truculent cabinet approved the trip.¹³¹ Eden viewed it as another unwarranted intrusion into foreign affairs.¹³²

Churchill had difficulty explaining this cabinet obstructionism to Roosevelt, and he drafted an abrasive telegram to Eden about it. He did not ultimately send it off, but he told the foreign secretary of its content on his return to London. He had studied Europe for forty years, he said, and he

really must be allowed to go where he liked.¹³³ As it was, he ruminated in his response to London, until midday he had been faced with either answering Questions in the House as usual on the morrow, or meeting 'Jumbo' Wilson, the C.-in-C. Middle East, in Cairo. That evening he sent another message, with a hint of mischief about it, to London: 'We are just off over Atlas Mountains which are gleaming with their sunlit snows. You can imagine how much I wish I were going to be with you tomorrow on the Bench but duty calls.'¹³⁴ Thus he now resumed his airborne odyssey, circling to a height of 14,500 feet in a freezing Liberator, then heading through the 'pink gateway' as the sun set on the snow-capped Atlas mountains.

AFTER AN eleven-hour flight they reached Cairo at 7:30 A.M. Having already fortified himself with two whiskies-and-soda, he turned away the chaste cup of tea which Lady Lampson proffered and asked for a glass of white wine; this he knocked back in one draught and licked his lips, as Brooke looked on in wonderment.

To Brooke this visit to Cairo revived nightmare memories of its August 1942 precursor, 'with all the unpleasantness of pushing Auchinleck out.'¹³⁵ Telegrams had come from the Turkish government, professing to be delighted at Churchill's coming visit. 'This is big stuff!' he kept repeating, as he read and re-read the cables: once again, he had been right and his cabinet advisers wrong.

He took the opportunity of this visit to Cairo to grill Admiral Harwood on ways of coercing the remaining French fleet units in Alexandria harbour. Winston saw no reason why the British empire should continue to provide their rations and pay, maintaining them in shameful sloth, as Jacob put it; Harwood favoured letting sleeping dogs lie, and this was his undoing.¹³⁶ General Montgomery, who made no secret of his distaste for the Royal Navy, spoke in harsh terms about this admiral in particular, and in March 1943 Churchill ordered the dealings with the obstinate French admiral Godfroy turned over to the British minister-resident in Cairo, Casey, and Harwood relieved of his command. The admiral wrote privately a few days later, 'On both his visits to Cairo I have had to bear the full blast of the Prime Minister's venom against this Squadron.' Casey fared no better after a month or more of bluster to Godfroy; Harwood had always said that the fleet would not come over until the capture of Tunisia.¹³⁷

Cunningham wrote privately to Admiral Pound that Admiral Harwood was very upset at being relieved by Churchill, and ascribed it to having

stood up to the prime minister. 'Quite rightly in my opinion,' commented Admiral Cunningham: 'So did I, when the P.M. was here, and subsequent events have shown how right we were.' Montgomery, he learned, had furthermore complained at the admiral's slowness to reopen the port of Tripoli. 'I feel,' added Cunningham later, 'that Harwood has been very hardly dealt with.'¹³⁸ It has to be said however that Admiral Pound shared Churchill's assessment of Harwood's capabilities.

Churchill sent Harold Macmillan to tackle Admiral Godfroy. The urbane British diplomat lunched with the French admiral on March 6, and found he had met his match. 'I do not think you can bully Admiral Godfroy,' he advised London, summarising their lengthy talk. 'He is contemptuous of such methods, and especially of the Prime Minister's efforts. He is too sure of himself and too well bred to submit to being bullied by what he regards as the rather middle-class methods of a nation of shopkeepers.'

Godfroy was clearly waiting until the Germans had been ejected from Tunisia, and he would then sail the fleet to a French port.

This was the policy that Macmillan now adopted; the payments continued, and it enraged his prime minister: 'What you propose,' Churchill harrumphed in a telegram to him on April 12, 'is exactly [the] opposite of what was explained through you to Giraud in my telegram 276, which you said he entirely agreed to and was grateful for. No pay of any kind should reach the recalcitrant squadron in Alexander harbour until they definitely come over to Giraud.' Macmillan ignored this telegram, and Churchill sent another on the last day of April: 'The course you propose is exactly the opposite of what I have repeatedly prescribed. No payment should be made till they come over to HMG and declare themselves under Giraud's orders.'¹³⁹ Macmillan again ignored it.

BROOKE FLEW off on a sightseeing trip to the oasis at Siwa on January 28. Churchill decided that such a jaunt would be taking an unnecessary risk, and remained in Cairo. Hearing that General 'Hap' Arnold was in the city, he called him round for a talk on American aircraft production. He was still working on getting the Turks into the war, he said; Turkey would need enough planes for twenty-eight squadrons. Arnold warned in vain of undertaking such a fresh obligation. Churchill assured him that he would tailor his actions so as not to interfere with America's planned air operations.¹⁴⁰

Sir Alexander Cadogan arrived, flown out from London by a worried foreign office to chaperone the prime minister for his meeting with the

Turks. Churchill burst into this suave diplomat's room early on January 29 and expatiated on the coming visit, pacing up and down, and boasting of how he was going to handle the Turks. Cadogan merely grunted from time to time through face towels.¹⁴¹ Their meeting was to take place in Adana, in southern Turkey. Since the British could not wear uniforms in a neutral country, they were all issued with 'plain clothes' – Commander Thompson was handed an electric blue suit which would have shamed a spiv in London's Whitechapel-road; Brooke's trousers were too long, and hoisted up by braces to somewhere near his chin; while 'Jumbo' Wilson was issued with a suit too large for him.¹⁴² Writing up his diary of this episode, Brooke recorded the fear that they looked like a third-rate repertory company.

The rain beat down throughout the journey – they actually saw two waterspouts from the air as they flew up the coast to Turkey – and when they reached their rendezvous with the president, Ismet İnönü, at a curve in the railway track, miles from house or habitation, they found themselves surrounded by ploughed fields soaked into a morass by rains. With only two Scotland-yard detectives to protect him in this strange land, Churchill was taking a risk – in fact greater than he knew, because when Brooke asked one of the detectives why he was not occasionally patrolling outside, the officer retorted: 'Am I expected to work all night as well?'¹⁴³

The president was a white-haired, deaf old man. Churchill conducted the negotiations at first in his own French *patois* – in Ian Jacob's words he 'waded resolutely on and came out at the far end bloody but unbowed.' General Brooke's French was of a more intelligible variety. The Turks were too polite to display any emotions, let alone amusement, and when Winston at last took refuge in English their faces lit up as they realised that he would not be forcing them to join his war.¹⁴⁴ Cadogan had never seen men so resolutely disinclined to be drawn in. Churchill left empty handed.

At first he was inclined to stop here for one more night. Brooke warned of the risk to his security, as 'most of Turkey' now knew he was there, and Churchill reluctantly gave up on the Turks – though not for good.

He decided to fly to Cyprus, then changed his mind for Cairo. 'We had already got into the plane,' recorded Brooke, 'when we found the pilot thought he was still going to Cyprus.'¹⁴⁵ As the pilot walked off, Churchill called out: 'Stop – no, I shall not go to Cairo, I shall go to Cyprus after all!'

The plane decided otherwise. Taxiing around a corner, it sank up to one axle in the slime. Captain J. H. Ruggles, Churchill's pilot, later described privately how Churchill had insisted on taking the co-pilot's seat and steer-

ing the heavy aircraft; it took two and a half hours to extricate the machine.¹⁴⁶ Hours later, they were finally airborne – for Nicosia, Cyprus. Turkey succeeded in staying clear of Churchill’s morass until 1945.

Later still that day, Churchill flew on from Cyprus to Cairo. He was received with an alarming signal from ‘C’ in London: Hitler’s ambassador in Turkey had correctly reported to Berlin in code, late on the thirtieth, the location of the Adana conference, and the identities of those attending.¹⁴⁷

On February 2 he watched a newsreel of Montgomery and his troops entering Tripoli. The Axis forces were being thrown out of North Africa, but it was all taking much too long. Over dinner Churchill snarled at his dreadful son, across the lap of Cadogan who sat trapped mutely between them. The foreign office chief reflected that Randolph had been an incubus of their party ever since Casablanca. ‘Very silly of Winston to take him about,’ he inked into his diary that night, but he kept this thought to himself.¹⁴⁸



Churchill’s prolonged journeys overseas irritated the British public and alarmed and vexed King George VI. ‘Ever since he became my prime minister,’ the monarch wrote to his mother, the formidable Queen Mary,

I have studied the way in which his brain works. He tells me, more than people imagine, of his future plans & ideas & only airs them when the time is ripe to his colleagues & the chiefs of staff. But I do hope & trust he will return home at once.¹⁴⁹

There was reason for alarm. Hitler’s Intelligence services were furious that nobody had reported on Casablanca in good time. British codebreakers intercepted a flurry of indignant code messages. Berlin expressed astonishment to Himmler’s SD agent in Lisbon. A witless Tangier official apologised to the *Abwehr* in Madrid that they had heard only of ‘senior officers,’ Roosevelt being referred to as ‘Admiral,’ and Churchill as ‘Commodore.’¹⁵⁰

To some Nazis there still seemed time to act, however. On February 3 Bletchley Park intercepted a cypher message from Tangier, signed ‘Muh.’* This informed Berlin that Churchill would probably return to England via

* ‘Muh’ was well known to the British. He was ‘Muhamet’ – Hans-Peter Schulze, a 28-year-old SD (*Sicherheitsdienst*) agent disguised as a German attaché in Tangier.

Algiers and Gibraltar.¹⁵¹ 'Muh' promised to smuggle agents into Algiers and Casablanca in time. 'As it takes at least five days to get people across the frontier,' he warned, 'it appears doubtful whether Churchill can still be reached.' Attlee sent a telegram through ULTRA channels, marked 'CLEAR THE LINE,' to Churchill, stating with the nonchalance for which the English are justly famed that 'attempts are going to be made to bump you off.' The cabinet urged him to fly straight home. In further signals 'Muh' reported that he had now sent four killers into Algeria 'to take action against Churchill' and he asked for fifty machine-pistols, magnetic- and limpet-mines, skin-contact toxins, and poisons for lacing drinks.¹⁵²

The prime minister's personal weaknesses were, after all, well known.

EARLY ON February 3, 1943 he left Cairo for the western desert, flying over El Alamein, Buerat, and the other famous battlefields so recently vacated by Rommel. He landed at Castel Benito, outside Tripoli, at teatime and drove to Montgomery's headquarters. The Eighth Army was winding up for its frontal assault on Rommel's new Mareth Line. He slept that night in an oil-heated caravan, as the desert was bitterly cold at night.

On February 4, taking another of those risks which he seemed so much to relish, he drove in an armoured car with Montgomery into the centre of Tripoli, a sprawling city from which Rommel's army had been expelled only days earlier. It seemed as if the entire Eighth Army had been drawn up in formation, and unit by unit they gave the visiting prime minister three cheers as his car paused abreast of them.

This was one of those unforgettable moments. The men he saw looked bronzed and fit, their equipment was freshly oiled and spotless. These 'Desert Rats' had not even known he was in their midst. Under the eyes and ears of the newsreel cameras Montgomery greeted the prime minister with prolonged and fulsome flattery; Churchill felt bound to match it. When he saw the newsreel later, he pinked at his own verbal torrent of purple prose and directed his staff: 'Cut that scene out! It makes me almost as big a cad as Montgomery.'¹⁵³

Censoring the newsreels was one prerogative of being a warlord, but there were others too. On Tripoli's main square he took the salute as the 51st Highland Division, veterans of every major campaign since France, marched past to the skirl of bagpipes and drums. The tears streamed down his face as he stood at attention wearing the uniform of an air-force commodore. To many an onlooking British officer the sweetness of this day was

more than recompense enough for that awful hour in the White House just six months earlier, when the news had come of Tobruk's surrender.¹⁵⁴

WINSTON'S NEW code-name was MR BULLFINCH (and one may wonder what abbreviation Patton would have used for that). It was used in the telegram he had just received in Cairo from Clementine. 'The cage is swept,' she wrote, 'and garnished fresh water and hemp seed are temptingly displayed. The door is open and it is hoped that soon MR BULLFINCH will fly home.'

'Keep cage open for Saturday or Sunday,' replied Winston.

He was heading home. At five-thirty A.M. on February 5 he took off from Tripoli for Algiers, accompanied by 'Brookie.' They had made this early start because of the assassination rumours. At Algiers, Eisenhower met him, nervous at having a 'marked man' as a guest. An armoured car with oil-smearred windows drove him to Cunningham's villa, a stone's throw from Eisenhower's. Bedell Smith came to ask if Noguès and Marcel Peyrouton, whom Murphy had appointed as Governor-General of Algiers, would be welcome at lunch with them. Churchill, his eye on the hot water and the admiral's soft bed, decided to stay on and he suggested to Brooke they hang on for another day. Eisenhower, still worried, hit the roof: 'He wanted the P.M. out of town as soon as possible,' noted his aide. He told the prime minister that in London he was worth two armies to the Allies; that in Algiers he was 'a liability.' The refusal of that signed photo still rankled.

Since Hitler had spies everywhere, Eisenhower laid on an elaborate ritual of readying a B-17 bomber, to simulate Mr Churchill's departure for Gibraltar; at the Rock, Governor Mason-Macfarlane had to toil round to the airfield to meet the empty airplane to complete the deception.

Eisenhower went ahead with the luncheon for Churchill, inviting Giraud, Boisson, Noguès, Peyrouton, to join the English guests. Churchill was still under-impressed by the American. He told his Major Desmond Morton that he was upset by the situation in Algiers, and shocked by the sheer unpreparedness of the American troops. Despite having already mobilised over six million men, they still had only five divisions operational. Of the seven divisions promised for North Africa, they had so far produced only two. This was what entitled the British to such clout in the Mediterranean command structure, with General Alexander commanding on the ground, Cunningham at sea, and Tedder in the air.¹⁵⁵

Mercifully this day too ended, and Eisenhower dined with Churchill at Cunningham's villa. At eleven P.M. he escorted him to Maison Blanche air-

field and left him there. After a while revving the engines, the pilot – it was now Vanderkloot – announced a mechanical failure.

Finding his father's departure delayed, Randolph Churchill opened the aircraft trapdoor and clambered in. ('We thought we had got rid of him,' recalled Jacob, aghast, 'as he was to rejoin his unit in Algiers. However he seemed determined not to miss a minute for conversation – and a drink – and it wasn't long before the usual bickering began.' He seemed to delight in baiting his father in public.)¹⁵⁶ Toward one A.M. the pilot announced that a magneto had failed; Winston seized the opportunity to prolong his absence from London, and they all returned to the villa in Algiers – with the exception of Sir Charles Wilson, who had taken his usual knock-out draught and was allowed to snore on in the bomb bay of the parked and otherwise empty Liberator. 'It was obliging of the magneto to cut out before we started,' Churchill joked in a telegram to Eden, 'rather than later on.'¹⁵⁷

Eisenhower was not pleased to be woken with the news that Britain's prime minister was back under his roof.¹⁵⁸ At Admiral Cunningham's villa too there were indelicate comments about 'The Man Who Came to Dinner,' and strange rumours flew around. The admiral's flag secretary Shaw told Eisenhower's staff that the P.M. had been so determined to stay on that he had sent his personal detective Thompson to remove a wire from the magneto; Shaw insisted that Churchill himself had hinted at this otherwise improbable story during the day.¹⁵⁹

'Tommy' Thompson was certainly not much liked by the P.M.'s staff; while Winston and Randolph went off to play *bélique*, Rowan and Jacob held what they called an indignation meeting about him, finding it monstrous that their beloved chief should be served by 'so insignificant, so selfish, and so undignified an object.'¹⁶⁰ It was just like any other family row before an extended seaside vacation ended.

Churchill finally left for England at eleven P.M. on the sixth, flying home in his trusty Liberator AL504, 'Commando.' His mind seems to have been less on assassination than on airplane crashes – he had learned that Brigadier Vivian Dykes and three others of his staff had gone down in a Liberator just like this one on the flight back from Casablanca a few days earlier.

'It would be a pity to have to go out in the middle of such an interesting drama, without seeing the end,' he remarked to Ian Jacob as they sat face to face in the bomber's fuselage, and his valet rummaged around for the Quadrinox sleeping draught. 'But it wouldn't be a bad moment to leave. It is a straight run in now, and even the cabinet could manage it.'¹⁶¹

30: *'Use Force if Necessary'*

PRIME MINISTERS HAVE rare prerogatives – they can name the wars they fight and the code-names and words used in fighting them. Shown a list of possible names for the current global conflict, since the Great War no longer seemed appropriate for the first, in June 1944 Churchill ruled that the two global conflicts were to be known in future as the 'First' and 'Second World War.' Like a proud father naming his infant son, he inked a ring around the latter, and that is how it got its name.¹

Sometimes statesmen become hostages to their own terminology: 'Unconditional Surrender,' which sounded so magnificent when spoken, was an example. Sometimes histrionics supervened: at Casablanca, discussing the security of their sea communications, Churchill had announced to the Combined Chiefs that he wanted German submarines referred to henceforth only as 'U-boats' rather than dignified with the word 'submarines.'² 'We must call them U-boats,' demanded the P.M. 'We must distinguish between those stealthy, murderous monsters that lurk under the water to destroy our ships and our gallant merchant seamen; and those wonderful weapons of modern warfare, the submarines, which our gallant officers and heroic seamen are using to bring our enemies to their knees.'³

He suggested to Eisenhower that they use 'aircraft' instead of airplanes, 'airfields' instead of aerodromes, and 'airport' for long-distance or overseas traffic.⁴ He knew, as the writer Eliot Cohen remarked, that men are ruled by words. Thus he had renamed the Local Defence Volunteers the Home Guard; and christened the soup kitchens the British Restaurants.⁵

After the Combined Chiefs' Casablanca directive took shape, Churchill continued to fret over the loose language usages of the Americans, and he asked Hopkins to put these 'points of nomenclature' to FDR: 'Our object,' he defined, 'is "the liberation of Europe from German tyranny" –'

We *enter* the oppressed countries rather than *invade* them. The word *invasion* must be reserved for the time when we cross the German frontier. There is no need for us to make a present to Hitler of the idea that he is the defender of a Europe which we are seeking to invade. He is a tyrant and an ogre from whom we are going to free the captive nations.⁶

Commonsense applied the same insight to the selection of codenames. While crossing the Atlantic to Canada later in 1943 he would study the latest list of proposed code-names, and score through many as unsuitable. Operational codenames should neither be boastful, he explained, as in TRIUMPHANT, nor calculated to disparage, as in WOEBETIDE, MASSACRE, FLIMSY, PATHETIC, or JAUNDICE. The code-names should be neither commonplace words nor the names of ministers (one example of the latter was BRACKEN). It would hardly cheer a widow or mother to learn that her husband or son had been killed in an operation BUNNYHUG or BALLYHOO. 'Proper names,' he lectured Ismay, 'are good in this field. The heroes of antiquity, figures from Greek and Roman mythology, the constellations and stars, famous racehorses, names of British and American war heroes, could be used, provided they fall within the rules above.'⁷ Once again he had referred to 'British and American,' without reference to the empire.

CHURCHILL SAW no reason to go easy on 'the Huns.' From his codebreakers he knew all too much about the atrocities being committed in their name.

The 'German police' section at Bletchley Park had now amassed thousands of intercepts of police units on the eastern front, police headquarters in Germany, and concentration camp commandants reporting to Berlin. From them, a clear picture was emerging. Every smallest detail was reflected in these messages, including a signal to the commandant of Auschwitz, S.S. *Sturmbannführer* Rudolf Höss, in September 1942 regretting that rubber truncheons were 'unobtainable in Breslau.'⁸ On October 26 the British codebreakers observed Berlin warning the huge facility at Auschwitz, in what had been Poland, to stand by to receive two visitors from the Führer's Chancellery in Berlin – the agency supervising euthanasia and various other killing schemes – for a lengthy stay at the camp: they would be setting up an X-ray sterilisation operation, the radio signal said (this being the method chosen by the S.S. to keep the Jews from breeding).⁹

The next day the system's headquarters at Sachsenhausen reported that it was shipping to Auschwitz two hundred Soviet prisoners of war found to

have contracted tuberculosis.¹⁰ After Berlin ordered that all camp fatalities were to be reported, on December 1 Buchenwald dutifully reported, in their secret code, a total of 134 deaths from natural causes during November, including four Jews.¹¹

The typhus epidemic at Auschwitz now appeared to be under control. On December 8 Dr Eduard Wirths, chief physician in Auschwitz, reported twenty-seven male and thirty-six female typhus deaths during the previous week.¹² During early 1943 the intercepts were found to contain with greater frequency the word *Sonderbehandlung*, special-treatment – evidently a thinly veiled reference to the termination of the Nazis' enemies. In one such message on January 17, the chief of police in Kiev reported laconically, 'So far 853 screened and 614 special-treated.'¹³

A month later, after completion of the anti-partisan sweep HORNING, a report to the same police chief in Kiev listed the body count as '(a) enemy dead eighty-two, (b) suspects and special-treated 1,124.'¹⁴ Notwithstanding that these hundreds of thousands of secret code intercepts are often brutally explicit, it is worth noting, as the official historian has also pointed out, that nowhere in them is there any hint of gas chambers or gassings.¹⁵

This hard evidence of atrocities was backed by despatches of varying reliability from the Polish secret army. These suggested that the Germans had intensified their policy of extermination against the Poles and Jews: 'Over 640,000 people' had already perished at Auschwitz by the end of 1942; there were 40,000 prisoners there, and about 27,000 more in a camp at Majdanek; a series of Jewish ghettos across Poland had been wholly or partly liquidated.¹⁶

General Wladyslaw Sikorski, the prime minister of Poland in exile, pleaded with Churchill to allow the Polish squadrons of Bomber Command to bomb 'certain targets' in Poland, as a reprisal for the German atrocities.

Presiding over a chiefs of staff meeting on the last evening of 1942, Churchill read out Sikorski's letter and invited Sir Charles Portal to comment; he suggested that R.A.F. Bomber Command execute two or three heavy raids on Berlin in January 1943, dropping leaflets which would tell the people below that these raids were 'reprisals for the persecution of the Poles and Jews.'¹⁷ Sikorski's proposal came up again at Casablanca in January. The chief of air staff dismissed it as impracticable, and offered instead the notion that the participation of Polish airmen in the raids on Berlin 'might be considered partly as a reprisal.'¹⁸

The air ministry had always set its face against reprisal operations. The aftermath of Lidice was an example. The Dutch prime minister Pieter Sjoerds Gerbrandy had suggested during the summer that they threaten to bomb a German village as a reprisal, if the Germans shot a large number of Dutch hostages as they were intending to do. Portal had to point out once again how counter-productive it would be to bomb villages – and inevitably the empty fields around them – instead of factories and cities.¹⁹

THE AMERICAN heavy bomber squadrons, established at such a cost in production resources and training, were not ready even now to penetrate German air space. For months Churchill had brooded on the ineffectual nature of their contribution so far. By December 1942 nearly six months had elapsed since the first bomber unit had arrived in Britain. They had raided into France; their operations to the Biscay ports – under heavy British fighter escort – had achieved little. The British air force commanders still believed it unlikely that they they would be able to sustain operations into Germany in daylight, let alone without fighter escort, an intention which Churchill disparaged as laughable.

On December 16 he circulated a paper on the need to keep up the weight of bombing against Germany during the winter months. The increase of 'bulk deliveries' of bombs to Germany remained the top priority. He became increasingly doubtful of the American proposals for bombing Germany in heavily armed daylight squadron formations. He predicted: 'The danger of having all their ammunition teased out of them by minor attacks by enemy fighters increases with every mile of penetration.' If the American plan failed, it would be a bad shock to public opinion. Their industry was however geared to the production of daylight bombers only.²⁰

At a defence committee meeting at the end of 1942 he again disagreed with the confidence vested by the chiefs of staff in the coming American daylight attacks.²¹ On January 10 he wrote that they should on the contrary discourage the obstinate persistence of the Americans and urge them to make their bomber force capable of night bombing instead: 'What I am going to discourage actively is the sending over [to England] of large quantities of these daylight bombers and their enormous ground staffs until the matter is settled one way or the other.'²² Harris, seeing a way to increase the saturation of the enemy's night defences, backed Churchill's plan.

At Casablanca the prime minister forcefully put this proposal to Roosevelt, talking of the harrowing losses being sustained by the young

Americans.²³ General 'Hap' Arnold wrote in his diary that he dined afterwards with Ira C. Eaker, the U.S. Eighth Air Force commander whom he had flown out from England to Casablanca, and talked over what Churchill had called the 'grief of bombing,' evidently meaning this unresolved tactical dispute. Meeting Arnold later out on a walk, Churchill agreed to give Eaker a hearing.²⁴

They met at noon on January 20.²⁵ Eaker handed him a one-page document arguing that the Eighth Air Force should continue its daylight operations, however costly. Winston liked one-page documents. He read it slowly and deliberately; since his lips mouthed the words, the U.S. air force general could follow his progress down the page.²⁶ The P.M. particularly liked the young American general's words about bombing the Germans 'around the clock,' and he silently rehearsed the phrase. It was an angle he had not considered. 'You know,' he told Eaker, 'my mother was an American, and it breaks my heart to see these tragic losses you're suffering.'

The Americans were losing ten per cent, he observed, Harris currently only two. He proposed however to suggest to Roosevelt that they allow Eaker to continue daylight operations, painful though their losses were.



'Winston arrived back yesterday in terrific form,' Eden reported to Lord Halifax on February 8, 1943, reporting his chief's return from Casablanca. 'These trips appear to buoy him up tremendously, and I hope that this time there won't be the reaction that there was after the last American flight.'²⁷

If he was referring to the public irritation with such excursions, particularly in the North of the realm, Eden was not far off the mark. In Scotland the newsreel of the parade in Tripoli evoked mixed feelings. From a Glasgow cinema audience watching the newsreel of the parade there was no applause even for the skirl and circumstance of the massed Scots pipers of the Highland Division. When Churchill himself came on the screen, looking pudgy in his air commodore's uniform, just one woman clapped in the darkened cinema.²⁸ Later that year, in June, somebody decided to give his reputation a leg-up, and London blossomed with poster-billboards depicting British heroes of the past – Sir Francis Drake and William Pitt among them. Similar prints of Winston Churchill were never far away.²⁹

The prime minister's Liberator bomber had landed at Lyneham. A special train brought his party to London's Paddington station.³⁰ Meeting his

cabinet at five-thirty p.m. that day, February 7, 1943 – a meeting called although it was a Sunday – he entertained them with an account of his journeys. He told them that Roosevelt harboured the strangest ideas for France and her possessions after the war – that she should not be allowed an army, that Dakar should become an Allied base, and that the United States should hold on to her Pacific islands regardless of the undertakings that he had given to both René Pleven, French minister for the colonies, and to General Giraud to restore the integrity of the French empire.³¹

De Gaulle's behaviour was to blame for this hardening American aversion to all things French. In a message to Eden, Roosevelt expressed annoyance at the propaganda still emanating from de Gaulle's headquarters in London, calling it 'a continuing irritant.' 'He knows,' wrote Hull, 'that the prime minister would agree with him, and hopes that you can take further steps to allay the irritation.'³² Considering himself a loyal admirer of de Gaulle, King George VI was bewildered by their American allies' readiness to deal with rival French officials like Bergeret, who had been uncomfortably close to the Vichy regime. Eden of course shared that view. After reading a foreign office paper on Eisenhower's dispositions in Algiers the king decided that the whole position in North Africa was 'an enigma.'³³

Churchill felt very differently. Sitting next to Eden as they watched the latest Humphrey Bogart movie *Casablanca* – it had been released in January, the same month as his own performance in that city – Churchill fulminated in the darkness against de Gaulle, while Eden nagged him for two more hours about Turkey, and whether the journey to Adana had really been worth it. Of course it had not, but Churchill grumbled that as prime minister he could go where he liked.

Anyway, he retorted to Eden, who recorded his words from memory, if he had been killed, it would have been a good way to go; and then Eden would have come into his 'inheritance' even sooner. 'There is old Anthony,' he said he had remarked at the time, in *Casablanca*, 'thinking all I want is a joyride. He has got it all wrong.' 'But,' he told Eden now, 'I bear no rancour.' He kept his young foreign secretary up until two a.m. that night with this argument. When Eden referred to his own plans to visit Washington, Churchill implied that there was no need – that he was on better terms with Roosevelt than ever before.³⁴

Unarticulated and unidentified, there was now an awkwardness, a nameless tension between the two men. Eden was impatient to inherit; but he saw no way of accelerating the process, tiresome though Winston could be.

The next day the prime minister floored him with the casual remark that he had not yet actually mentioned to Roosevelt anything about Eden's burning desire to visit Washington.³⁵

RELATIONS WITH the French would remain a watershed issue between Eden and Churchill, and between London and Washington, until the war ended. When Churchill proposed on February 8 that he announce to the House that he had placed the Eighth Army under Eisenhower's supreme command and that they had appointed Alexander and Tedder as his deputy supreme commanders, Roosevelt sent back the smooth response that the British appointments were better kept secret: 'It is my opinion,' he reasoned, 'that co-operation by French Forces will be best if the American supreme command in North Africa is stressed.' He positively purred the concluding words, 'I am so glad you are safely back. You have accomplished marvels.'³⁶

The king was also pleased to see his first minister looking so well and cheerful, and not visibly fatigued after his long journey. After lunching with Churchill on February 9 he confided to his diary: 'He gave me a good account of the Conference, delighted with his Turkish visit & was eulogistic over the smartness of the Eighth Army. He is furious with de Gaulle over his refusal to accept F.D.R.'s invitation to meet him & Giraud. The latter made friends with F.D.R. & got on well.' The king pleaded with him not to go too hard on de Gaulle and his men. 'I told W.,' he wrote, 'I could well understand De G's attitude, & that of our own people here, who do not like the idea of making friends of those Frenchmen who have collaborated with the Germans.'³⁷

CHURCHILL CONTINUED to find serious fault with Eisenhower. The general was now estimating that General von Arnim's strength in northern Tunisia was increasing by 950 troops each day, and that out of 75,400 Axis troops on his front no fewer than 62,100 were ground combatants, while only 10,100 were in the rear; the rest were Luftwaffe personnel. Eisenhower also estimated that on the southern front Rommel had 64,000 men, of which 40,500 were combatants, 14,500 were service troops and 9,000 Luftwaffe.³⁸ Churchill disputed these figures. He challenged his chiefs of staff on February 10: 'How is it that there are seven German combatants to one non-combatant, whereas with us it is pretty well the other way round?' Referring to the intercepts, he added: 'The figures quoted about Rommel's army are very different from those which we saw in BONIFACE some weeks

ago.³⁹ Ismay replied on February 16: 'Information received from BONIFACE in the last 48 hours substantially confirms our estimate of the strength of German troops in the Mareth area' – namely 34,100 army troops and 8000 in Luftwaffe field units, which was close to the war office's own estimates.⁴⁰



By this time the prime minister was ill. Wilting at first only from a head cold, he had driven over to the House on February 11, 1943 to report on Casablanca. The next day the cold took him to bed. It rapidly became more serious, and a worried hand – not his – drew a line through all the appointments on his desk calendar.⁴¹ Summoned to Winston's 'cage' at the Annexe – to discuss whether to offer to General Auchinleck the Iraq–Iran Command – Sir Alan Brooke found him in bed running a temperature. The prime minister struggled out of bed on February 15 for lunch with a predecessor, Lord Baldwin ('I can't help liking the old miscreant,' he would tell Lord Halifax), and again for a cabinet meeting later that day, though now battling with a painfully sore throat as well.⁴² With only Clementine at his side he could feel his fever worsening by the hour the next evening; his physician diagnosed a lung inflammation and prescribed 'M&B,' a sulphonamide drug. Finally the truth could not be denied. X-ray photographs confirmed that he had contracted pneumonia, or what Dr Geoffrey Marshall, who came over from Guy's Hospital, called 'the old man's friend.' Churchill inquired how it had earned that sobriquet; in a matter-of-fact tone the doctor explained, 'because it takes them off so quietly.'⁴³

The world learned nothing of this, but for days his staff, hovering around the forlorn apartment, believed that their chief was on the brink of death.

He shared this month of physical discomfort with an illustrious, if far-away, opponent. On February 8 Mahatma Gandhi had declared a fast to the death to secure his release from imprisonment. While Churchill had been away in Cairo in August 1942, the war cabinet had ordered the Viceroy of India to imprison Gandhi and several hundred of his rebellious followers. Gandhi himself was held in conditions of some comfort in the Aga Khan's villa in Poona, and he announced his intention, repeatedly, of going on hunger strike.

Gandhi's well-publicised fast was an event for which Churchill's cabinet was therefore well prepared. He and the government of India had debated repeatedly how best to deal with it and opinion had wavered. In September

1942 they decided quite simply not to intervene.⁴⁴ The Governor of Bombay, Sir Roger Lumley, disagreed, expressing concern that there would be riots if Gandhi should die while in his custody; when the war cabinet again discussed the possibility on January 7, 1943, it now felt that if he did begin the fast he should be released from internment on compassionate grounds.⁴⁵ Prompted by Leo Amery, the viceroy objected, and the cabinet decided to allow Gandhi, if foolish enough to start, to complete his fast to death.⁴⁶

On January 29 Gandhi announced his intention of doing so. Opinion in London again wavered. Attlee hoped to deal with it behind Churchill's back on his return on Sunday, February 7, but the prime minister decided against going straight down to Chequers that day, and held his cabinet meeting. He was in a belligerent mood, and muttered loudly; he finally told Simon, Amery, and Anderson, the three of them, to draft a telegram to the viceroy. Hearing that there had been protests from the viceroy's Indian Council, he was not put out in the least: 'What if a few blackamoors resigned!' he exclaimed, according to Amery. It was time for the British to show the world that they were governing. Amery shuddered, and decided that the improvement in the fortunes of war had turned the P.M.'s head.⁴⁷

Accompanied by great and unseemly publicity, Mahatma Gandhi began his fast the very next day, on February 8. Churchill was now going down with his pneumonia, but he was resolved to outface this Asian agitator. Over the following days, as the fast ran its course, the Hindu newspapers in India fell in behind Gandhi and voiced grave concern; the Moslems treated it with more levity. Sir Roger Lumley pleaded for Gandhi's unconditional release – a display of softness which killed his chances of Churchill appointing him to succeed Lord Linlithgow as viceroy.⁴⁸ The doctors warned that Gandhi would die on or just after February 21; Lumley quoted the view of his European civil service and police officers that irreparable damage to Anglo-Indian relations would result. Churchill however remained firm.

As the days passed, it became a battle of wit and willpower. Speaking in the unnaturally weak and gentle voice characteristic of pneumonia, he dictated a message to the viceroy inquiring whether it could be verified that, as he had heard, Gandhi usually took glucose in his water when 'doing his various fasting antics.' The viceroy replied that his information was that Gandhi was absolutely refusing to do so.⁴⁹ Churchill was unmoved.

MAHATMA GANDHI'S *coup de théâtre* gave Washington an excuse to resume its interference in the affairs of British India. Once before, in 1942, Roosevelt

had told his vice-president that his great ambition was to destroy the British empire, commencing with India.⁵⁰ (It was an irony of history that Adolf Hitler, Churchill's principal enemy, had often expressed the opposite desire.*)

Roosevelt left no doubt of his hostility to any empire other than the burgeoning American one, and Churchill showed little interest in opposing him.⁵¹ Roosevelt never lost sight of his goal. Driving alone and talking politics with George Patton in January 1943, he 'discussed the P.M. to his disadvantage,' as the general privately recorded, and gloated that India was all but lost to the British.⁵² To speed that process he had sent the Hon. William Phillips to Delhi in November as his personal representative, an officer whose principal qualification appeared to be a barely concealed disdain for Churchill, and who routinely wrote his private letters on the printed letterhead of Roosevelt's new espionage service, the O.S.S.⁵³

Phillips stopped in London before proceeding to India. Both Amery and Cripps met him.⁵⁴ He also lunched at No. 10 Downing-street, sending to Washington a dispatch the next day that rather dwelt on the prime minister's 'siren zipper-suit' and boots. During the two-hour luncheon, which had begun at one-thirty, Churchill conducted his guest on a tour of every corner of his world; upon reaching India, he remarked that he was willing to grant Dominion status if the parties there should be in agreement (knowing that they were not).⁵⁵ The British, reported Phillips, were saying that if they pulled out a civil war would ensue between Hindu and Moslem.⁵⁶

This was a prediction on which Roosevelt's agent offered no opinion. Arriving in Delhi, he passed on to the viceroy a request from the president to release Gandhi; it was evidently inspired by that noisome duo, Eleanor Roosevelt and Madame Chiang Kai-shek, who was staying at the White House. Leo Amery reassured the viceroy that they were taking a robust line against American interference. 'I do hope,' he also asked Churchill, 'you will make it quite clear to the president that his people must keep off the grass.'⁵⁷ He had little cause to fear. Churchill did not like Gandhi, that was plain. His views on India, as Amery remarked in private, remained those of the army subaltern Winston Churchill at Poona in 1892.⁵⁸

* See David Irving, *Hitler's War* (London, 2001), pages 22ff, 37f, 45f, 135, 274, 299f, 309ff, 316f, 459, 846f, 873. Hitler repeatedly expressed the desire for an alliance with the empire: *ibid.*, pages 437, 444, 886.

As Gandhi seemed to near his highly publicised end, Churchill instructed Lord Halifax to educate Hull, Hopkins, and all the other meddlers in Washington that he was not about to change his mind, and that any intervention from the United States would be the cause of 'great embarrassment' between them.⁵⁹ Gandhi however did not die. Writing to the king on the day after the Indian's expected demise, Churchill referred with feeling to 'the old humbug Gandhi,' and scoffed that he was lasting so much longer than one had been assured was medically possible, that 'one wonders whether his fast is *bona fide*.'⁶⁰ Whatever the origins of this miracle, Gandhi began to gain weight; his doctor was heard on the twenty-fourth telephoning friends in Delhi that he was in no danger, and Churchill received a telegram from the viceroy to this effect.⁶¹

Churchill (quite rightly, we now know) believed that the Hindu doctors had fed glucose to the politician to sustain him during his well-feigned fast. His experts had told him, he said, first that the fourth day would be critical; then it was the seventh, and then the eleventh – and all the time Gandhi was quite clearly taking surreptitious nourishment. He told Field-Marshal Smuts that he did not think Gandhi had the slightest intention of dying yet: 'I imagine he has been eating better meals than I have for the last week. What fools we should have been,' he reflected, 'to flinch before all this bluff and sob-stuff.'⁶² Gandhi was no doubt counting, mocked Churchill, on a couple of Japanese army corps being forthcoming to enable his Congress Party to rule over the rest of India.⁶³ He urged the viceroy to use, judiciously, the weapon of ridicule in dealing with 'the old rascal' in future.⁶⁴

Of course he was relieved that Gandhi did not die, and pleased too that for once Washington had allowed things to run their course.⁶⁵ Gandhi abandoned his fast early in March and was freed soon after.

ILL THOUGH he was, Churchill's displeasure with Eisenhower deepened. A telegram came from the general explaining that they might not have cleared the Axis out of Tunisia even by May and that HUSKY – the invasion of Sicily – might have to be postponed until July.⁶⁶ From his sickbed Churchill dictated on February 13 an indignant response, calling it 'a disastrous hiatus': 'I hope that we need not take this as conveying your final decision but only as presenting many serious difficulties to be solved.' A three-month delay in launching HUSKY, he repeated, seemed 'a very serious disaster for the Allied cause.'⁶⁷ Upset, he also sent a cable to Harry Hopkins, asking him to point out to their friend, meaning Roosevelt, that the British generals felt

that they could have their side of HUSKY ready by June. 'I think it is an awful thing,' wrote the prime minister, 'that in April, May, and June not a single American or British soldier will be killing a single German or Italian soldier, while the Russians are chasing 185 divisions around.' Anticipating powerful reproaches from Stalin he reminded Hopkins, 'We should not have had any TORCH if we had yielded to the fears of the professionals.'⁶⁸

Eisenhower was faced however with the military realities. By mid-February 1943 the situation in southern Tunisia had become tense as the German forces threw violent punches at the now greatly over-extended Allied ring around them. Rommel was back in the fray, and the Americans facing him were a motley and still inexperienced force. The Germans had several companies of the new Mark VI Tiger tanks, mounting the deadly 88-millimetre guns, and they were making good use of dive bombers. The American troops evacuated Gafsa late on February 14, and there was stiff fighting around Faid. Eisenhower went forward briefly to take command.⁶⁹

As the American setbacks at Gafsa became apparent, Eisenhower was asked by his staff whether the British might not now claim the credit for throwing the Germans out of Africa. Eisenhower reassured them in terms which revealed the anti-imperialist strain of American foreign policy. President Roosevelt, he said, had talked to him quite frankly about the eventual Peace Conference. 'I will dictate the peace,' Roosevelt had said. He would prevent Tunisia from becoming a British asset. 'Perhaps,' wrote Eisenhower's naval aide, 'Lend-lease gives him [Roosevelt] a feeling [that] Uncle Sam can foreclose on its mortgage.'⁷⁰

By the seventeenth the U.S. First Armored Division had lost eighty tanks to Rommel's well-prepared surprise attack. General Sir Harold Alexander came to see Eisenhower on that day; the American made to his new deputy a somewhat inarticulate reference to Rommel's move, calling it a real 'son of a bitch.' He blamed faulty British Intelligence. It turned out that Lieutenant-General Kenneth Anderson, commanding the First Army, had attached too much credence to an ULTRA intercept supplied by his Intelligence officer, Brigadier Eric Mockler-Ferryman, which had implied that Rommel's thrust was only a diversionary move. In consequence Anderson had held back his reserves in the north, rather than sending them south to help Major-General Lloyd Fredendall's U.S. Second Corps.⁷¹

General Alexander could see that Rommel intended to 'gobble up' the Allied units one by one, while they were widely dispersed. This was classic Clausewitz. The next ULTRA intercept that Bedell Smith (and Churchill)

saw showed Rommel reporting confidently to Berlin that he proposed further such strikes 'on account of the low fighting value of the enemy.'⁷² Eisenhower winced at this slight, but it was well-deserved. Rommel went on to punch a hole through the Kasserine Pass, giving the American forces here the worst hiding that they had had so far. The word 'disaster' figured in American newspaper headlines. Eisenhower relieved General Orlando 'Pink' Ward and appointed another to command the First Armored Division.⁷³ This was no minor setback. It was one of the most resounding defeats ever inflicted on the Americans in war. 'We sent out some 120 tanks,' noted Eisenhower's aide Harry Butcher on February 23, 'and 112 didn't come back.'⁷⁴ What added insult to injury was the courteous and understanding attitude of the British generals.

In London the American disaster at Kasserine evoked naked *Schadenfreude* as well as dismay. Using the scrambler at his bedside, Churchill phoned Brooke at home about the news.⁷⁵ Late on February 22 Rommel abandoned the attack through the Kasserine Pass, adjudging that he had pushed ahead too far. The codebreakers deciphered his message to this effect.⁷⁶ 'The enemy,' Churchill informed Stalin in a confident message on the twenty-fourth, 'have shot their bolt and will now be brought into the grip of the vice.'⁷⁷

AFTER KASSERINE Churchill made little attempt to conceal his contempt for the American forces and their fighting value. He scoffed at the enormous numbers of Americans in uniform in the 'tail' for each man actually in the front line; an American division, he marvelled to his cabinet, numbered fifty thousand men. All talk of getting twenty-seven American divisions into Britain by April vanished, because thanks to Hitler's U-boats there was not enough shipping to bring them over.⁷⁸

The king was much disturbed about both the political and the military situation in North Africa. He noted in his diary, 'I am not happy about either.'⁷⁹ Churchill's illness had prevented their regular Tuesday meetings. On February 22 he wrote a long, worried letter to the sick prime minister: 'I feel the underhand dealings of Murphy with the French in North Africa, and his contacts with Vichy, have placed both America and this country in an invidious position,' he explained.* He was concerned about the setbacks at Gafsa and Kasserine, and said quite bluntly: 'It looks as if the U.S. Forces have had a sound defeat last week . . . and as if we shall have to do all the fighting there.' According to the telegrams he had seen, said the king, the situation seemed to be deteriorating, and now the Americans were propos-

ing to delay HUSKY: 'This fact,' the king added, showing a remarkable grasp of the essentials, 'will throw out all our careful calculations for convoys and escorts, and will upset our import programme again.'⁸⁰

Churchill was in no mood for such a letter. To General Brooke, visiting him on this day, he still looked ghastly, though he joked that his temperature was right down to only one hundred degrees. Brooke felt it reprehensible that he should have been bothered with such a letter while so ill.⁸¹

In his reply – parts of which Brooke advised him to tone down – the prime minister discounted the king's belief that Murphy was hand-in-glove with Vichy.⁸² He predicted, rightly, that Rommel had so denuded the Mareth Line to win his victory at Kasserine that Montgomery's two corps, the Tenth and the Thirtieth, would have an easier task. 'What a providential thing it was,' continued Churchill with a certain relish, 'that I perpetually pressed for General Eisenhower to take the command, as the defeat of the American corps, if it had been under a British general, would have given our enemies in the United States a good chance to blaspheme.'⁸³

This satisfied the king, who concluded that the Allies had no option but to use the French who were 'there,' in North Africa. 'The Americans will learn through defeat,' wrote the king, summarising Churchill's views; 'and,' he added as a neat codicil, 'the Germans will learn from the Eighth Army when they meet in Tunisia.'

AS HIS fever increased during February 1943, and the congestion in his lungs made it harder for him to speak, his memoranda became more terse. One message to General Brooke on February 17 – asking about Rommel's surprising resurgence in southern Tunisia – was less than one line long: 'Was it necessary to evacuate Gafsa?'⁸⁴ By Friday the nineteenth the illness was entering its crisis. A fever of 101 degrees was entered in the desk diary, and more people were necessarily brought into the secret.⁸⁵ Lord Moran and two nurses were constantly in attendance; while they massaged the P.M.'s head each night in oil of wintergreen, he bombarded them all with questions, which masked his real anxiety, about how sulphonamides worked.⁸⁶

* The king's forceful language about Robert Murphy suggests that the French findings that he figured on a British secret-service hit-list were not fanciful. This sentence was omitted from the text published by both Churchill, vol. iv, pages 655ff, and Sir John Wheeler-Bennett, *King George VI: His Life and Reign* (London, 1958), pages 561f.

For several days the flow of memoranda completely stopped. He asked the foreign secretary to delay his trip to Washington. As Churchill's designated successor, Eden followed the illness more closely than most.

Whitehall held its breath: pneumonia is such a wayward and arbitrary killer – so little under man's control. On Saturday night his fever worsened, but then it declined, and the crisis was past.⁸⁷ The Lord had decided not to send for him just yet.

On Sunday February 21 Averell Harriman wired the better tidings across the Atlantic to Hopkins, informing him that the P.M. was somewhat improved now. Now Winston had to be patient, while his scarred lung-tissues healed. Visiting her father that day Mary Churchill was distressed to see him slumped back in his bed, looking very old and tired.⁸⁸ He was taking no papers of state at all.⁸⁹ 'It was miserable having him ill and knowing how he hated it,' wrote one of the shorthand secretaries most attached to him. 'He was so sweet, too, any time one had to go in; [he] seemed quite glad to see one.'⁹⁰ Partially offsetting the world's prolonged uproar about Gandhi's 'near death,' the British Sunday newspapers now disclosed that their own prime minister was suffering from a touch of pneumonia. In an elderly *bon vivant* with a taste for alcohol, noted one journalist in his diary, such an illness could only be serious.⁹¹

He was not too ill to view a film, sent by Stalin, of the Stalingrad ordeal; he ordered *Desert Victory*, Britain's film of the victory at Alamein, flown out to Moscow in response. On the twenty-second Eden's staff learned that the prime minister's health was 'still stationary.'⁹² On the twenty-fourth the temperature was returning to normal. 'Had bad time,' he admitted in a cable to Hopkins, 'and might easily have been worse. Am feeling definitely better now. So,' he added cynically, 'is Gandhi' – he had taken a marked turn for the better once he saw that his antics were getting him nowhere. 'I am so glad,' added Churchill, 'that you did not get drawn in.'⁹³

Cables flew around the world to reassure Churchill's many friends. 'Winston is well on the way to recovery,' Brendan Bracken informed the financier Baruch in New York: 'He passed through a rough time but he is tough like you Bernie and I think you will both achieve centenaries.'⁹⁴

On the last day of February he picked up the 'phone and called Hopkins in person, to announce that his fever was gone. He was still feeling 'pretty rocky,' he said. He was also taking an interest in the war again, telling Hopkins that the battle in Tunisia had gone pretty well – presumably he meant, for the British – and that he expected it to go better. Hopkins gathered from

his hints that General Montgomery was intending to strike back at Rommel sooner than the Americans had anticipated.⁹⁵

On March 1 his private secretary John Martin, returning from a vacation in Scotland, found Churchill still in bed but much better.⁹⁶ Brooke, visiting at ten P.M. to discuss appointments to various commands, agreed.

It was a sign that something of the old Winston, and his obsessions, were returning that while talking of their next approaches to the Turks, he explained to Eden: 'We must start by treating them purry-purry puss-puss. Then later we shall harden.'⁹⁷ After a while Churchill was better again. His voice regained its old bark and bite, and his secretaries squealed with silent delight at the snorts of impatience and the words of scorn, coupled with what one called 'the final twinkle of forgiveness.'⁹⁸



While the U.S. bomber squadrons had yet to fly their first missions over German territory, R.A.F. Bomber Command, Churchill's main striking force, was now well prepared to batter by night at the heart of Germany. Sir Arthur Harris had gathered a force of many hundreds of heavy four-engined bombers, each capable of lifting many tons of bombs. They were since the autumn of 1942 led moreover by an elite Pathfinder force equipped with revolutionary precision radar devices like OBOE and H2S.

They had a clear purpose too: the Casablanca directive of January 21, 1943 had defined that they were to aim at the 'progressive destruction and dislocation of the German military, industrial, and economic system, and the undermining of the morale of the German people to a point where their capacity for armed resistance is fatally weakened.'

Overriding these military considerations there was also a strong political purpose in the offensive – the need to impress Stalin; for this reason Churchill insisted that Harris had to attack Berlin. During their summer conference in Moscow, Stalin had gained the impression that Churchill had promised to bomb the city in September, but he had not kept his word.⁹⁹ In fact Harris was deeply reluctant to risk his force over Berlin as yet. He once said that, like Admiral Jellicoe in the Great War, he was the only commander who could, by a false move, lose his entire force, and thus the war, in one night. Dissatisfied, Stalin repeatedly asked over the ensuing months when Berlin was going to be bombed. Churchill in turn harried Portal and Harris. But the city was a long way from British bases; for half the year, short nights

put it out of range and even then only the moonless nights were suitable. In September 1942 Portal had told the prime minister that they would need three to four hundred bombers and crews to saturate the defences, and these they would not have before January 1943. Contemplating this lack of real success at a cabinet meeting on January 4 the prime minister gave voice to his sense of frustration: he had poured Britain's industrial resources into the strategic bombing offensive, to the exclusion and almost the ruination of the other services – had he been over-optimistic in doing so?¹⁰⁰

Harris had agreed to raid Berlin, but on January 6 Winston was baffled to learn that this would employ only 150 Lancasters. Had not the air staff, arguing for delay in September, told him that three or four hundred bombers were essential to saturate the city's defences? 'I do not understand this process at all,' he had complained to Portal, and ordered him to come with Sinclair and Harris to discuss the matter at No. 10 Downing-street. At this meeting, on Friday the eighth, Harris mounted a wordy and technical defence, revolving around the mixed types available in September, compared with the all-Lancaster force now which could still carry five hundred tons to Berlin. Harris set out his plan for operation TANNENBERG, a raid on Berlin eight or nine days later. Churchill hastened to pass the news to Stalin.¹⁰¹

As the pattern of carnage was spread ever wider across Europe, not only the Germans suffered. Anxious to defeat the U-boat menace, Churchill turned his glare on the heavily bunkered submarine pens which Admiral Karl Dönitz had installed in France's Biscay ports like Lorient and Brest. Since the pens themselves were invulnerable, the admiralty wanted Harris to execute 'area bombing' raids on the surrounding towns. There would be heavy casualties among the French dockyard workers and their families, which raised serious political implications, and at an Anti U-boat Warfare meeting on December 9, 1942 Churchill said they would have to discuss these with the foreign office first.¹⁰² The foreign office gave the go-ahead. On January 11, before leaving for Casablanca, Churchill authorised the saturation bombing raids on the two French ports. He ordered the civilian population given a brief warning to get clear of the towns – a courtesy that was neither desirable nor feasible in Germany.¹⁰³

On January 14 Bomber Command began a five-week blitz on Lorient. This series of raids would absorb over half of Harris's entire effort for these weeks. Harris's operational research experts had learned from Britain's own experience in Plymouth, and his bombers attacking Lorient were loaded with both high explosives and fire bombs. Altogether 1,952 sorties were

dispatched against this target, and 1,833 tons of explosives and 2,453 tons of incendiaries cascaded onto the town; twenty-nine British bombers were lost, and five of the thirty-five American planes attacking on January 23 were also lost. By February 17 the town was devastated. The submarines continued to sally forth unscathed. The effect on U-boat sorties was barely perceptible. Admiral Pound urged that the attacks on Lorient and the other U-boat bases should go on; the air staff considered that the raids had failed.¹⁰⁴

As the Allied bomb damage to French cities grew, the Bey of Tunis appealed through the Swiss government for his city at least to be spared; he wanted it recognised as an open town, as the bombs were falling on the militarily meaningless Mohammedan areas of this ancient metropolis of Islam. The foreign office privately inquired of the chiefs of staff whether there might be any military advantage in accepting the Bey's proposal, then rejected the appeal and the bombing continued.¹⁰⁵

THE TWO January 1943 raids on Berlin had been executed while Churchill was still at Casablanca. On the twenty-seventh he had cabled to Sinclair, 'It seems to me most important to keep on at the big city whenever the weather allows, lest it be thought their feeble but vaunted reprisals have damped our ardour.' On his return he again ordered heavy raids on the German capital. On the night of March 1–2 his squadrons dropped over seven hundred tons of bombs on the city, including the new four-ton 'blockbusters.' Informing Stalin of this in a three-line telegram, he did not neglect to mention the losses, nineteen planes (with over 150 highly trained men) out of the 302 dispatched.¹⁰⁶ During this raid, Harris reported to him, the fire brigades had been overwhelmed and thirty factories damaged.

The blockbusters sucked the windows out of every building within five hundred yards, which laid their contents bare for the fire-bombs. Archie Sinclair also sent a raid assessment to the prime minister. One of the four-ton bombs had detonated in a courtyard of Hermann Göring's air ministry building, destroying two to three hundred rooms of the sprawling complex. The Fleet-street papers published a gloating account of the raid, and their boastful reports that 'ultra-heavy' bombs had been used added to the ordinary Londoners' fears that Hitler would retaliate. Sinclair and Churchill did not share those worries. The greatest damage of these raids was now caused by two factors, said Sinclair – the use of phosphorus incendiaries (which caused hideous painful burns as people tried to tear the blazing phosphorus from their skins), and the heavy bombs which blew out all win-

dows within a range of 500 yards.* Churchill noted 'good' on his copy of the minister's report.¹⁰⁷ He called for a repeat of this raid. Berlin's deathroll from this one raid topped six hundred.¹⁰⁸

LONDON'S EAST-ENDERS fully expected the Luftwaffe to return for revenge; this expectation led to a horrific incident two days later, on March 3.

The half-finished Tube station at Bethnal Green had been turned into a deep shelter in 1940 offering refuge for up to ten thousand from the Blitz. By that evening, five to six hundred were already crowding into the underground tunnels. When an Alert sounded at 8:17 P.M., the awful, chilling, unforgettable rise-and-fall wail of thousands of sirens across the entire city, hundreds more stampeded toward the entrance. As the sirens kept wailing, the neighbourhood cinema theatres halted their projectors, and staff turned their audiences out into the streets; three London Transport buses stopped at the shelter entrance to unload their frightened passengers. This was the real people's war as the Churchills and Edens never experienced it in their lives. Within ten minutes fifteen hundred shabbily dressed East-Enders had elbowed their way through the darkened narrow entrance of the shelter, its upper steps lit only dimly by one 25-watt bulb. Soon, distant gunfire could be heard; then at 8:27 P.M. a salvo of rocket missiles suddenly streaked into the sky a mile away. Somebody shouted, 'They've started dropping them.'

Urgency was replaced by panic, panic by pandemonium. At the foot of the staircase a woman carrying both a bundle and a child tripped over. Within seconds, layers of people built up across the width of the stairway, each layer trampling the one beneath. No enemy bombs fell that night, but the toll was deadly: 173 people were suffocated to death, of whom twenty-seven were men, eighty-four were women, and sixty-two children.¹⁰⁹

If Churchill had had his way, there would have been no mention of this unfortunate incident at all. The ministry of home security drafted a press release. 'A large number of people,' this stated, had been suffocated 'yester-

* The use of phosphorus bombs was illegal, and was not admitted by the Allies. See *e.g.*, the secret Press Censors' Guidance No. 816, issued on the authority of 21 Army Group by the Combined Field Press Censorship Group (Rear) at SHAEF (Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force) Headquarters on February 15, 1945. This put a STOP on 'all mention of the use of White Phosphorus Bombs as anti-personnel weapons,' explaining: 'This [use] is a contravention of the Geneva Conventions' (Hoover Libr., Daniel Lerner papers, Box 35: 'SHAEF, Other Branches'). So much for conventions.

day evening' during a serious accident. Churchill crossed out the word 'large,' and much of the rest. In a recent Boston fire, Morrison was reminded, six hundred had lost their lives (the real figure was 499), but only a 'small amount of publicity' had been given to this.¹¹⁰ As released, the ministry's brief statement now held that it was clear from 'a large number of eye witnesses' that 'there was no sign of panic.' This cover-up, the government soon learned, led to 'strong feelings' in the East End.¹¹¹

For several days ugly rumours flew – blaming alternately 'the Fascists' or 'the Jews.' A metropolitan magistrate conducted an inquiry. 'The [latter] canard had a much wider circulation,' he found, 'and was, I understand, endorsed by the broadcast utterances of a renegade traitor from Germany,' – a reference presumably to William Joyce. 'Not only is it without foundation. It is demonstrably false. The Jewish attendance at this shelter was, and is, so small as to constitute a hardly calculable percentage.'

The Home Secretary stated in the House on March 10 that the findings would be published, but he changed his mind on reading the report, with its evidence of panic. The enemy might use it 'in an attempt to show that London can no longer "take it."' Morrison rightly argued that Hitler might be tempted to start a campaign of minor nuisance raids.¹¹² The cabinet ordered the report suppressed, and the tragedy remained a wartime secret.

As these Londoners were being trampled to death in Bethnal Green on the mere rumours of bombs falling, on the night of March 3–4, Churchill's squadrons were dumping eight hundred tons of explosives and fire bombs on Hamburg. Stalin sent a telegram welcoming these raids and praised Churchill's intention to increase them during coming months.¹¹³

On the night of the fifth the R.A.F. aimed 468 tons of high explosive and 518 tons of fire bombs at a two-square-mile area of Essen, home of the Krupp armaments works, and Churchill had a telegram sent to the Kremlin accordingly.¹¹⁴

THE DOCTORS had ordered a ten-day convalescence for Winston. Averell Harriman lunched with the Churchills and Eden on March 3, before the P.M. retired to his country estate. 'The prime minister is better than I expected,' Harriman reported to Washington, 'but still obviously weak and definitely must take it easy for a period to recover fully.' They talked of de Gaulle – about what Harriman called his 'antics' and Eden, more delicately, his 'activities.' 'Clemmie,' Eden was interested to see, recording this evening in his diary, 'showed none of the reported hatred of de G.'¹¹⁵

The 'shotgun wedding' charade at Casablanca had however charged Churchill with fresh loathing for this Frenchman, and he talked openly of 'breaking' him before he broke the Atlantic alliance. In his letter of February 22 the king had expressed dismay at this continuing friction; in his response, Churchill had left little doubt as to his views on North Africa: 'The irruption of de Gaulle or his agents into this field,' he had responded, 'especially if forcibly introduced by us, would cause nothing but trouble. De Gaulle is hostile to this country, and I put far more confidence in Giraud than in him.' He had reminded the king of the insolence with which de Gaulle had rejected the invitation to come out to Casablanca and shake hands. 'He now wishes to go on a tour round his dominions,' he had then explained to the king, '*mes fiefs* as he calls them. I have vetoed this, as he would simply make mischief and spread Anglophobia wherever he went.'¹¹⁶

If Eden had hoped that Darlan's death would dispose of the problem, he was disabused by the prime minister's edginess toward him. On February 24 he flared up when the still feverish prime minister had approved a suggestion by Giraud that they appoint Pierre Flandin to the French National Council in Algiers. Flandin was a former prime minister whom both Churchill and Randolph had befriended before the war. But Flandin had damaged his good name by his support for appeasement in 1938.

'Pay no attention,' Churchill had nonetheless dictated in a message to Harold Macmillan in Algiers, 'to the newspapers' clack and chatter.'¹¹⁷

Alerted by John Martin, Eden tackled the bedridden Churchill about 'that telegram you thought of sending last night to Algiers.'

Churchill realised that Eden had arbitrarily stopped the cable: 'How dare you!' he shouted. 'By what right do you interfere with my private correspondence? I shall send what telegrams I choose.'

He growled that whenever he was away, or ill, Eden now seemed to be trying to cramp his style. He was not dead yet, he pointed out, and he would send any messages he chose.¹¹⁸

Eden flounced out, recommending to Martin that he get Lord Moran and Bracken to intervene. Relenting, Churchill asked to see him; Eden sulked, and lay doggo until late evening. He then found Winston in bed, rather more mellow about the telegram. Churchill said: 'Perhaps we had better not send it.'

Recalling this episode in his memoirs, twenty years later, Eden wrote that although there was nothing he could say that evening, the prime minister was aware of how he felt, and knew of the affection that bonded them.

As for de Gaulle, Eden continued to defend his general, but with scant assistance from the cabinet. On February 28 Churchill dictated to Eden that he wanted 'force used if necessary' to thwart de Gaulle's plans to tour his *fiefs* – Syria and North Africa. This ill-chosen Frenchman, he ruled, was Britain's 'foe.'¹¹⁹ Attempting to bring things to a head on March 2, General de Gaulle asked Charles Peake, British liaison officer on the French National Committee, point-blank to let him know within twenty-four hours whether he could start on his tour, or 'whether he was a prisoner.'¹²⁰

We shall inevitably return to him later.



As ordered, Churchill had driven down to Chequers on March 4, 1943 to convalesce after his pneumonia. Two hospital nurses accompanied him. They put him through a rigorous routine including chest exercises and little red pills, no doubt the 'M&Bs,' to be taken after dinner. It was during this stay at Chequers that he began reluctantly drafting a broadcast on his post-war plans. One of the nurses, Doris Miles, observed how he prepared his speeches; he did so in the bath – he had developed the art of turning the water taps on and off with his toes – then padded around in the nude or draped in a bath-towel, rehearsing the script out loud to Lord Moran or the Prof. They had all, nurses and cabinet ministers alike, seen it all before.

He continued to work on the script as he drove over to Dytchley Park for lunch on the seventh, taking just one shorthand-secretary. Throughout the drive, as her pencil flew across the jolting paper, his ideas tumbled forth. 'He spoke of Reconstruction,' she would recall in a private letter afterwards, 'of National Insurance; of Employment, the Export Trade, and Agriculture; he continued with Health and Education.'

It was about an hour's drive, she wrote, and all the way there the prime minister 'spouted hard and I had an awful time trying to hear everything and get it all down.' It was no joke, she added, when the car lurched round corners and her pencils fell to the floor, and his papers, matches, and spare cigar slid to the rear while his despatch box slammed shut and slid in the other direction. 'It is a bit apt to put you off your [shorthand] outlines,' she wrote, 'but I managed it all right, thank heavens.'

At Dytchley, Lady Diana Cooper, Duff's beautiful wife, threw her arms around Winston's neck and shrieked: 'Darling, how glad we are to see you.'¹²¹ 'After lunch,' wrote their millionaire host, Ronald Tree, 'there was a dis-

cussion on what should be the basis for post-war credit. The P.M. said it should be a dollar–sterling based on forty-eight commodities.' He then called for a blank postcard and deftly sketched the symbol he proposed for this new currency – it showed the pound sign cleverly piggy-backing on the dollar and wrapping its arms around it; or perhaps even engaged in an immoral act.¹²² Although he was joking, he had obviously discussed his whimsical ideas with the American president, because Roosevelt had told MacKenzie King a year earlier that he and the P.M. liked at odd intervals to talk over the future financial structure, of which admittedly neither of them knew very much. Roosevelt himself, he said, thought some standard might be fixed, which would be based on Gold but would carry a sign of the pound and of the dollar, and be known as the 'demo.'¹²³

On the twenty-first he delivered the broadcast; under pressure from Herbert Morrison he included a passage about state ownership of industries, particularly where monopolies had developed.¹²⁴ The speech did not go over well. International finance and the post-war world were not the basis for the prime minister's popularity. Perversely, Hitler was.

'I often think,' an American agent in London cynically reported, 'watching Churchill, that just as the Eighth Army owes a great deal to Rommel, so Churchill, in his present dimensions, owes a hell of a lot to Hitler.' When Churchill turned to the home front, he became a smaller figure – the politician, master of the telling phrase and the useful monetary compromise. 'You can tell by the change in his voice,' suggested the agent, '– the practised oratorical tone – when he is slipping into this role.' In this broadcast Churchill had shown himself innocent of any knowledge of economics. He had delivered a full-throated roar against Britain's declining birth-rate, but simultaneously slashed the Beveridge Plan's proposed 'family allowance' from eight shillings per child to only five. 'War' reported the agent, 'open or concealed, seems the only thing in which he is really interested.'¹²⁵

At a special war cabinet session on post-war commercial policy a few days later, Churchill apologised disarmingly that he was rusty on such matters, and declared testily that it would be better to reach agreement in bilateral conversations with the United States, and not to bring in the Dominions – 'these people,' as he disparagingly called them.¹²⁶ It was plain that anything not about the war bored him. When the highly technical discussion reached the creation of buffer stocks, he interrupted Sir William Jowitt to apologise, 'I thought you said Butter Scotch. I am getting very hard of hearing.' He hankered after the 'beautiful precision' of free trade

and the Gold standard, 'though not in this disastrous century,' he said with feeling, 'but in the last.' 'He said,' noted Hugh Dalton, 'that he had spent forty years of his life opposing imperial preference. He believed that it had done nothing but harm.' When Oliver Lyttelton remarked that Britain was now a debtor nation, Churchill roared in fury and offered the same ingenious bankrupt's defence that he had proposed several times before. 'The P.M.,' wrote Dalton, 'vehemently denied that we should owe anybody anything at the end of the war. On the contrary, we should send in a bill to the whole world for having defended them. We should begin,' he added, 'with India.'¹²⁷

The more experienced ministers found the prime minister's ignorance of economic theory or history quite painful. 'I confess,' dictated the dispirited India secretary after this cabinet meeting, 'I cannot conceive his presiding over a period of reconstruction in which economics will play a major part and which the attitude of the government here towards the empire may be vital for the whole future.'¹²⁸



By early March 1943 there were signs of decaying morale among the Axis troops in North Africa. One day early in March Churchill found in his box an intercept of a recent Hitler order, 'No. 7,' instructing officers to shoot out of hand any soldiers showing disobedience during the difficult withdrawal and evacuation movements that lay ahead:

It is wrong to wait for a later punishment by court-martial. Immediate steps must be taken. I will protect such energetic Commanders at all times from any juristical consequences of their actions. . . Those who do not act against the unruly shall receive the same punishment. . . (sgd)
ADOLF HITLER.¹²⁹

After his victory at Kasserine, Rommel had quickly pulled his strike force around preparatory to attacking the Eighth Army. Montgomery's advance guards had reached Medenine, sixty miles from the frontier of Tunisia. A week before the Germans could strike, ULTRA intercepts had already revealed his battle plan, enabling Montgomery to mass his defences at just the right point.¹³⁰ When Rommel's tanks attacked on March 6, he was ready and waiting; he had dug in five hundred anti-tank guns, four hundred tanks,

and much artillery. 'It is an absolute gift,' he wrote privately to Brooke, 'and the man must be mad.'¹³¹ Churchill phoned Eden during March 7 from Chequers. 'He didn't like First Army's retreat in North,' noted Eden, 'but had high hopes of Rommel's attack on Eighth Army, which should have begun at dawn yesterday.' Later the prime minister phoned again, to say that all Rommel's attacks had been repulsed, with the loss of thirty enemy tanks for none of Montgomery's.¹³² After fifty of his tanks had been knocked out, Rommel threw in the towel. Pleading ill health, he returned to Germany three days later. ULTRA detected that too. Rommel never returned.

Churchill decided that he could stay on at Chequers for the rest of the week. Before he returned to No. 10 on March 8, the king drove over briefly from Windsor Castle to visit him.¹³³ After practising all morning, the Coldstream Guards detachment at Chequers snapped their smartest salute as the long black limousine came through the gate; out stepped the Prof. The salute did not seem quite the same when the king himself arrived.

Stalin wrote a sharp reminder on March 16 that Churchill had expected to end the operations in Tunisia in February; the new date now was the end of April; this respite, he alleged, had enabled Hitler to pour more troops into the eastern front.¹³⁴ There was little Churchill could offer in response: the next PQ convoy had been cancelled because of the shortage of escort vessels. Using their secret ULTRA channel, Montgomery signalled him on March 21: 'PUGILIST launched successfully yesterday' – that was his assault on the Mareth Line – but it bogged down in the Axis minefields and Brooke was greeted on March 24 by the news that this attack had failed. Two days later however the Eighth Army, with heavy air support, battered through elsewhere, and forced the enemy to withdraw. On March 28 Montgomery, again using the ULTRA channel, signalled to Churchill and Brooke that after seven days of heavy fighting his troops had inflicted a 'severe defeat' on the enemy and were in possession of the whole Mareth Line. Early in April, the Eighth Army delivered a successful attack on the Gabes Gap. He again radioed his own illicit account of the operation direct to Churchill, by-passing both Alexander and Eisenhower. It took forceful arguments from Brooke to stop the prime minister issuing this 'bootlegged' information at once.¹³⁵



Eden had left for his oft-postponed trip to Washington, DC. Spending the night at Chequers on March 10, on the eve of his flight, he found Winston

looking older, and he appeared to have lost weight.¹³⁶ He told Eden that whereas he had always thought the war would last until 1944 or 1945, he did not now exclude the possibility of the Germans cracking in 1943, although he would not be prepared to bet much on it.¹³⁷

The now permanently entrenched bitterness against de Gaulle evidently germinated some ill-considered remarks by the prime minister on this occasion. Back in London later that day Eden discussed with his own private secretary his fears that the prime minister might take some 'desperate action' against de Gaulle during their absence. 'We must keep our hands off the French,' agreed Oliver Harvey, confiding in his diary. 'It would be fatal for us to touch De G or to try to remove him' – an explicit indication that Churchill had adumbrated action against de Gaulle on two distinct levels of finality. 'It would be burning Joan of Arc all over again,' the private secretary added, spelling the prospect out even more vividly.¹³⁸

WITH EDEN away in Washington, Churchill took over the foreign office. One official commented that he obviously enjoyed it; Lord Beaverbrook answered, with a trace of envy, 'You bet – he'd like to take over anything he can lay his hands on.'¹³⁹ (Beaverbrook himself was now rather out of the picture. He confessed to Sam Hoare: 'I see Churchill seldom. I say that it is Churchill's fault, but Bracken says it is my fault.'¹⁴⁰)

The prime minister's hostility toward de Gaulle continued undiminished. He ventilated it in the cabinet on March 15, predicting to his colleagues that if the general ever assumed power in France he would prove an enemy of the United Kingdom.¹⁴¹ Apart from rare meetings like this, his Downing-street agenda remained undemanding throughout early March 1943, mostly taking in one appointment a day, or two, and then only in the form of an invitation to lunch or dinner.

Generals, admirals, and air marshals again crowded the rooms at Chequers on the weekend of March 19–22. On the twentieth Nye, Pile, Mountbatten, and 'Butcher' Harris came down to see him.

Churchill still felt it necessary to placate the Church on the increasingly murderous activities of his bombers. Once, on March 24, he invited the American Archbishop Spellman, visiting London for the funeral of Cardinal Hinsley, to lunch, knowing that the Catholic dignitary was a personal friend of Roosevelt. The foreign office had strongly recommended Churchill to use flattery on the archbishop, but he tried a different trick. 'If it is not irreverent,' Churchill inquired of His Grace, knowing that he too had flown

the Atlantic, 'may I ask if you are a Short Snorter?' 'If so,' he challenged, 'show me your dollar.'

From a wallet that looked to Brendan Bracken as though it might well house the Vatican's entire financial reserves, Archbishop Spellman produced a dog-eared and heavily autographed one-dollar bill to prove that he was indeed a Short Snorter: in fact he was any length of snorter that Churchill cared to name, and lunch went well as the alcohol flowed fast and free. Churchill assured the 'lively and cheerful' archbishop that they were made for each other. Both certainly abjured the evils of abstinence that day.¹⁴²

Instructed by his experts that Britain must maintain at least the threat of bombing Rome, Churchill tackled Spellman on the subject. 'I told him,' he dictated afterwards, 'we would not bomb Rome without talking it over with the President first, but there was no reason why the enemy should be relieved of their anxiety on the point. He quite agreed.' In fact the prelate proved so amenable that Churchill found himself comparing him favourably with his British 'archiepiscopal opposite numbers.'

'But,' he reassured Eden afterwards, 'my adherence to the Protestant faith remained unshaken in spite of all this.'¹⁴³

THE LAST strains of the pneumonia had left him, conceding defeat. He was back at No. 10. He sent for Brooke – who had been laid low for ten days with influenza – and was 'very nice' to him. Two days later he was even nicer; he sent for the C.I.G.S. again, and then hopped into his bath in the Annexe so as to receive him there, wrapped in a large bath-towel like a Roman senator (or like Charles Laughton portraying one); this he immediately removed in front of the goggle-eyed general, and nonchalantly began to dress – 'A most interesting procedure,' wrote the general that night in his diary, thus recording a scene which posterity might otherwise have failed to enjoy:

First he stepped into a white silk vest, then white silk drawers, and walked up and down the room in this kit looking rather like 'Humpty Dumpty' with a large body and small thin legs. Then a white shirt which refused to join comfortably round his neck and so was left open with a bow-tie to keep it together.

While he 'rippled on' about Montgomery's great battle, the prime minister sprayed scent on a handkerchief and rubbed it on the sparse wisps of

hair, which he solemnly brushed and then sprayed again direct with scent. The ensemble was rounded off with trousers, waistcoat and coat.¹⁴⁴

Harris had again sent his heavy bombers to Berlin.¹⁴⁵ On March 28 Churchill cabled to Stalin boasting, 'Last night 395 heavy bombers flung 1,050 tons on Berlin in fifty minutes.' For once the Soviet dictator seemed appeased, and he dished out plums in reward. He revealed in his reply that he and his colleagues had just watched the British film *Desert Victory*, which

depicts magnificently how Britain is fighting and stigmatises those scoundrels (there are such people also in our country) who are asserting that Britain is not fighting at all but is merely an onlooker.¹⁴⁶

Churchill reported on March 30 again to Stalin 'last night we went back with 370 machines and threw 700 tons upon Berlin. The first reports show excellent results.'¹⁴⁷

The Bomber Command raids were getting heavier and so were the losses, but he had little alternative. On March 30 Churchill had to admit in a long and explicit telegram to Stalin that he was reluctant to send to North Russia the next planned PQ convoy or indeed any more convoys until at least September, because of the powerful German battle fleet stationed at Narvik including *Tirpitz*, *Scharnhorst*, and *Lützow*, and because of their summer commitment to operation HUSKY.¹⁴⁸

In his terse reply on April 2 Stalin called this a 'catastrophic' diminution of supplies, but on the twelfth, after not responding at all to Churchill's six following telegrams, trumpeting the latest successes in Tunisia and in the bombing war, Stalin sent a somewhat warmer response.¹⁴⁹

Casting about for new ways to enhance the bombing offensive, Churchill suggested that three hundred heavy bombers might attack Berlin with twenty 250-pound bombs, each timed to explode at random over say two days, to disrupt the entire government district: there would be, he calculated, six thousand violent explosions, at two-minute intervals.

Portal replied that desirable though this would be it took no account of the loading characteristics of the Lancaster bomber: five per cent or more of their bomb-loads were moreover already made up of long-delay fused bombs with the object of hampering the fire-fighting operations while the fires were taking hold and spreading.¹⁵⁰

The art of killing enemy human beings was becoming more sophisticated, more refined, and deadlier all the time.

Stalin was the only person who applauded; although the bombing campaign did enjoy a crude popularity at street level, few of Churchill's colleagues saw the point.

General Brooke told them that he deplored Churchill's 'infatuation' with bombing at the expense of increasing air transport capacity, for example. The other night, he revealed, the costly bombing raid against the Skoda arms factory in Czechoslovakia had obliterated one unfortunate Czech village six miles away.¹⁵¹

Rome was still embargoed from air attack. A message went to D'Arcy Osborne at the Vatican on April 6 reassuring him that while the Allies intended to maintain the threat of bombing, the state department had made plain that the United States would not want to join in such a bombardment.¹⁵² It was a restriction that irked Churchill, and in the summer of 1943, after the devastating fire raids on Hamburg which we shall witness in the next volume, the prime minister would press unsuccessfully for the bombing of Rome 'to the utmost' possible.¹⁵³

Bombing, he understood; much of the rest of cabinet government, he did not. Economics, the post-war era, the empire – all bored him.

For a while, it might seem to the reader that the memorable silvery phrase, however ephemeral, meant more to him than the substance. Shown a plan for the recapture of Burma, the American operation ANAKIM, he snarled: 'You might as well eat a porcupine one quill at a time.'

It was one of those priceless sayings that seemed worth commending to posterity. Churchill repeated it three days later to Peirse and Somerville, likening the Burma plan to 'munching a porcupine quill by quill.'¹⁵⁴

WHEN TALK turned to porcupines, he was bound to think of de Gaulle. Speaking to his junior ministers on April 6, Churchill did not mince his words about the prickly French general: 'Though he has undeniable qualities,' he said, and not for the last time, 'he is a great fool and very anti-British.' At Casablanca, he said, he could have obtained fifty-fifty for de Gaulle and Giraud: *les deux grands chefs militaires*. As it was, General Giraud, with his decorations and wound stripes, and with his story of how at age sixty-two he had slid down a rope smuggled into prison by his wife to escape, had become the hero of every American. If de Gaulle should ever come to power in France, he predicted, he would try to build up popularity by being anti-British. If he now went out to Algiers, he might fly off to Brazzaville or Syria, and would do much harm in either.¹⁵⁵

At their embassy in Grosvenor-square the Americans were building up a very ugly dossier on de Gaulle and on his brutal Intelligence organisation, run by André Dewavrin (alias 'Passy'), in Duke-street, only a few hundred yards away. The first secretary, H. Freeman ('Doc') Matthews had on March 27 secretly warned that the Gaullist movement carried in it the seeds of future difficulties. 'The reports show Passy as a budding Himmler, whose aims in the creation of an organisation subservient to an individual, rather than to the nation, may eventually achieve results similar to those in Germany.'¹⁵⁶

The embassy continued meanwhile to investigate the disturbing evidence that de Gaulle had planned several assassinations in Algiers.¹⁵⁷

The problem nearly solved itself, if messily, late in April 1943. The general was scheduled to decorate Free French sailors in Glasgow; the air ministry provided an airplane for the flight north from Hendon airport. Traveling with him in this converted Wellington bomber, No. L4237, on April 21 were his aide, Captain François Charles-Roux; the commander-in-chief of the Free French navy, Admiral Philippe Auboyneau; and four other senior aides. At 10:05 A.M. the British pilot, Flight-Lieutenant Peter Loat, taxied onto the runway. As there was a well-known obstacle at the far end, a railroad embankment, Loat, an experienced aviator, braked and revved up his engines until the tail lifted – intending to race down the runway already 'rotated' to flying position.

Unexpectedly, the elevator controls went slack: the tail dropped to the ground, and Loat aborted the take-off. After de Gaulle and his party disembarked, Loat and his maintenance flight-sergeant checked the control lines in the tail with the airport security officer: the lines had snapped, reportedly because of the use of an acid.¹⁵⁸

De Gaulle transferred to a Hudson, M7220, which he was allowed to select at random, and with the same pilot he continued north to Abbotsinch airfield at 10:20 A.M. The General's aide-de-camp, 'very white in the face,' told a British naval passenger that there had been a sabotage attempt. The experts at the Royal Aeronautical Establishment, Farnborough, confirmed it.¹⁵⁹

The general avoided flying in Britain again.¹⁶⁰

31: *The Hill of Goats*

IN HIS MEMORIAL day speech in Berlin on March 21, 1943 Hitler had revealed the current figure of the German Reich's war dead as 542,000, two hundred thousand more than November 1942. Stalingrad had cost him dear. The records show that he was giving an accurate figure, but the Russians were claiming that Germany had lost ten million men, and Churchill had boasted in May 1942, that Hitler's casualties already exceeded those of the Great War (of 2,043,000 dead).¹

In this war the value placed on human life was ever smaller. Assassination was a device to which governments increasingly resorted. Unable to destroy Rommel by fair means, both Mountbatten's Commandos and the S.O.E. sent out teams – in November 1941 and in July 1944 respectively – to get rid of him by foul. Hugh Dalton made frequent sly references to such methods in his diary; and one wonders what was his 'proposition for dealing with certain Turks,' for which he had gained the support of the commanders-in-chief in the Middle East, over which he clashed with Eden.² At least one man, an Oxford don, inadvertently saw evidence that pages blanked out of cabinet minutes early in the war related to the assassination under certain circumstances of the Duke of Windsor, the king's headstrong brother, for which act of near-regicide, so the minutes reported, the blessing of the Archbishop of Canterbury had already been sought and obtained.³

The French, as Britain's traditional enemies – and particularly Pétain, de Gaulle, Darlan, Laval, even Giraud – figured in records as the target of such murderous discussions. General Charles Huntziger, who signed the armistice with Hitler in 1940, was liquidated in November 1941. Mountbatten remarked in January 1942 that they ought to have slipped Pétain an overdose six months earlier: 'It would have been easy to put this old "gaga" out of the war,' he said, 'and the results would have been splendid.'⁴ (The

Irish Republican Army may well have reached the same conclusion, as they assassinated Mountbatten thirty-seven years later). Not for nothing was de Gaulle known in Whitehall as 'Joan of Arc'; wistful conversations at Chequers occasionally recalled the manner of her disposal by the English.⁵

No, the Allied record on political assassinations was not inspiring. Butcher's diary reveals Eisenhower and Murphy planning to liquidate members of the Axis armistice commissions in North Africa.⁶ American diplomats reported on at least one wartime 'hit' in Sweden, when the British secret service rubbed out a Norwegian girl wrongly believed to be a German informant.⁷ William Stephenson, 'agent 48,000,' the head of Churchill's secret service in North America later claimed that his agents bumped off the leading isolationist William Rhodes Davis in 1941.⁸ Be that as it may, there survives enough documentary material to indicate that Churchill was less averse to assassination than his 'secret circle' later asked people to believe. At a luncheon for American newspaper correspondents on April 24, 1942, he remarked off the record that if news came that some patriot had 'done in' Laval, he could not say that he would enjoy his dinner any less.⁹

Where others issued such orders, the prime minister seems to have turned a blind eye. Two weeks after that London luncheon, the U.S. state department learned that Stephenson's man in Bogotá had received orders to liquidate Colombia's foreign minister; this British officer had thereupon asked the amazed American ambassador for 'technical assistance' in carrying out the hit, which is how the matter came to Washington's attention. The purpose was evidently to implicate the Nazis, since the target, Dr Lopez de Mesa, was known to be pro-British. The British official blandly admitted to American colleagues that Mr Churchill was also trying to lure Colombia into the war by circulating certain forged documents.¹⁰



The British atomic-bomb project, TUBE ALLOYS, was more secret than any planned assassination, more sensitive even than the codebreaking effort. By early 1943 however it had stalled. Co-operation with the Americans had begun to dry up. The background to this is plain. Now turned over to the U.S. army, the parallel American MANHATTAN Engineering Project had made extraordinary progress toward ultimately producing atomic explosives at a number of secret sites. The MANHATTAN director, Major-General Leslie R. Groves, had erected colossal factories scattered across North America. At

the end of 1942 however the war department had learned of a memorandum which the British had signed with Molotov in Moscow on September 29, agreeing to a complete exchange between Britain and the Soviet Union of all new and unknown weapons, including any still to be discovered. This was an unhappy surprise. Stimson thought immediately of 's-1,' their atomic bomb project, and of microwave radar.¹¹ He took it up with President Roosevelt at once, who was easily persuaded that there was no alternative but to freeze the British out of MANHATTAN in consequence.¹²

For some reason, the British were never told of this background. On January 7, 1943 Dr James B. Conant, Roosevelt's scientific adviser, handed to Mr W. A. Akers, the TUBE ALLOYS representative in the United States, a memorandum restricting exchanges of atomic data. All interchange of information was to become a very one-way affair to the American advantage.¹³ The British were told of an executive (*i.e.*, presidential) ruling that there was to be no exchange of atomic weapons information unless the recipient were in a position to take advantage of it in this war.¹⁴ It was a very great shock for the British. Akers rushed a copy of the memorandum over to Sir John Anderson, the minister overseeing TUBE ALLOYS in England.¹⁵

Churchill was just departing for Casablanca. His own scientific adviser, the physicist Lord Cherwell ('the Prof.'), warned him that co-operation with the Americans was breaking down. They intended, he said, to build a full-scale plant for enriching uranium-235 based on the 'diffusion' method pioneered by the British. This made this gradual attempt to extrude the British 'the more unfair,' he wrote. It was vital for the British to stay in the atomic arms race. 'Otherwise,' the Prof. warned Churchill, 'we shall be at the mercy of any other country possessing the equipment.' He concluded: 'You may wish to take this matter up with the President, who, I am sure, does not desire to cheat us out of rights accruing from our early co-operation and [from] what virtually amounts to a partnership agreement.'¹⁶

Sir John Anderson concurred in this. There was no time to be lost. On January 11 the two men urgently recommended that the prime minister take up with the president, while at Casablanca, the restrictive new policy as applied by Groves and MANHATTAN. The American army was forbidding the release of atomic data to the British, but they apparently still expected the British to furnish data from TUBE ALLOYS where they were in the lead. This had come as a 'bombshell,' wrote Anderson, 'and is quite intolerable.'¹⁷

While at Casablanca, Churchill received a further message from Anderson. This reported that the position was now even more serious than they

had thought. His colleagues had now seen Conant's memorandum. He felt that secrecy was only a 'pretext.' The U.S. army generals, 'who are now in complete control,' were trying to steal a march on the British, 'having now benefited from the fruits of our early endeavours.' 'We hope,' the telegram from London to Casablanca continued, 'you will be able to prevail upon the president to put matters right. If not, we shall have to consider drastic changes in our programme and policy.'¹⁸

Churchill replied in an optimistic, if cautiously worded, telegram and raised the matter with the Americans at once.¹⁹ He received no response. His secretary Martin then handed a brief note to Harry Hopkins reminding him.²⁰ It seems however that Churchill's 'gunpowder' here at Casablanca had been momentarily dampened by the spat over de Gaulle – by his inability to 'produce the bride.' Accordingly he raised the ticklish atomic matter not with Roosevelt himself, but with Hopkins; Hopkins assured him that all would be put right as soon as the president returned to Washington.²¹

Over the next weeks and months the British wrote a series of notes on TUBE ALLOYS to their American counterparts, some of almost painful brevity; to which their allies, being now in total possession of Britain's atomic secrets, replied either with like economy of words or not at all.

It is fortunate that this entire exchange took place under the wraps of heightened secrecy, because these exchanges on TUBE ALLOYS brought Anglo-American relations to their lowest ebb since Pearl Harbor. The 'secrets' treaty with Moscow had inflicted nothing but harm. Lord Cherwell wrote to the prime minister on January 20 urging a halt to all further technical and scientific exchange with the Russians. He was more than a little uneasy: 'According to the Treaty, this should have been reciprocal,' he pointed out. 'Apparently we are getting absolutely nothing in return.'²²

Churchill jogged Hopkins's memory a few weeks later about their conversation at Casablanca on 'that very secret matter' called TUBE ALLOYS: Hopkins had, he recalled, assured him that the flow of information would resume as soon as the president returned home. 'At present,' chided the prime minister, 'the American war department is asking us to keep them informed of our experiments while refusing altogether any information about theirs.'²³ Hopkins responded, 'In a casual inquiry here I find that our people feel that there has been no breach of agreement.'²⁴ It was a reply that was nonchalant to the point of studied impertinence. Churchill dictated – but then did not send off – a memo in response, making clear: 'We

do not wish to allege breach of agreement. Until recently,' he added, 'we were too mixed up together in this for any agreement to be necessary. And that is the state of affairs I should like to see restored.'²⁵ He ultimately sent instead a very full history of Britain's originating role in the project: for example, he had allowed American scientists to attend all the secret meetings of the MAUD committee in April and July 1941, where they had been given complete reviews of all the British progress on the atomic project.*

London's high-level dismay about Washington's tactics deepened during March 1943. During this phase, the messages on the British file betray by their deletions and edits the anguish that was felt. Churchill brooded for days over a fresh message to Hopkins, hinting that Britain was about to go it alone: '*I must shortly commit myself to full scale action,*' he dictated on March 18, '*towards which we have made some progress in the last three months.*' This looked like bluff, and the words indicated were scratched out before the draft was retyped and despatched ('in a locked box') to Washington. The weeks were passing, he added, and the exchange of atomic information had come to a halt.²⁶ Hopkins again fobbed him off, sending a telegram reading: 'I . . . will let you know as soon as I know something definite.'²⁷ These were patent delaying tactics, and it was most unsatisfactory.

The dossier began to reek of recrimination and mutual distrust. Roosevelt passed it to Dr Vannevar Bush, director of his Office of Scientific Research and Development.²⁸ Dr James Conant updated Bush the next day on the logic behind their attempts to exclude the British from MANHATTAN. 'From the point of view of the security of the United States,' he wrote, 'knowledge of the design, construction, and operation of these plants is a military secret which is in a totally different class from anything the world has ever seen.' As for Britain's expertise, he disputed that they needed it from now on. 'There is little to be gained by our bringing British scientists . . . into the work.'²⁹ This high-handed argument missed the point of entering into an alliance, of course. On the last day of March 1943, Bush recommended to Hopkins that they continue to stall the British. He added the insidious suggestion that what really lay behind London's frustration were commercial interests, anxious to exploit the manufacturing processes after the war.³⁰

Thus advised, Roosevelt and Hopkins stonewalled the exasperated British inquiries. Churchill cabled to Hopkins on April 1, again expressing concern. 'That we should each work separately would be a sombre deci-

* See page 315 (and chapter 16, *passim*).

sion,' he said. There was no response.³¹ Three days later, Churchill sent a letter, marking it that it was to be opened by Lord Cherwell personally, stating that he wanted to see him and have explained to him 'all about element Forty-Nine' (the element now known as plutonium).³²

REPORTS HAD come in since July 1942 of similar German research efforts. London was aware that the Germans needed a large quantity of 'heavy water' – deuterium oxide – to use as the moderator in an atomic pile (the British and Americans had correctly calculated that they could use graphite instead). British Intelligence had identified Germany's sole source of heavy water as the Norsk Hydro hydroelectric plant at Vemork, near Rjukan, in southern Norway. The war cabinet ordered a Commando attack on the plant. The job was eventually given to the S.O.E., which parachuted an advance party of four Norwegians into the mountains twenty miles away.

On November 15 the Norwegian manager of the plant, who had been smuggled out of Norway to London, reported that only attacking the 'High Concentration' plant at Vemork would do the requisite damage.

Four days later, Combined Operations despatched a raiding party of Commandos in two aircraft, each towing a glider laden with airborne troops.

The result was tragedy: one of the aircraft and both gliders crashed while still a hundred miles short of the dropping zone; the survivors were hunted down. On November 21 British codebreakers heard the message: 'Seventeen saboteurs were dropped in the neighbourhood of Stavanger; three were recaptured by Norwegian police.' Police and Gestapo units were now combing the area. 'All battalions are to keep watch.'³³ In line with Hitler's Commando Order the survivors were all executed by firing squad.

On February 16–17, 1943 a small S.O.E. party was dropped, of six men. They landed on the frozen surface of Bjarnesfjord, rendezvoused with the earlier advance party, and carried out a textbook sabotage attack on Norsk Hydro eleven days later which demolished the high concentration plant.

It was March 10 before the message reached London reporting that the operation had been carried out 'with 100 per cent success.'

The operation had destroyed four months' supply of heavy water, and it might take eight to twelve months to resume production.³⁴ Knowing what was at stake, as he reviewed the S.O.E. report on this attack, Churchill minuted on April 14, 'What rewards are to be given to these heroic men?'³⁵

NOTHING WAS told to the Americans about these operations, since the co-operation had broken down. Unaware of the S.O.E. success the Americans began pressing for a bombing attack on Norsk Hydro.³⁶ The chief of air staff replied that the S.O.E. had destroyed the plant, 'which they now consider to be ineffective for at least two years.'³⁷ It was uncertain whether this remained true. Only a few weeks later, on August 20, one of the British scientists reported that Germany had received two tons of heavy water, and that Vemork had been repaired and production restarted. Moreover, if the German scientists hit upon the same technology as Imperial Chemical Industries (I.C.I.), they could increase monthly production of heavy water from 150 kilograms to about a ton with comparatively little effort.

Leif Tronstad, the S.O.E. captain involved in the sabotage attack, opposed any bombing raid because of the destruction; besides, the Allies would need the plant after the war.³⁸

The R.A.F. rejected the idea of bombing from low level; the S.O.E. said they could not do further effective damage by sabotage; so in October 1943 the war cabinet asked the Americans to lay on a high-level attack.³⁹ General Ira C. Eaker (commander of the U.S. Eighth Air Force in England) agreed to tackle the plant when weather was unsuitable for raids on Germany.⁴⁰

ASTONISHINGLY, A complete report appeared in *The New York Times* on April 4, 1943 under the headline 'NAZI HEAVY WATER LOOMS AS WEAPON. SUPER EXPLOSIVE INDICATED.' This spoke of Allied anxieties that the Nazis had managed to harness atomic energy for war. Heavy water, the newspaper continued, could be 'used in the manufacture of terrifically high explosives.'

Dr Bush sent the clipping to Hopkins to show 'what can happen when control is loose and security insufficient.' This newspaper account gave sufficient basis, he argued, to restrict knowledge only to those who really needed it.⁴¹ (It is worth commenting that Dr Bush sent both his letter and the clipping to Hopkins by ordinary mail.)

Having received no response at all to his message of April 1, the prime minister wrote to Hopkins again on the ninth: 'I am troubled,' he said, 'at not receiving any answer to my telegram.'⁴² Hopkins's reply now was evidently uncompromising, because Churchill answered: 'I cannot help being much disappointed by your telegram.'⁴³ In Washington, Hopkins offered to Lord Halifax the bland observation that each side had a tendency to hold information back from the other. He suggested that their two leaders,

Roosevelt and Churchill, would have to agree first to carry over any war-time exchange of knowledge on TUBE ALLOYS into the post-war period.⁴⁴

Britain now prepared to go it alone. From Lord Cherwell, Churchill obtained a five-page outline of the atomic bomb project. Using simple terms the Prof. explained the difference between uranium-235 and the alternative explosive, what is now called plutonium; he estimated that the atomic bomb's uranium core, less than six inches across, would pack an explosive punch equivalent to ten to forty thousand tons of TNT. The British diffusion process for enriching uranium-235 was more likely to work than the electromagnetic process favoured by the Americans, he added; the American plant, with all its imponderables, was not likely to be running before the end of 1944. As for the likelihood that Hitler's scientists might get the bomb first, the S.O.E. had destroyed their only heavy-water plant in Norway, and the Germans in consequence probably had only one and a half tons, less than they needed.⁴⁵ Churchill couriered this blueprint for nuclear war over to Eden and Anderson. He inked on the outside of the heavily sealed envelope: 'We must have a talk about this during the next week.'

It was all very worrying. 'I have read your notes,' he wrote to the Prof., 'and now understand the broad outline of the story.' He would arrange, he said, for them both to meet with Eden and Anderson. 'Meanwhile,' he continued, 'I should like you to talk to C.A.S. [Portal] and ascertain from him whether there is the slightest chance of the Germans having erected a large scale plant.' Air Intelligence would surely be able to detect any such very large installation. While he was about it, Cherwell should also consult 'C,' the head of the secret service.⁴⁶

The Anglo-American grand alliance counted therefore for naught where atomic weapons were concerned. It was a sorry pass, inspired by greed and nurtured, one must suspect, by the flair for intrigue of Hopkins. It brought about the ultimate parting of the two countries' nuclear ways.

In mid-April 1943, Churchill met at No. 10 with the ministers involved, then formally directed Anderson to explore how much time, money, and manpower would be involved in Britain pressing ahead with 'TUBE ALLOY projects Nos. 1 and 2,' the uranium and plutonium bomb production, herself, and 'at full speed.' Lord Cherwell told him that if Britain were to go it alone, it would be six or nine months before she could begin the actual construction of a bomb. Churchill did not want such a weapon to be in American hands alone. 'In my view,' he wrote on April 15, 1943, 'we cannot afford to wait.'⁴⁷

March and April 1943 had seen R.A.F. saturation attacks on the Ruhr cities and Nuremberg. Hitler wanted retaliation, but his bomber force was extended and far away, fighting conventional battles on the eastern front and in the Mediterranean. For retaliation, he would bring in new 'secret weapons.' British Intelligence became aware, through ULTRA intercepts and the overheard conversations of prisoners, that he was preparing some kind of long-range missile attack. But what kind of missile? On April 15 'Pug' Ismay brought these reports to Churchill's attention: 'The fact that five reports have been received since the end of 1942,' he commented, 'indicates a foundation in fact, even if details are inaccurate.' The chiefs of staff suggested that Winston appoint his son-in-law Duncan Sandys, now a joint parliamentary secretary at the Ministry of Supply, to investigate in secret. 'So proceed,' agreed Churchill, writing on Ismay's minute.⁴⁸ On April 22, the prime minister asked the Prof. how real the secret-weapon threat was.⁴⁹

He did not dismiss the new threat lightly. Satisfying the greedy gods of war, military technology was making rapid strides. A few days later he set eyes for the first time on a jet-propelled plane being test-flown at Hatfield aerodrome – an aircraft, Brooke noted, 'without propellers, driven by air sucked up in front and squirted out behind!' It was, so the general heard, likely to become 'the fighter of the future.'⁵⁰

Ably assisted by the air ministry's chief expert on scientific Intelligence, the young Dr Reginald V. Jones whom Churchill recalled as having distinguished himself by his work on the German blind-bombing beams in 1940, Duncan Sandys surveyed all the evidence, including the intercepts from the 'most secret sources.' Jones told him that one report, written by a German traitor of proven value and forwarded from Oslo in November 1939, had given the first warning of such rocket experiments. Later months had brought word of rocket trials near Swinemünde on the Baltic. As recently as March 1943 the former Afrika Korps commander General von Thoma, captured at Alamein, had been overheard making sarcastic comment that the London he had seen did not yet seem to have suffered from the rockets which he himself had witnessed being tested at Kummersdorf, the missile testing range near Berlin.

The ULTRA evidence on missiles pointed elsewhere – to Peenemünde, a remote former seaside resort on a sandy Baltic peninsula. R.A.F. photo interpreters pulled out the old covers of the region: one air photo revealed

factory buildings being erected at Peenemünde in May 1942, and an elliptical earthwork at the peninsula's northern tip of almost pre-Columbian dimensions. New photographs taken in March 1943 showed land-reclamation work on the foreshore. Sandys called for large-scale photographic cover to be flown in April; these new pictures revealed a strange aircraft on Peenemünde's Luftwaffe airfield – an airplane without a tail.

Other intelligence sources linked all this Peenemünde activity to a site hundreds of miles away at Watten, not far from the Channel coast of northern France. In May photographs over Watten showed major excavations beginning. On May 14 a further photographic reconnaissance flight took in the Peenemünde area, and three days later Sandys circulated to the war cabinet a summary of the evidence which he had seen so far. The enemy weapon, he had decided, was a rocket with a range of 150 miles and a warhead of ten tons. He asked for detailed high- and low-level photographic cover of Peenemünde, since the evidence of the ULTRAS and other radio intercepts was that the site was engaged in rocket development of some kind.⁵¹ In another report, later in May, he described the evidence as still inconclusive, but he was continuing his investigation. Churchill ordered a copy of the report sent to 'Bomber' Harris.⁵²

Rocket missile or tailless aircraft? Lord Cherwell, for whatever reason, disagreed with Sandys. Big rail-served sites were seen under construction in northern France during the summer at Martinvast, Valognes, Yvrench/Conteville, Domleger, Sottevast and – early in September – at Mimoyecques. That month, one of the tailless planes was seen standing on a launching rail at Peenemünde. Reconnaissance planes detected a rash of the 'Yvrench/Bois Carré' type of sites breaking out all over northern France, in an arc between Dieppe and Abbeville, centred roughly on London, and in the Cherbourg peninsula.⁵³



Most of the early evidence on the secret weapons came from signals Intelligence. The radar units tracking the test launchings of one weapon reported to Luftwaffe headquarters in code. Rocket tests were mentioned in other signals. None of these sources could be compromised, and for this reason the Americans were deliberately deceived. The secret Intelligence was sometimes used in unusual ways. The CHAFFINCH key used by Rommel's army in Africa, broken since August 1942, provided details of the make-up

and importance of each ship's cargo. As the fighting in Tunisia approached its end, the Allies were able to order ships known to be carrying foodstuffs to be spared from attack – otherwise they could not have fed all the prisoners taken in this fresh Axis débâcle.⁵⁴

By the end of 1942 feelings were running high among British codebreakers about the meagre contribution made by the Americans to the breaking of the newest high-grade cyphers like TUNNY and the manual German military and Luftwaffe cyphers. All practical research work was being done in Britain, where skilled manpower was scarce.

Bletchley Park felt strongly that the Americans would do better to shut down their own 'unpractical' training and ship their manpower over to Britain.⁵⁵ The situation at the end of 1942 was that Bletchley Park was regularly exchanging its Japanese diplomatic traffic (PURPLE) with the war department in Washington, and London was also supplying copies of the Japanese military attaché traffic. From Washington, Stephenson's agents (Nos. '48,946' and '48,947') were providing hard copies of Japanese messages which Bletchley Park also decoded.⁵⁶

With the German intercepts however the British had so far maintained a very different policy. Until the spring of 1943 there was no formal sharing of ULTRAS with Washington. Early that year, the Americans formally complained, and not for the first time, that their British cousins were holding out on them. In a secret letter to Ambassador Winant, preparing the ground for a visit to Britain by the American codebreaking expert, Colonel Alfred McCormack, the state department complained about the reluctance of the British to exchange 'MAGIC-type' information – the reference was of course to the ULTRAS.

'A feeling has grown up in certain circles,' the state department wrote, 'that while there is full interchange on our side, certain information has not been forthcoming from the British side.'⁵⁷

McCormack, William F. Friedman, and Telford Taylor, representing the US Army Intelligence 'Special Branch,' visited London in April 1943 and demanded access to both the military ULTRA products of Bletchley Park and the diplomatic decrypts obtained by its out-station at Berkeley-street in London. Bletchley Park strongly opposed releasing the ULTRAS.⁵⁸ In May 1943 however a formal agreement was signed with the United States, agreeing to share the ULTRA secret.⁵⁹ It was also decided to concentrate the Japanese codebreaking resources in Britain and India on their army-air cyphers, especially one known as '3366.'⁶⁰

The British now had another major secret up their sleeve, the progress they had made with FISH – the Nazis' secret code radio-teleprinter, the *Geheimschreiber*. In conjunction with Post Office scientists, the wizards at Bletchley Park had built a machine affectionately known as 'Heath-Robinson,' through which an endless loop of punched-paper 'key-tape' was run at high speed until it found a match with the cypher intercept. At the end of April 1943 the cypher used for the FISH link between Berlin and Field-Marshal Albert Kesselring's Army Group South was solved by Bletchley Park. From the end of May onwards Bletchley Park were able to read all the FISH traffic between Berlin and Kesselring's headquarters near Rome. It was a more valuable breakthrough than usual, as Kesselring was regularly informed of all top-level decisions, including those affecting other theatres.⁶¹

Thus from the very first few days this yielded full details of Hitler's coming operation CITADEL, his offensive at Kursk on the eastern front. By July 1943 the German army already had six FISH links, by the autumn ten, and from early 1944 no fewer than twenty-six. They carried the highest grade traffic, between Hitler and his commanders; with the help of COLOSSUS, Churchill often received the signals at the same times as they did. At no time did the enemy suspect that he was listening in to these highly sensitive transmissions.



He engaged in more conventional planning on HUSKY after a long weekend at Chequers, inviting the C.I.G.S. to an informal, even intimate, dinner at No. 10 on Monday March 29. They dined on plover's eggs, followed by chicken broth, chicken pie, chocolate soufflé, and a bottle of champagne, which the two convalescent old gentlemen – Brooke had also been ill recently – chased down with port and brandy. The prime minister expressed renewed disappointment with Eisenhower. Eisenhower, he felt, was committing too much force to HUSKY, and they could surely be invading southern Italy and even Greece at the same time as Sicily.⁶² From the overheard conversations of Rommel's generals in British captivity he knew that they feared this most – that once the Allies dominated the Mediterranean they could readily 'knock out' Italy, then conquer Europe from Italy and Greece.⁶³

Anglo-American strategic agreement was already wanting in the Mediterranean, and this showed itself in minor ways. Dining with the war cabinet at No. 10 Downing-street on March 31, the king obtained their approval

for him to visit the Allied armies in North Africa.⁶⁴ He had sent a message direct to Montgomery concerning this proposed visit. Eisenhower expressed dissatisfaction to Macmillan with this by-passing of his own headquarters. Eisenhower insisted on proper protocols being followed. When Churchill found that General Alexander had ceased sending him messages – he was still receiving messages direct from Montgomery – he suspected the supreme commander of interfering with his new deputy's direct radio link to him, and he sent an angry message round to the C.I.G.S., Brooke.

EDEN WAS back from his talks in Washington. He telephoned Chequers from Hendon airfield on April 4, and the prime minister insisted that he come straight down. Eden reported that President Roosevelt had seemed to like his ideas on World Government and on an international police force; summoned to Chequers the next day, Ambassador Winant cabled to Roosevelt afterwards that the overall British concept fell 'ninety-five per cent' within that of Roosevelt, and he noticed that both Churchill and Eden seemed to warm to the American idea of a General Assembly. Churchill had mentioned, said the ambassador, that he would invite Harry Hopkins and General Marshall over for another visit to London soon.



Churchill had not spoken to his junior ministers for some time. He did so at length on April 6, telling them of his confidence about the battle in Tunisia, despite Hitler's 'usual obstinacy' in pouring in more men and materials. He knew, he said, without elaborating on how, that Hitler was playing for time. 'We have reason to know,' he added, 'that he hopes we shall not start any new large land operations till July 1.'

He boasted that he was flirting simultaneously with Moscow and Washington. His relations with Roosevelt were intimate, while the Kremlin was more unpredictable, save for one thing: 'Stalin,' he revealed, 'always telegraphs congratulations whenever we raid Berlin.' Concluding his speech, Churchill admitted that the American build-up of forces in Britain and North Africa had been slower than planned. There should have been thirty divisions in Britain by now; in fact they had one, plus seven or eight in North Africa. 'This is due to the U-boats,' he explained.⁶⁵

Still focusing his mind on operations even beyond Sicily, on April 5 Churchill wrote to ask Roosevelt precisely that question: 'Where do we go

from HUSKY?' The Americans were still shaken by Kasserine, and unwilling to think that far ahead. On the seventh, Eisenhower sent a telegram to Washington expressing pessimism about HUSKY if the actual invasion area on the island contained substantial numbers of well-armed German troops. The British chiefs of staff disagreed, but from April 7 to 9 there was a further setback to American self-confidence in Tunisia as Major-General Charles S. Ryder's 34th American infantry division faltered seriously in its attack toward Kairouan. Coming under heavy artillery and rifle fire, the still green U.S. infantrymen dug in and refused to leave their foxholes.

The Americans tried to blame the British corps commander, General Sir John Crocker. Coming so soon after Kasserine, the incidents further weakened Eisenhower's position. General Alexander stated that he would use only the 1st and 9th Divisions in the final operations into the tip of Tunisia, and he ordered the American 1st armored and 34th infantry divisions to the rear, since they were not up to this difficult task.⁶⁶ With his flair for expressing himself, George Patton described Eisenhower's morale as being as low as 'whaletracks on the bottom of the sea.'

At ten A.M. on April 15, Colonel John Bevan, chief of the suitably anonymous 'London Controlling Section' which handled strategic deception, was brought down into Churchill's bedroom in the Annexe. With the backing of the chiefs of staff, he had a macabre plan to propose, code-named MINCEMEAT, to mislead the Germans on HUSKY. It had been born of the Catalina aircraft accident late in September 1942.* The plan was to float a corpse ashore in Spain, dressed in British uniform, carrying fake documents indicating that the next operation would be an invasion of Sardinia or Greece. The coroner, Mr Bentley Purchase, had provided a suitable 'stiff' to the secret service, and since April 3 it had been dressed in Royal Marines undergarments and gaiters. Bevan handed to Churchill the details on a sheet of paper. He afterwards hand-wrote this account:

To my surprise I was ushered into his bedroom in the annex where I found him in bed smoking a cigar. He was surrounded with papers and black and red cabinet boxes. After explaining the scheme, in which he took much interest, I pointed out that there was of course a chance that the plan might miscarry and that we would be found out. Furthermore that the body might never get washed up or that if it did, the Spaniards

* Pages 567–8. Spain was known to have passed to Berlin papers salvaged from this crash.

might hand it over to the local British authority without having taken the crucial papers. 'In that case,' the P.M. said, 'we shall have to get the body back and give it another swim.'

There were other risks. The Spaniards might detect that the dead man – a Welsh vagrant, Glyndwr Michael – had in fact taken his own life by swallowing a phosphorus weed-killer. The forensic pathologist Sir Bernard Spilsbury thought this unlikely, explained Bevan; this poison was difficult to detect. Churchill gave the go-ahead, provided Eisenhower agreed.⁶⁷

He did, and on the seventeenth, the body was removed from its deep freeze, dressed, and its pockets filled with carefully crafted items that established beyond any doubt the new identity of Major William Martin, a courier, who had just become engaged to 'Pam' and, as the letters showed, had a bothersome bank overdraft.

Into a black case chained courier-fashion to his neck were placed three fake letters addressed to generals Eisenhower and Alexander and Admiral Cunningham; one referred jokingly to 'bringing back some sardines.' Packed in dry ice to expel the oxygen, in a specially built steel tube, this dead and unwitting warrior sailed for Spanish shores aboard the submarine *HMS Seraph* (Lieutenant N.L.A. Jewell) on April 19.⁶⁷

Late that same day, the land attack on Tunis was due to begin. After tea on April 17 Churchill had received a telegram from General Marshall suggesting they might commence *HUSKY* even before Tunis was cleared. He liked the idea, and 'phoned the C.I.G.S.

Brooke choked with rage, but the prime minister said the idea had 'high strategic conception,' as he put it. For half an hour Brooke used some pretty frank language to put the idea out of Winston's mind.⁶⁸ There were other, lesser command problems on the British side, mostly betraying inter-service rivalry. Admiral Cunningham complained privately about General Montgomery in a letter to the First Sea Lord written at the end of the month, calling him 'a bit of a nuisance.' 'He seemed to think that all he has to do is to say what is to be done and everyone will dance to the tune of his piping. [General] Alexander appears quite unable to keep him in order.'

He added that Air Chief Marshal Tedder was, like him, opposed to the new plan for *HUSKY*. In fact Cunningham prophesied that they would not have cleared Tunisia before the end of May. The fighting was heavy, and the enemy were contesting every yard. There were no signs that the Axis were pulling out, 'rather the contrary.'⁶⁹

Churchill had grand plans, romantic and probably wholly unworkable, for the future of Central and Eastern Europe. The problem was getting the Czechs, the Poles, and the Russians to agree among each other, let alone with him. President Beneš caused the fewest problems. They had been in cahoots at the time of Munich in 1938, and often lunched together now. The Poles were more distant. When Beneš lunched at Chequers on April 4, Churchill again revealed his obsession with uprooting what he called 'Prussianism' and destroying the 'German general staff' (to historians of the Second World War, both must seem nebulous concepts indeed). 'Germany must not be left with one single aircraft or warship,' he said.

He set out plans to dismember Germany, and he spoke of making Vienna the capital of a Central European federation. The prime minister told a delighted Beneš that he was wholly in favour of population-transfers as the best way of solving the minorities problems in Central Europe.*

At the time of Munich, continued Churchill nostalgically, he had tried to rouse people in London and Paris out of their lethargy. 'He wanted to send us a telegram,' noted Beneš, meaning after the talks which Churchill had with Georges Mandel and Paul Reynaud in Paris on September 23, 1938; the telegram would have urged the Czechs to fight. 'But,' Beneš told his private secretary afterwards, 'he [Churchill] ultimately changed his mind because he did not want to accept such a personal responsibility.'⁷⁰

Speaking to Beneš on this occasion he voiced sharp criticism of the exile Polish government, whereas in a private conversation with their prime minister, General Wladyslaw Sikorski, as recently as the end of August 1942, at a time when the Soviet Union was in military difficulties, he had promised to support the Polish frontier claims at the Peace Conference at the end of the war. He now told Beneš that he wanted the Poles to accede to Stalin's demands on their eastern frontier, in which case he, Churchill, would be willing to transfer the German provinces of East Prussia and Upper Silesia 'and maybe even more' to Poland.

To Churchill it all seemed simple – effectively pushing Poland from east to west a bit, at Germany's expense – but the proud and stubborn General Sikorski was refusing to agree.

* Hitler also favoured population-transfer: it remained until at least July 1942 his own preferred solution to Europe's Jewish problem.

Sikorski worried both the British and the Americans by his *folies de grandeur*. He saw himself as the leader of all continental Europe.⁷¹ He had already trodden on British toes on a number of sensitive issues; intercepted Jewish Agency messages revealed for example that in a message to the ‘new Zionist organisation’ he supported a Jewish state in Palestine.⁷²

This was not the British government’s position. In 1943 Eden told the Americans that Sikorski had wanted to name a newly acquired destroyer *Lvov*, which would have been a blatant provocation for Moscow; he was prevailed on to call it *Gdansk* instead. During his recent visit to Washington, Eden had warned against their Polish allies, stating: ‘Poland has very large ambitions after the war.’⁷³

As relations between the Russians and the Czechs warmed, those with the exiled Poles had gradually congealed. It became plain that if the Red Army occupied Poland’s eastern territories, Stalin intended permanently annexing them, with or without Allied agreement. Much Cyrillic writing to this effect was on the wall: on January 16, 1943 the Russians had arbitrarily declared that all inhabitants of these territories were to become Soviet citizens. Heeding Eden’s warning, on April 12 Roosevelt wrote to Sikorski asking to be kept informed on the frontier question, and pleading with him to prevent ‘any rupture of Polish relations with the Soviet Union.’⁷⁴

MORE IMMEDIATELY disturbing was the fate of 180,000 Polish prisoners taken by the Russians in September 1939. These included fifteen thousand Polish officers, who had been taken from their prison camps at Kozielsk, Starobielsk, and Ostashkov in early April 1940 and not seen since. Among them were many of General Sikorski’s former personal staff officers and relatives of his present ones. The railroad wagons on which they left had returned empty, with markings scribbled on them in Polish – one said they had been unloaded at a small station near Smolensk, another warned urgently: ‘Don’t believe that we are going home!’

Nothing more was heard of these missing legions, the elite of the pre-war Polish army. Half of Poland’s officer corps, the cream of her leadership, had vanished seemingly without trace. After Hitler’s attack in June 1941 converted the Soviet Union from Britain’s foe to friend, in October 1941 Sikorski’s government began pressing Moscow to release the missing officers. The Russians provided many excuses why they could not do so – all different, and most beggaring belief. ‘This confusion,’ said Sir Owen O’Malley, British ambassador to Sikorski’s government, later, ‘cannot easily be under-

stood except on the assumption that the Russian government had something to hide.'

Rumours reached the German occupation forces during the winter of 1942–3 about what had happened to the 15,000 officers, and where. On March 29, 1943 the ground had thawed sufficiently for them to uncover mass graves which local villagers had identified to them at one such location called 'The Hill of Goats,' at Katyn, in a forest near that railroad station in Smolensk.

For days the Germans exhumed hundreds of bodies. They were of Polish officers, many with their hands tied behind their backs with barbed wire; they were stacked in several layers, trampled flat, face down, sardine-fashion. Some corpses, like that of a Major Adam Solski, had unposted letters in their pockets, or notebooks and diaries; all the entries ended in the second or third week of April 1940, when this region was still in Russian hands. By the end of April 1943, seven such graves had already been opened, yielding 982 corpses. Each had been shot with a single bullet in the back of the head, the traditional N.K.V.D. mode of execution. When this holocaust was finished, the murderers had planted little conifers to cover the traces.

The total at Katyn alone would eventually rise to 4,500. Seen in retrospect, it was not a large figure in the age of Auschwitz and of R.A.F. saturation bombing raids – the raid on Wuppertal one month later would kill as many innocents in one hour. But news of the find, expertly released by Dr Goebbels, created uproar among exile Polish government circles in London.⁷⁵ Sikorski called a Polish cabinet meeting at eleven A.M. on April 15: the reports coming out of Berlin were compelling, and cited names of former army colleagues known to have been among the missing fifteen thousand.

Churchill was in a most unenviable position. He had to put the Grand Alliance, of which he was the architect, above all else. He invited the deeply worried Polish leaders round to lunch with him at No. 10 Downing-street. Sikorski arrived at one-thirty P.M. with his foreign minister, Count Edward Raczyński. They sat down at the polished dining table between the white-painted wooden balks of timber in the reinforced servants' quarters.

To Raczyński, the prime minister seemed bowed and his face was puffy. Speaking in his own brand of French – as Sikorski spoke no English – and sometimes allowing Raczyński to interpret his words into Polish, Churchill urged the Poles to see reason. He offered to mediate with Moscow, but simultaneously warned against any provocation of the Russians. 'Alas,' he told Sikorski, 'the German revelations are probably true. I know what the

Bolsheviks are able to do, and how cruel they are.' With inevitable cynicism he suggested that the Soviet ruthlessness was actually a source of strength when turned against their common enemy, the Germans. He hoped however that the Poles would recognise that, in politics, one often could not press delicate matters too far, for the sake of the common cause.

'If they are dead,' he cruelly advised Sikorski, 'nothing you can do will bring them back.'⁷⁶

The Polish prime minister disregarded his warning, and it is difficult not to sympathise with him. He issued a public protest about the Katyn massacres the next day, April 16. In a statement drafted by his defence minister General Marian Kukiel, he unambiguously implied, as had Dr Goebbels, that the murderers were Russian; and he called upon the International Red Cross to mount a formal investigation. Sikorski privately admitted to one diplomat that during his talks with Stalin in Moscow in December 1941 he had gained the impression from the dictator's 'marked evasiveness' that he knew full well that something terrible had befallen those Polish officers.⁷⁷

Dr Goebbels at once joined Nazi Germany to Sikorski's appeal for an International Red Cross investigation, and the fat was in the fire. On April 21 Stalin sent identical complaints to Roosevelt and Churchill about this Polish 'campaign of calumny.' This was routine Kremlin language, but what followed was not: Stalin alleged that there was evidently collusion between Sikorski and Hitler.⁷⁸ Ambassador Maisky delivered this ill-tempered message to Churchill on the evening of April 23. The prime minister telephoned Eden about it the next morning. Eden reacted more strongly than Churchill had: Churchill now admitted that he had felt that during their interview with Maisky, Brendan Bracken had harried the Soviet ambassador adequately enough. Playing for time, Churchill informed Stalin that he would find out how Sikorski reacted to these charges, and telegraph him. 'His position,' he explained in this first message, 'is one of great difficulty. Far from being pro-German or in league with them, he is in danger of being overthrown by Poles who consider he has not stood up sufficiently for his people against the Soviets.' Perhaps significantly, in the light of tragic later events, Churchill added this further admonition: 'If he should go, we should only get somebody worse.'⁷⁹

'Go?' Somebody had to talk some sense into the Polish prime minister before it came to that. Churchill told the foreign secretary to do it at once: Eden invited 'Moley' – Sir Orme Sargent – to luncheon first, to discuss their 'plan of campaign' in advance.⁸⁰ Sikorski arrived at the F.O. at four

p.m., and Eden informed him that Stalin was threatening to break off relations with the Polish government in London if Sikorski did not at once personally and publicly deny the Nazi allegations about the massacre.

Whatever his private feelings, Eden had no compunction in taking Stalin's side in this discussion, impressing upon the Poles strongly that they also had to withdraw their demand for a Red Cross investigation 'under Nazi auspices.'

While going some way toward agreeing to 'soft pedal' the affair, Sikorski refused this, the main demand.⁸¹ The voices of his dead comrades were calling to him from beyond their graves. Eden picked up the phone and reported his failure to Churchill. The prime minister said he would therefore try to persuade Stalin not to break with the Sikorski Poles.⁸²

He did so in an impassioned message to Moscow. 'We shall certainly oppose rigorously any "investigation" by the International Red Cross or any other body in any territory under German authority.' As the prime minister put it, 'Such investigation would be a fraud and its conclusions reached by terrorism.' He hoped that the Russians would reconsider their threat to 'interrupt' relations with the Poles.⁸³ Churchill further reported to Stalin:

Mr Eden saw General Sikorski yesterday evening. Sikorski stated that so far from synchronising his appeal to the Red Cross with that of the Germans, his government took the initiative without knowing what line the Germans would take. In fact the Germans acted after hearing the Polish broadcast announcement. . . . Sikorski emphasised that previously he had several times raised this question of the missing officers with the Soviet government, and once with you personally. . . . As a result of Eden's strong representations, Sikorski has undertaken not to press request for [a] Red Cross investigation and will so inform the Red Cross authorities in Berne.

This was not true, but Mr Churchill continued:

He will also restrain the Polish press from polemics. In this connection I am examining the possibility of silencing those Polish papers in this country which attack the Soviet government and at the same time attack Sikorski for trying to work with the Soviet government.

In view of Sikorski's undertaking, I would now urge you to abandon idea of any interruption of relations.

Such a break would, he suggested, only bring comfort to their enemies.⁸⁴ Stalin was not appeased. He had the British and their Poles on the run. He had been waiting for just such an opportunity as this. He informed Churchill on April 25 that ‘public opinion’ in the Soviet Union was outraged by the Polish government, and he could not avoid breaking off relations with them.⁸⁵

BRITISH OFFICIALS at every level were already quite aware of the Soviet guilt for the Katyn massacres. The British ambassador in Moscow cabled to Lord Halifax in Washington that the Soviet break with the Poles was clearly an attempt to cover their own guilt in connection with the massacres.⁸⁶ The foreign office vented its impotent fury on the weaker party, General Sikorski. Eden telephoned Brendan Bracken on Tuesday April 27 and said he was for ‘beating up’ the Poles. Bracken’s advice was that they should play it down.⁸⁷ The Poles did little to assist; it was after all their comrades lying in those mass graves. Churchill told his cabinet about the growing crisis. The cabinet decided that the BBC and the press would have to be brought into line.

The fundamental error was the belief that anything that London could do at this late stage would change the Kremlin’s intentions over Poland.

At 5:45 P.M. on April 27 Sikorski and Raczynski brought round to No. 10 a communiqué which they had spent all day drafting. It seemed to Churchill like a ‘declaration of mortal war.’ He at once notified Eden. Arguing that there was no use ‘prowling morbidly around the three-year-old graves of Smolensk,’ Winston redrafted the document during the night; he directed Eden to force the Poles to swallow this new line. They must set aside forever the issue of Katyn, and look ahead instead to a resumption of Polish-Soviet co-operation in the war against Germany. ‘If you can get the Poles to adopt this line,’ he indicated to Eden next morning, ‘it is important that it should come from them and not seem to be inspired by us.’⁸⁸

Eden confronted Sikorski and Raczynski with the Churchill draft the next day, April 28; the foreign secretary explained that if they would issue ‘something along these lines’ it would put his prime minister in a better position to make a personal approach to Stalin.⁸⁹ The two Poles refused to play along. At three o’clock that day Churchill had them brought into the cabinet room. He sat there, flanked by Cadogan and Eden, and faced them without speaking. After a few moments, Sikorski broke the silence. Churchill responded with a string of reproaches to the ungrateful Poles about their disgraceful lack of tact. He demanded that they issue the unctuous ‘Polish’ communiqué which he had drafted, and not their own version. Whether or

not with Sikorski's consent, the Churchill draft was issued over his signature that night.⁹⁰ He cabled to Roosevelt afterwards, 'You will see that we have persuaded them to shift the argument from the dead to the living and from the past to the future.'⁹¹ He never saw General Sikorski alive again.

Later that afternoon, Thursday April 28, Churchill dictated a draft telegram to Marshal Stalin. When Eden came round at four P.M., he expressed the view that it was too soft on the Russians and came down too hard on the Poles.⁹² The draft was shelved for a day or two.

SMALL WONDER that the prime minister, anxious to put these warring Poles and French behind him, now suddenly announced that he was going to leave for Washington. Given the uncertainties between the Allies over the next operations after HUSKY, Churchill decided that he must confer with Roosevelt again. Besides, there were other burning issues including India, the Far East, and now inevitably TUBE ALLOYS too. It was relatively short notice, and of course Roosevelt had not invited him. On April 29 Winston therefore sent a telegram to Roosevelt, effectively inviting himself to Washington less than two weeks hence.⁹³ He would leave for the United States on Sunday night, May 2, 1943. Among his large retinue, he would take with him one Czech, the president Dr Beneš; but he would not take one Pole, an omission which the Poles interpreted as a deliberate snub.⁹⁴ The announcement of this new trip evoked murmurs of protest in cabinet, but nobody except Brendan Bracken dared oppose him out loud. 'P.M. blithely rode down all opposition,' observed Cadogan, having made no protest himself.⁹⁵

During Winston's remaining days in London, the Soviet clamour against General Sikorski became vitriolic, and spilled over from the *Soviet War News* into the liberal and left-wing British press. The popular cartoonist Low was able to publish a cruel caricature showing a Polish machine-gunner turning his weapon against the Allied side. For a few days, Churchill did put up a more valiant protest than did Eden; he called in the Soviet ambassador, in Cadogan's presence, and verbally kicked him all around the room. He reminded Maisky that if Sikorski's government was 'émigré' in character, this was not unconnected with the joint occupation of his country by Hitler and Stalin in 1939. It was window-dressing; a war of words, no more. Power was what mattered now, not prose. Maisky referred in an aside to Poland as a country of twenty millions, adjacent to one of two hundred millions.⁹⁶

Still failing to appreciate what lay behind the Soviet moves, on Friday April 30 Churchill composed a warmer message to Stalin, assuring him

that he had instructed the exiled Poles not to make ‘charges of an insulting character’ against the Soviet government. ‘So far this business has been Goebbels’s triumph,’ he dictated, which cannot have helped. The final text drew stern attention to Dr Goebbels’s claim that Moscow intended to set up a puppet government on Polish soil; Churchill warned that Britain would never recognise such a government (he did, in 1945). The Poles, he promised, now earnestly desired to work loyally with the Soviets again and Britain, for her part, would ensure ‘proper discipline’ in the Polish press on her soil. Much of this would have sounded more convincing coming from the Poles themselves, rather than from their host government. Matters ‘to our joint detriment,’ Churchill assured the Soviet dictator, must and ‘will be stopped.’

A further letter was drafted to Stalin on this last day of April 1943. Its two harshly worded opening paragraphs were drafted for Winston by the foreign office: they tackled head-on the thorny questions of the surviving Polish soldiers and next-of-kin still held in Russian territory. By Saturday, May 1, Churchill had second thoughts about the opening paragraphs and told Eden so. Cadogan came round at eleven-thirty that morning, bringing further amendments to the cigar-smoking P.M.’s bedside which their man in Moscow had suggested. The foreign office stuck to its guns. Those questions could not be ducked; Roosevelt had not hesitated to raise them. It went off as drafted and Winant repeated the text to Roosevelt.⁹⁷

General Sikorski meanwhile refused to refashion his London cabinet as Moscow was demanding. Nor would he withdraw his appeal to the International Red Cross in Geneva to investigate the graves. In a broadcast on May 4, he solemnly told his listeners: ‘There are limits to servility beyond which no Polish citizen will step.’

Throughout the next weeks the row festered. After Churchill left London to visit Roosevelt, General Sikorski and his ambassador Count Edward Raczyński would revert to their recalcitrant line, and they issued unhelpful statements to the press.⁹⁸ From Washington, Churchill sent Eden a telegram proposing that they ‘beat up Sikorski,’ as Eden summarised it, for provoking Stalin.⁹⁹ There it was again: the language in these private exchanges was becoming similar to the language that some are found to have used about the late Admiral Darlan, and others about de Gaulle.

The underlying ethical issues were not addressed, in public anyway. On the phone to Eden, Cadogan argued that the Soviet government had always made a habit of butchering its own citizens on a grand scale. It was all very

nasty, Cadogan however admitted to his diary, asking the obvious, if rhetorical, question: 'How can we discuss with Russians [the] execution of German "war criminals," when we have condoned this?'¹⁰⁰

CHURCHILL'S LATER account of the Katyn massacre did no credit to his reputation as an historian. By that time there remained little doubt about the truth of the affair, yet in his memoirs he quoted extensively from the 1944 Russian inquiry into the atrocity, which surprised nobody by concluding that the Nazis had committed the crime.¹⁰¹ Some of the same men in fact signed the 1945 Soviet report on the Nazi crimes at Auschwitz.

On May 24, 1943 Sir Owen O'Malley, Britain's ambassador to the Sikorski government, would report secretly to Eden on the Katyn massacre, leaving no doubt that the Russians were the murderers, and insisting that His Majesty's Government were in a far better position than the public, press, or Parliament to form an opinion as to 'what actually happened.' The public knew that they were being duped, he said, and worse: 'We have been obliged to . . . restrain the Poles from putting their case clearly before the public [and] to discourage any attempt by the public and the press to probe the ugly story to the bottom.' Not mincing his language, O'Malley charged: 'We have in fact perforce used the good name of England like the murderers used the little conifers to cover up a massacre.'¹⁰²

Katyn remained an embarrassment to Churchill. On August 13 he urged Roosevelt to read O'Malley's letter, commenting that it would repay the trouble. '[It] is a grim, well-written story,' was his cynical comment; then the author in Winston added, 'but perhaps a little too well-written.'¹⁰³

Disregarding the evidence, Eden's foreign office, and that of his successors, allowed Stalin's Big Lie to prevail. In 1952 an American congressional committee concluded unanimously that the N.K.V.D. committed the murders. The British authorities still refused to accept it. In 1976, when Poles in West London unveiled a Katyn monument with the accusing year '1940' engraved on it, the Labour government boycotted the ceremony and threatened to court-martial any serving officers who attended.

As late as 1988 the foreign office minister Lord Glenarthur still insisted that there was no conclusive evidence of responsibility. The United States feels differently; on the Baltimore waterfront there is now a monument to the 'twenty thousand' Poles murdered at Katyn. Only the figures are now disputed. In March 1990 Soviet historian Natalya Lebedeva, writing in the *Moscow News*, named the Soviet officials and seventeen N.K.V.D. officers

responsible for the murder at Katyn of 15,131 Polish officers. A few days later, on April 13, in its dying weeks in office, the Soviet government made a formal death-bed confession, putting the blame for the massacre on Lavrenti Beria, Stalin's secret police chief, and Vsevolod Merkulov, head of his security organisation, the M.G.B.



One other matter occupied Churchill before his departure for spring-time Washington. For some months he had worried over whom to send out to India to replace Lord Linlithgow as viceroy, who had officiated in Delhi since 1936. That he procrastinated was a product of his general uneasiness about India – his refusal to face up to Britain's shrinking future in the sub-continent, and his reluctance to become involved in what was clearly going to be a most distasteful affair. The most obvious contenders were in his view either too old, left-wing, tired, petit-bourgeois, or otherwise unacceptable. He flatly and frequently rejected Sam Hoare as an 'appeaser.'

Eden asked Lord Halifax diffidently if he would consider going back to India, if Winston so desired (he had previously served in Delhi as Lord Irwin); Halifax left him in no doubt that he would not accept the post so long as Churchill was prime minister. 'Our approach to the problem was too different,' was how Lord Halifax summarised his position in his diary.¹⁰⁴ Several other names were mooted, including those of Sir John Anderson and Anthony Eden.¹⁰⁵

Anderson however was most effectively running Britain's domestic affairs and the TUBE ALLOYS project, while Churchill ran the war; and Eden was reluctant, recognising that to accept India would kill his hopes of ever succeeding Churchill – and that might be at any minute – as prime minister.

Two or three weeks after Eden's return from Washington, on April 20, Churchill raised the matter with him, in a roundabout way; they both conceded that it would be 'very difficult' for Eden to go out to India, given Winston's fragile health. Churchill accordingly suggested to Amery, the India Secretary, that sacrificing Eden to Delhi would be a great loss for London.¹⁰⁶ When Churchill wrote to the king urging Eden's appointment the king also expressed misgivings; Eden was Winston's right-hand man, with a formidable reputation on the stage of international politics.¹⁰⁷

Eden came round to see the prime minister about some telegram, after dinner on the twenty-first, and Churchill began – around midnight – to

take quite a different line once again: he now waxed enthusiastic about Eden as viceroy, and argued that it would be a calamity if Britain were to win the war and to lose India; and that Eden was the only really intimate friend among his colleagues and that he would hate to lose him: but that he was convinced that Eden might be their last hope of saving India. He cunningly hinted that from the viceroy's palace Eden could also direct the war in the Far East.

To this prospect Churchill added the suggestion that they might send his old friend 'Max' Beaverbrook to Washington, bringing Lord Halifax home, with Lord Salisbury to succeed Eden at the F.O.¹⁰⁸ 'In short,' commented Eden cynically in his diary, 'Winston's imagination has clearly caught fire, encouraged no doubt by the difficulty of finding anybody else & by the fun of reconstructing his Govt., which he proceeded to do straight away!'

Even so, for a while Eden himself wavered. He was both flattered and tempted. He was losing his appetite for foreign affairs. 'I don't want to have to resign again,' he told his secretary; but his own staff warned that the posting would take him away from England for two years or more.¹⁰⁹

The idea was put into cold storage, as the Polish crisis boiled over.

AFTER DINNER on Easter Sunday, April 25, the king's secretary Sir Alex Hardinge telephoned Eden, saying that His Majesty also did not like the idea of Eden as Viceroy of India in wartime. Hardinge added that the king would probably oppose any hurried decision; more importantly he confirmed Eden's suspicion that once he was out in India he could no longer be regarded as Winston's successor. When Hardinge insisted that Eden's place was in London, where he could 'have some influence on Winston,' Eden grumbled that Churchill was increasingly taking over the reins at the foreign office, as witness his leading role in the current Polish-Soviet impasse, and that he was far from sure how much real influence he could exert on the prime minister. 'It might well be,' he stated, giving voice to his previously unspoken fears, 'that Winston, even unconsciously, now favours my going to India in order to give him a freer hand at home.' The king's secretary agreed, and concluded that it would after all be better if Eden did not go out to India.¹¹⁰

Churchill had hoped that Eden would make up his mind about India before he left for Washington. On May 3 he invited Eden to see him at five P.M., after the cabinet, and told him that if he was keen on going to Delhi, then he would persuade the king; otherwise he would look elsewhere.¹¹¹

Churchill showed him the exchange of letters with the king, which impressed Eden however that he ought not to go.¹¹² Eden reassured his worried staff afterwards to that effect.¹¹³

‘Poor Anthony,’ recorded the India Secretary, Leo Amery, beset for months by this problem of the succession, ‘is very much torn between real keenness to go and what he feels his duty here.’¹¹⁴

ON MAY 18, 1943 somebody suggested to Winston the name of Mountbatten, and there the matter rested for the time being.¹¹⁵ The problem plagued him for months. Arriving in Washington, he told Lord Halifax he would not hear of Sam Hoare, partly for political reasons; Roger Lumley had spoiled his chances by wanting to let Gandhi out of prison, and so it went on.¹¹⁶

After his return from the United States, Churchill had another long talk alone with Eden, far into the night, pleading with him to accept the appointment, as only he could redeem the situation; if he were Eden’s age, he urged, he would go himself. On the following day he resumed the contest, arguing now for either Lyttelton or Eden to accept the posting. Churchill however was forced to agree that it would be a misfortune to take any important piece out of the war cabinet machine now that it was working so well. He sent for Lyttelton and asked him if he would accept; Lyttelton responded, ‘I will do whatever I am told.’ ‘That’ sighed Churchill, ‘is exactly what Anthony says – making it quite plain at the same time that he has no intention of going.’¹¹⁷

In June 1943 he finally hit on Field-Marshal Wavell. It seemed, in retrospect, an obvious choice and it would prove to be widely popular. The choice struck only Lord Halifax as an odd appointment, but Roosevelt was pleased by it.¹¹⁸ Churchill invited the taciturn, one-eyed field-marshal to dine with him on the fourteenth, and he formally offered him the post.¹¹⁹

Eden was both relieved and disappointed. He found in his box a letter from Winston about the appointment, on which the prime minister had marked a note that Eden himself must read it. Eden now said to Bracken on the phone that if Winston really wanted him to go out to India, he was ready, and that he had several times told him so. Bracken replied it was really out of the question. ‘There is Parliament, the Tory party, and a peace to make.’

It was too late anyway. After dinner Churchill phoned Eden and announced, in top form, that Field-Marshal Wavell had accepted. ‘Winston,’ recorded Eden, ‘seemed very pleased & asked me to lunch tomorrow.’¹²⁰

Over that lunch, Churchill said to Beatrice Eden with a chuckle that she would never get her elephant ride now.¹²¹

Everybody was relieved that the field marshal had accepted. The prime minister announced it to the war cabinet the next day; Auchinleck, an Indian Army officer, would become Commander-in-Chief, India. Churchill capped this happy conclusion to his weeks of agonising with the less fortunate proposal, later in June, that they substantially reduce the size of the Indian Army. Amery was appalled. 'Winston,' he objected in his diary, 'has a curious hatred of India and everything concerned with it, and is convinced that the Indian Army is only waiting to shoot us in the back.'¹²²

HAVING SO recently recovered from pneumonia, it was out of the question for Churchill to fly to the United States, at a necessarily high altitude, in a *Liberator*; icing problems would prevent the lower-altitude *Clippers* from using the northern route until the end of May.

Lord Leathers, minister of transport, offered to carry Churchill and his staff aboard the fast transatlantic liner *Queen Mary*. Her next crossing was due to begin in a few days' time. The great ocean liner was now a troopship; she had been stripped down to the barest essentials. On each eastbound trip she carried fourteen thousand American troops, sleeping eight men to a cabin in three shifts, with thirty thousand eggs cooking in her galleys for each breakfast; her great speed gave her considerable protection against U-boat attack, particularly when zigzagging. Churchill was assured that *Queen Mary* could withstand half a dozen torpedoes without sinking (but then *Bismarck's* luckless crew had been told much the same). Nevertheless he asked for a machine gun to be mounted in his lifeboat, resolving, perhaps quaintly, to sell what was left of his life dearly if captured.

Off the coast of Spain near Huelva, the once-mortal known as Major William Martin was prepared for his 'swim.' Early on April 30, 1943, his remains were removed from the MINCEMEAT container ('the body was very high,' the submarine commander stated in his report).¹²³ Opening the shroud revealed a heavily tanned face, unexpectedly covered with mould from the eyes downwards. The thousands of Poles even now being exhumed at Katyn can not have presented a less nightmarish picture. It was a war in which the value placed on life and human dignity was ever smaller. At four-thirty A.M., the corpse was lowered into the sea, and an empty aircraft dinghy tossed in after him. The submarine turned round, and used the backwash from its screws to start the dead 'major' drifting towards Spain.

32: 'Is that you, Winston?'

THUS MR CHURCHILL sallied forth from Downing-street on yet another transatlantic adventure on May 4, 1943. 'Left the Annexe at midnight to join the train,' wrote Elizabeth Layton, his shorthand secretary seeing things still with a girlish eye. 'Terrific security. . . Gourock at four P.M. Went aboard a little tug where all the red tabs and gold braid in creation were congregated – just over 100 in the party – and were taken out to the *Queen Mary*.' The tugboat crew were astonished to see Britain's best-known faces parading aboard; but their knowledge availed them little, as they were taken further up the Clyde and moored in mid-river until word arrived that the Churchill party had safely reached the New World.¹

There were in fact 158 in the party, including the chiefs of staff and the Lords Moran, Leathers, and Beaverbrook – Winston was still thinking of putting Max into Washington and sending Halifax back to India as viceroy.²

He had left Anthony Eden in London. Hearing that General Sikorski and his Polish ministers were once again raising Cain about Katyn, Churchill wired a harsh directive back to the foreign secretary from *Queen Mary*, as the first comforting American warships and destroyers hove into view and swarmed around her. 'Sikorski,' he dictated, 'should be made to feel that he and his associates put themselves hopelessly in the wrong when they launch public attacks against Russia. It is a small part of the punishment for their folly that they should not be allowed to reply to Russian rejoinders.' He now felt, he said, that they should not be 'too tender' with Sikorski and his people. They should keep him 'at arm's length' until he came into line.³

On this westbound trip *Queen Mary* had effectively been returning to New York 'empty.' She carried below decks a cargo of five thousand German prisoners, unaware of the identity of their illustrious fellow-passenger. The prisoners shared their quarters with rats and other vermin which

had escaped from a previous cargo of kit-bags stored in Suez; Churchill's quarters, the main deck, had been disinfested with 'Zyklon,' a cyanide pesticide, but those travelling below were less fortunate.⁴ *Queen Mary* herself had maintained radio silence. There was some concern lest the German ambassador in Dublin – through a quirk of history, still accredited to the Court of St. James – learnt of his journey, but Churchill's Intelligence services were confident of intercepting any 'sink them' message that he sent.⁵

The war situation now was more favourable. The Atlantic U-boat war was being won, thanks to the operation of hunter-killer groups on the American side, but more particularly to the introduction of centimetric radar – based on the cavity magnetron, yet another product of British genius. Relying on a different version of the radar, Sir Arthur Harris's bomber squadrons were pulverising Hitler's industrial cities. On the ground, General Eisenhower's armies were rolling up Tunisia, destroying Colonel-General Hans-Jürgen von Arnim's armies, while the Mediterranean forces cut off their supplies of fuel, arms, and men. The codebreakers had identified the sailings of three vital ammunition ships and all three were now 'full fathom five,' thanks to the efforts of the Royal Navy.⁶ On May 5 ULTRA indicated that the Germans were pulling out of Tunisia.⁷ From FISH intercepts however the British knew that Hitler was massing forces for the biggest tank battle in history, at the inviting Soviet salient at Kursk.

The Washington talks would be dominated by the Allied differences over how to proceed after the invasion of Sicily. Roosevelt wanted to commit the British to a firm date to invade northern France in 1944. Churchill was haunted by the 1942 Dieppe disaster. He argued that the Allies should invade the Italian mainland, then continue from there into the Balkans, and southern France.⁸

The romance in the Anglo-American alliance was fading fast. After the war Churchill would go to some lengths to maintain the fiction of the unselfish Grand Alliance, but the dealings between London and Washington were growing tougher with each year that passed. The Americans found they had to blank out compromising passages from records like the diary kept by Eisenhower's naval aide, and Eisenhower later apologised to Winston for the insult and injury that even its published pages still contained.⁹

THERE WERE many reasons why Roosevelt awaited this British invasion without enthusiasm. Some were personal. Winston Churchill could be a trying guest, he told his secretary: he drank 'like a fish,' he chain-smoked immense

cigars, he worked at night, and he slept by day.¹⁰ The prime minister's popularity had begun to wane. When Roosevelt had mentioned Churchill, Stalin, and Chiang Kai-shek in a speech to the House of Representatives in January 1943, the applause for the British prime minister was noticeably the weakest.¹¹ 'India' and 'de Gaulle' were to blame for the surge in anti-British feelings among American officials. In the new Pentagon building in Washington and inside the U.S. embassy on Grosvenor-square there was much anti-British speculation.¹² Britain's principal concern, it was said, was to gain post-war control of the Mediterranean. It aroused suspicion when Churchill insisted that a British general be appointed military governor of Italy.¹³ The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff (the J.C.S.) mistrusted Winston and his people. On General Marshall's orders, they purged all their records of any evidence that they had connived to thwart Britain's ambitions.¹⁴

There were instances of this when they conferred with the president at the White House at 2:30 P.M. on May 8, and again on the ninth, while the British were still on the high seas.¹⁵ The only surviving vestige is the resulting J.C.S. policy document; the record of the preceding deliberations was destroyed.¹⁶ Perversely, Roosevelt indicated that he wanted the J.C.S. to push for a British supreme commander for General Marshall's cross-Channel invasion – but only so that the blame for any new 'Dieppe' would not fall on an American.¹⁷ Henry Stimson, the U.S. secretary of war, confessed himself 'very troubled' by this new round of talks. He shared Marshall's doubts that their president would stand up to Churchill. 'I fear,' wrote Stimson, 'it will be the same story over again. The Man from London will arrive with a program of further expansion in the Eastern Mediterranean and will have his way with our Chief, and the careful and deliberate plans of our staff will be overridden.'¹⁸ Churchill was 'evidently equipped for war on us,' as Stimson dictated to his diary, and 'determined to get his own way.' He dreaded Churchill's eloquent and vigorous presentation of cases that were themselves 'unstable and dramatic rather than military.'¹⁹ Other Americans shared his fears, summed up in the words of another general: 'Churchill in Washington. What is stewing now?'²⁰

LOOKING DOWN-AT-HEEL and drab in her blue-grey Atlantic camouflage, the liner *Queen Mary* berthed off Staten Island on May 11. A tender ferried the English visitors across to American soil, where Hopkins was waiting to escort them to a special train. Lunching on plate-sized slabs of meat, which were described on the menu as 'small steaks,' Churchill's party set off for

Washington at 1:26 P.M. and arrived at the Bureau of Engraving siding at 6:45 P.M.²¹ White House staff carried the prime minister's bags up to the suite in which Queen Elizabeth had stayed, looking out over the front lawn.

Churchill would stay in Washington precisely two weeks for this conference, code-named TRIDENT. The size of his 'travelling circus' raised eyebrows. Roosevelt commented that he had taken only twenty men with him to Casablanca. Lord Halifax saw it as an amusing form of megalomania on Winston's part.²² Not knowing quite how to break it to Eleanor that 'that man' was coming again, Roosevelt had decided not to tell her at all. She had not forgotten her visit to No. 10 in October 1942. Finding out only now, at the last moment, she made her views clear by staying away. Winston detected this after a while, and explained to Clementine: 'Mrs Roosevelt was away practically all the time, and I think she was offended at the President not telling her until a few hours before I arrived of what was pouring down on her.' He tried to put a less malign spin on her absence: 'He does not tell her the secrets, because she is always making speeches and writing articles and he is afraid she might forget what was secret and what was not.'

Halifax came to see Winston at ten A.M. on the twelfth. The prime minister was still in bed, enveloped by cigar smoke and state papers, and wearing an elaborately apologetic air for having brought Beaverbrook along. Roosevelt had received a letter from Lord Beaverbrook hinting at coming to Washington as ambassador; Max had declined the offer because, so he wrote, he did not know enough about Churchill's policies. To the president the letter seemed 'unhinged.'²³ Now that Beaverbrook himself had arrived, looking more than slightly sheepish, Churchill seemed unwilling to enlighten Halifax on why Max was here; nothing came of it anyway.²⁴

To Stimson's dismay, Churchill had almost twenty-four hours to work on the president before the J.C.S. could intervene.²⁵ He need not have worried. Winston does not seem to have spoken at any length with Roosevelt before the first full meeting of the British and American chiefs of staff – the Combined Chiefs – was held at two-thirty P.M. in the Oval Office.

Here, Churchill spoke first, setting out his own grand strategy: with TORCH now concluded, and HUSKY approaching, the next great prize must be to force Italy out of the war during 1943 'by whatever means might be best.' This fell some way short of the fateful phrase 'unconditional surrender.' He believed that the Turkish government would then allow the Allied air forces to bomb the Romanian petroleum fields at Ploesti from bases on Turkish soil. Furthermore, Germany would have to replace the Italian divi-

sions policing the Balkans. The Royal Navy would no longer have to police the Mediterranean, and could use her warships elsewhere. He expressed particular concern about the months immediately following *НУСКУ*. Hitler had 185 divisions on the Russian front, but the Allies would soon not be in contact with the German forces anywhere. 'They could not possibly stand idle,' Winston lectured those sitting around him in the Oval Office. 'And so long a period of apparent inaction would have a serious effect on Russia, which was bearing such a disproportionate weight.'

Churchill had not abandoned hope of a sudden collapse in Germany just as in 1918. The British, he said, were standing by to exploit a sudden German collapse, 'should this by any chance take place.' Against that bright prospect he painted in much darker hues the problems of the cross-Channel invasion that Marshall preferred – the difficult beaches of northern France, the tides, the strong enemy defences, the superiority of Hitler's internal communications. He added, however, as the record showed, that

he wished to make it absolutely clear that His Majesty's government earnestly desired to undertake a full-scale invasion of the Continent from the United Kingdom as soon as a plan offering reasonable prospects of success could be made.

After that he addressed the more distant problem of recapturing Burma. He suggested an alternative operation against the tip of Sumatra and the waist of Malaya at Penang, where the Japanese would be less likely to expect it.²⁶

Admiral Leahy, the president's personal chief of staff, had listened attentively to all these opening remarks and they seemed promising enough: 'He made no mention of any British desire to control the Mediterranean regardless of how the war may end.' Moreover, Winston was undertaking to join the fight against Japan. On the cross-Channel invasion however he diverged from the American view. 'There was no indication in his talk,' summarised Leahy, 'of a British intention to undertake a cross channel invasion of Europe either in 1943 or 1944 unless Germany should collapse as a result of the Russian campaign and our intensified bombing attack.'²⁷

The fighting in Tunisia was nearly over. During the day the codebreakers reported that General von Arnim had signalled to his superiors: 'I report [that] the order to defend Tunisia to the last cartridge has been carried out. (Sgd.) ARNIM.' To which the German radio operator had added, 'We are closing down forever.'²⁸

ON THIS first evening in Washington, Churchill drove over to dine at the British embassy, and he stayed on until nearly one A.M. 'Every imaginable topic,' recorded Lord Halifax, 'past, present and future, ranging from the story of his own unhappy speculations in American bonds when he was out of office at the time of the crash, in which all his expected reward for writing *Marlborough* was pledged in advance and lost,' and then India, France, and general strategy.

Halifax saw a very different Churchill from the tired and jittery old gentleman whom he had visited the previous summer in England. After the ladies had withdrawn, Winston told the latest joke about the technologically advanced Yanks. One had said to the other, 'I think we ought to see Coventry. They tell me that a naked woman rides through the streets on a horse.' To which the other had replied, 'A naked woman riding through the streets on a horse? Yes, let's go. I haven't seen a horse in years.'²⁹ Churchill, who had probably not seen a naked woman in years either, laughed until the tears rolled down his cheeks.

Legends of female activists on white horses conjured up images of Joan of Arc. Churchill told Halifax that he had recently refused de Gaulle an airplane to go to North Africa; the general had said: '*Enfin je suis prisonnier! Bientôt vous m'enverrez à l'Île de Man.*' 'So I'm a prisoner. You'll soon be packing me off to —' and the general had to repeat it three times before Winston deduced that it was the 'Isle of Man,' whither he had consigned Sir Oswald Mosley's fascists and other subversives under Regulation 18B. He retorted, '*Non, mon général, pour vous, très distingué, toujours la Tower of London.*'*

The French were nothing but an *ennui* for Winston now. He was 'rather bored' too with what he called Macmillan's 'long and flowery' telegrams from Algiers. As for the even more boring African desert, Churchill had one bright idea about what to do with it: it should be reserved as a kind of

* Halifax secret diary. The confrontation was on April 2, 1943, according to Max Gallo, *De Gaulle*, vol. ii, *La solitude du combattant* (Paris, 1998), page 258. With eye-witness René Massigli as his source, he cites the same wording, omitting *toujours* — 'always.'

stadium, a gameboard, for authorised wars – people who could not settle their differences by other means might lease it for, say, one, three, or six months, to stage a one-, two-, five-, or ten-division war. The United States and Britain could umpire and supply the material.³⁰ This zany insight into the madness of war, displayed by one of its more illustrious exponents, showed Winston at his cynical best.

WHILE HERE in Washington, he was due to meet the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House, and he asked Halifax what ticklish questions he might expect. The ambassador murmured something about whether Britain anticipated ever repaying Lend–Lease. 'Oh, I shall like that one,' retorted the prime minister. 'I shall say: Yes, by all means . . . but I shall have my account to put in too. And my account is for holding the baby, alone, for eighteen months, and it was a very rough, brutal baby I had to hold.'³¹



'The end is very near,' General Alexander, Eisenhower's deputy supreme commander, wired to Churchill direct from Tunisia that day, May 12, 1943. 'Von Arnim has been captured, and prisoners will most likely be over 150,000. All organised resistance has collapsed, and only pockets of [the] enemy are still holding out.'³² The next day, Thursday, May 13, he reported that the Allies were masters of the North African shores.³³ Letters of congratulation came from the king and from Clementine.³⁴ 'Talking of telegrams,' gushed Mrs Churchill, 'that was a splendid one the king sent you. I am so glad about it. I do wish you were here my Darling so that we could jump for joy at this great & glorious Victory.'

That night Roosevelt and Churchill dined *en famille* with Averell Harriman, 'Pa' Watson, Frances Perkins, and James Forrestal, secretary of the navy.³⁵ Again we have no record of what was discussed, but the importance of bringing off a successful invasion of France before the U.S. presidential election of November 1944 was evidently one matter that came up – incongruous though such an argument might sound to British ears. Winston would write privately to Clementine a few days later,

In my long talks with the President I naturally discussed American politics. Although after 12 arduous years he would gladly be quit of it, it would be painful to leave with the war unfinished and break the theme

of his action. To me this would be a disaster of the first magnitude. There is no one to replace him, and all my hopes for the Anglo-American future would be withered for the lifetime of the present generation – probably for the present century.

On the other hand the Constitution says there must be an election, and even now when it is twenty months away all thoughts are turned to the question of who is to hold the power. We should certainly not allow such a state of affairs in our country, but a written Constitution makes slaves of its subjects and is in this case totally unfitted to the waging of war.³⁶

On Friday May 14, the Combined Chiefs held their second conference from two to four P.M. at the White House. This time they concentrated on the India–Burma–China theatre. While still crossing the Atlantic, Churchill had prepared a paper, explaining why Britain had failed to fulfil the commitment agreed at Casablanca to recapture Akyab in Burma before May.³⁷

He disparaged the American plan ANAKIM as physically impossible for 1943, arguing that going into swampy Burmese jungles to fight the Japanese was like going into the water to fight a shark. They should rather try to entice the Japanese into a trap somewhere else, staging a landing where it was not expected.

Backed by the dour and charmless Field-Marshal Wavell, commanding the British Army in India, the prime minister again canvassed a landing in Sumatra and Java where, he pointed out, the Japanese were weak, and Britain's effective sea power would soon be augmented by the neutralisation of the Italian fleet.³⁸ Wavell and Churchill failed to convince the Americans. Wavell, Leahy noted a month later, displayed such a defeatist attitude that his replacement was inevitable.³⁹

CHURCHILL LEFT Washington that evening for a weekend with the president. Before he went, the British Joint Staff Mission asked him to authorise the use of UPKEEP. In time of war, one is inevitably soon adrift in a welter of code-names, and he queried: 'What is this?' In fact UPKEEP was a special weapon for No. 617 squadron of R.A.F. Bomber Command to attack the most important dams in the Ruhr. Booms and nets protected these dams from conventional weapons like bombs or torpedoes. But UPKEEP was different, an 11,000-pound 'dambusting' bomb that was spun to a high rotational velocity while still clamped in calipers in the bomb-bay of its Lancaster, so

that when released it would skip over the surface of the water and clear these defences.⁴⁰

The operation itself, operation CHASTISE, was the product of a very special English genius, Dr Barnes Wallis. A few months earlier, he had written a proposal, modestly titled, 'An Engineer's Way to Win the War.' In this he had pointed out that there were five dams in the Ruhr: 'Without them, Germany's power stations can't make steam, her canals will either overflow or run dry and her most vital factories will be devastated by flooding. One dam, in particular, regulates the supply of the only sulphur-free water available to the Ruhr's steelworks.' It took one hundred tons of water to make one ton of steel, and this one dam, the Möhne Dam, held back 134,000 tons of water. Wallis had written about this to Lord Cherwell on the last day of January, enclosing a twenty-page secret report, with photographs and diagrams that explained the aerodynamic and hydrodynamic theory behind his spinning bomb.

He carried out experiments using models in a shipping tank and showed the impressive film of these to Portal and Pound on February 19. Portal ordered Bomber Command to establish a special squadron for the attack.

Harris had no time for people like Wallis – he had run into inventors who thought they had a simple way to win the war before. He wrote to Portal, complaining, 'All sorts of enthusiasts and panacea-mongers are careering round the Ministry of Aircraft Production suggesting that about thirty Lancasters should be taken off the line and modified to carry a new and revolutionary bomb, which exists only in the imagination of those who conceived it.' Churchill simply ordered him to prepare the attack on the dams as a top priority, and he now authorised the use of the UPKEEP bomb.

The attack was carried out at a suicidally low level in the early hours of Monday, May 17, at a terrible cost to the Lancaster bomber crews and with a display of heroism by No. 617 Squadron's leader, Wing Commander Guy Gibson, which earned him the Victoria Cross. The German defenders watched transfixed as the heavy bombs bounded across the lakes, hopping right over the defence booms, and crashed into the dams, where they sank to a preset depth with their spin now forcing them hard against the concrete dam wall.

Wallis's UPKEEP bombs breached two of the colossal dams – the Möhne and the Eder – emptying the contents of the lakes suddenly onto the sleeping villages below. Immense though the resulting deathroll was – eight hundred foreign labourers were drowned in the tidal wave that engulfed one

camp – the industrial effect was less than the more intangible effect of this operation on enemy morale.⁴¹

The ULTRA intercepts revealed a disappointing lack of chaos *après le déluge*. By 9:50 A.M. the Möhne police had already set up an operational headquarters to handle the emergency. Nothing indicated any public disturbances. By May 21 repair units were already withdrawing; the damaged Ruhr bridges were reopened. By May 23 Bletchley Park had heard no police messages about the dams, 'although most air raids have been reflected in requests from German policemen on active service to come home on compassionate leave or, if at home, to have leave extended.'⁴² Even so, Churchill told the Prof. to report on what was being done to protect Britain's reservoirs from similar attacks.⁴³

ROOSEVELT HAD intended to spend the weekend of May 14–17 up at Hyde Park, on the Hudson. Eleanor retaliated by announcing that she would invite some of her 'reformer' friends, so he invited the prime minister out to 'Shangri-La,' a log cabin encampment in Maryland, instead.

Accompanied by a motorcycle escort, they drove out to this former holiday camp at Thurmont, two thousand feet up in the Catoctin hills (now more famous as 'Camp David').⁴⁴ Through the car's windows at Frederick, Churchill caught sight of a 'Barbara Frietchie' candy store. Roosevelt explained that this Dame Frietchie was an elderly Northerner who had defied Stonewall Jackson's Confederate troops in the Civil War; the prime minister interrupted him with a spirited recitation of the famous poem about this folk heroine –

'Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,
But spare your country's flag,' she said.
A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,
Over the face of the leader came;
The nobler nature within him stirred
To life at that woman's deed and word;
'Who touches a hair of yon gray head
Dies like a dog! March on!' he said.

He apologised that he must have read it forty years ago, and had not given it a thought since.⁴⁵ Roosevelt and Hopkins exchanged appreciative looks. It is not fanciful to believe that episodes like this may have done more to

prosper Anglo-American relations than all the formal conferences of this May 1943 visit to North America.

At Shangri-La, Roosevelt settled into his stamp collection, while the prime minister, who did not share his enthusiasm for these little squares and triangles of gummed paper, watched contentedly. Shortly however Eisenhower's chief of staff, General Walter Bedell Smith, arrived and the albums had to be set aside. General Marshall had half-approved of Churchill's desire to bring forward the date of HUSKY, the invasion of Sicily, but Eisenhower, in Algiers, had now turned that down. Churchill sighed; he recalled Hitler's 'blunder' at the end of May 1940 in failing to hurl his armies across the English Channel in hot pursuit after Dunkirk. On May 15 he wrote to his chiefs of staff in Washington that history might blame them for having now made the same mistake. It might well be, he added, that with a quarter of the force launched into Sicily now they could achieve the same result as with the whole force two months from now.⁴⁶

For a while their talk hovered around HUSKY.

The omens were good. A cryptic message suddenly arrived from Brigadier Hollis in London, reading: 'MINCEMEAT swallowed rod, line and sinker by right people and from best information they look like acting on it.'⁴⁷

On May 1, the Spaniards had notified the British naval attaché in Madrid that the body of a Royal Marine had drifted ashore at Huelva; a post mortem had confirmed death by drowning, and the victim, a 'Major Martin,' had been buried with military honours.

After a proper interval, London had directed the attaché to make discreet inquiries about 'important papers' the officer had been carrying. On the eleventh, the Spanish chief of naval staff handed back 'Martin's' black case and, separately, the sealed letters it contained, addressed to Eisenhower, Cunningham, and Alexander: British censorship experts determined at first that the letters had not been opened – the wax seals were unbroken; but a few days later this disappointment turned to elation as the first ULTRAS came in revealing that the Spanish had in fact supplied copies of all the crucial documents to Berlin.

As recently as Friday, even as Churchill and Roosevelt were being driven up the winding roads to Shangri-La, the German High Command had been overheard passing the data on to Naval Group Command South, using the FISH code, and ordering them to take steps to reinforce the areas mentioned in the documents. A panzer division was extracted from France, and Hitler dispatched Rommel himself to Greece to reinforce the defences.⁴⁸

Other intercepts brought to the United States were less encouraging. One revealed that on May 10 the Turkish president had reassured the Nazi ambassador that he saw no cause to join the Allies. Franz von Papen thought that the loss of Tunisia was unlikely to 'have very much effect.'⁴⁹

ON THEIR return to Washington on May 17 Henry Stimson listened closely to the British visitors' remarks. He perceived that they still had cold feet about any full-scale cross-Channel assault. Churchill's intention, in Stimson's words, was to have Britain and America each hold one leg of the deer, while they left it to Stalin to do the actual skinning. President Roosevelt reassured Stimson that he would read the Riot Act to the British about this.⁵⁰



Churchill had engaged to speak to the Congress on Wednesday afternoon, and he retired to his suite that Tuesday, May 18, to work on the script. He began dictating from his bed at nine-thirty that morning to Miss Layton; he telephoned Halifax to come over after breakfast and read out to him some bits he had already dictated, for example a 'purple passage' about bombing the Japanese (he spoke of beginning the process 'so necessary and desirable of laying the cities and other munitions centres of Japan in ashes'). He lunched privately with the Duke of Windsor at the embassy, then continued dictating 'without a break' until four-thirty P.M.⁵¹

Just before six o'clock the Canadian prime minister was shown in. The teetotal Canadian was as nervous as a long-tailed cat in a room full of rocking-chairs. Travelling down by train from Ottawa, Mackenzie King had opened his private diary and reminisced in it about how, once before, Roosevelt and Churchill had tried to tempt him with a drink; on that occasion he had fought off the inner demons that urged him to accept. This likeable Liberal statesman's eyes then chanced upon a passage in a book, reading: 'It was human passion and human cowardice that failed the League,' and he piously thanked the Lord that he would once again not allow himself to be tempted to accept any 'stimulants' that his two hosts might offer.⁵² Mackenzie King's other moral guardian was, as always, his pocket watch – this trusty timepiece, guarding over his every action and silently lecturing him on its propriety. All that morning the hands had been teasing him, wide open, in a perfect straight line, each time he pulled out his watch to examine it – at ten-twenty, at 11:25 A.M., and again at 1:35 P.M. as his train drew

into Union Station. When a flunky told him that he would be driving to the Capitol next morning with Churchill, he glanced at the clock face and, confound it, now the timepiece was flashing the 'bad omen' sign: 'Hands exactly together at 4:20,' he recorded in his manuscript journal.⁵³

Despite the early evening hour the Canadian statesman found Britain's prime minister still, or already, lying in bed, clad in a nightgown of black-and-white silk. Gone was his florid complexion, despite the opened bottle of Scotch next to him. He was studying documents on a small bed-tray balanced across his midriff, while resting his arm on a kind of rubber pad. Churchill put the writing aside, and welcomed the Canadian with the announcement of their victory in Tunisia. 'It was really shocking,' he said, 'the way the Germans came in at the end, giving themselves up, falling and crawling. . . When they thought they could win they were most savage and brutal.' Mr Churchill mimed their different postures – supplicant, pleading, brutal – on that frail, flabby white face.

What next, after North Africa? He said that his own grand strategy envisaged enticing Italy out of the war. He spelt out the conditions he had in mind for her surrender. She would not be treated too badly if she would yield up her fleet. He wanted to invade Europe through Sicily – he briefed the Canadian in confidence on *HUSKY* – and Sardinia; from there, noted Mackenzie King, proceeding through the Balkans or through southern France. The Americans wanted an invasion of northern France, said Churchill with evident distaste. 'I do not want to see the beaches of Europe covered with the bodies of slain Canadians and Americans,' he said. 'We might have several Dieppes in one day unless everything is properly prepared.'⁵⁴ It was a vivid image; it was the first time that Churchill had admitted that it haunted him, and he would conjure with it more times over the next twelve months.

Britain, he said, could provide sixteen divisions (including the Canadians) for a cross-Channel enterprise; the Americans had at present only one division in England.⁵⁵ Hitler on the other hand had the advantage of excellent internal lines of communication. He briefly sketched the plan they had prepared for *ROUND-UP*, in the event that Germany suddenly cracked, which might well happen later that summer.

Before they parted Churchill asked the Canadian prime minister cautiously whether he knew anything about a certain something which they ought to agree upon together with the Americans. Knowing nothing about *TUBE ALLOYS*, to which Canada was already contributing so heavily, Mackenzie King answered, 'No.' Churchill arranged therefore for the Prof. to

indoctrinate him.⁵⁶ As Mackenzie King rose to leave, the hands of the clock were smiling at him, at precisely five past seven. That being so, he reminded Churchill that one night at Chequers in the summer of 1941 they had danced a jig together. Churchill's recollections of that dance were necessarily hazy. 'Perhaps,' volunteered the Canadian premier whimsically, 'we might have another one tomorrow night.' Rowan, the P.M.'s private secretary, advised him not to bank on that. Churchill resumed work on the script, continuing his dictation now from midnight until two-thirty A.M.⁵⁷

Allowed to read Miss Layton's typescript draft, Mackenzie King noticed once again that Winston used the word 'we' to mean British and American (thus, 'our' air forces had worked together in Africa). It was another slight by Churchill which the Canadian statesman felt the empire's soldiers would take quite hard.⁵⁸

CHURCHILL'S LAST speech to the Congress had been a triumph; this one was taking a calculated risk. Dressed in black, he walked down the stairs to the Oval Office at midday on May 19. He found everybody already waiting for him – among them he saw President Roosevelt, Lord Moran, General Wavell; the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, and Eleanor Roosevelt. He had butterflies in his stomach – he felt, as he told Mackenzie King, like somebody being led out to be shot. As the motorcade flashed down Pennsylvania-avenue toward the dazzling white Capitol building, he made his V-sign to the crowds, and told Mackenzie King that he intended to address both houses like one big family.

It was 12:32 P.M. as they arrived in the chamber. The audience included both Houses of Congress, the Supreme Court, the cabinet, the diplomatic corps, Crown Princess Martha of Norway, Bernard Baruch, the Windsors and a galaxy of other notables in the Executive Box; Roosevelt was missing – he listened to the broadcast at the White House.

Winston reaffirmed Britain's strategy of dealing with Germany first; he undertook that Britain would thereafter help to defeat Japan; and he announced that they were winning the Battle of the Atlantic. As he reached the words about the process 'so necessary and desirable' of laying Japan's cities in ashes it was noticeable they drew applause.⁵⁹

The journalists in the press gallery above him could see that these words, typed on small sheets of paper before him, had been heavily underlined for emphasis. Opinion was divided, he admitted, as to whether bombing alone could bring about the collapse of Germany or Italy, but he remarked, to

heartily laughter, that 'the experiment is well worth trying.' The aim of bombing was to disperse the munitions workers. 'If they don't like what's coming to them,' he said to more laughter, 'let them disperse beforehand.' He drew more laughter when he spoke of 'the military intuition of Corporal Hitler,' he spoke highly of the recent North African victory, and he heaped praise on the names of both General Eisenhower and Giraud.⁶⁰ The 'butterflies' had flown.

'It was not a great speech,' wrote one of Roosevelt's cabinet,

but it was interesting. I was particularly interested in studying Churchill's platform manner. He knows how to handle an audience. He is somewhat of an actor, although he never lets himself get out of hand. I consider him one of the great speakers of his generation. He expresses himself clearly, in good simple English, and seems to me to be as much at home on the platform as he must be in bed.⁶¹

Far away, across the Atlantic, it warmed the heart of England to hear his voice ring out so strong and resolute; and Clementine told him so in a letter the next day.⁶² As he walked out, the chamber echoed with cheers for the man whom Speaker Sam Rayburn had introduced with permissible American hyperbole as 'one of the outstanding figures of all the earth.'⁶³

After lunch in the Senate building, members of the powerful Foreign Relations committee subjected him to their quiz. He cockily invited them to 'try and knock me off my perch.' With perhaps a surprising lack of secrecy – or was it in fact deliberate? – he repeated that his strategy now hinged upon knocking Italy out of the war; he was inclined not to go too hard on her after that. He personally would then favour attacking Europe through southern France or Sicily or further east. He spoke 'fiercely' of the bombing of Germany, and said that he would use poison gas if the Germans attempted to do so. Despite the powerful explosives already being used, he admitted, German morale was not cracking. 'The Germans,' he said, 'are either at your throat or at your feet.' He hoped, he said, that the United States would send to 'the Peace Conference' representatives from both Houses and both parties. (Roosevelt, listening on the radio, was dismayed: who had said anything about a Peace Conference? There would in his view be only the total, unconditional surrender of the Axis powers.⁶⁴)

When a Congressman asked whether the Senate ought to pass a resolution requiring the Soviet Union to stay within her present boundaries, the

P.M. discouraged this idea. Stalin was in enough difficulties as it was. The rest was his usual vapourings about Germany and the 'state of Prussia.' De Gaulle, Darlan, Katyn, Sikorski, Beria, the great purges, the Polish frontiers, were neither remembered nor touched upon.



At the Combined Chiefs meeting on May 19, Brooke suggested that a cross-Channel invasion on May 1 or June 1, 1944 would be preferable to a date in the coming winter. This would give time, he believed, to conclude the bombing offensive. Over dinner that evening Roosevelt pointedly referred to the Canadian troops in England and their impatience to see action. Churchill vaguely retorted, 'They also serve who only stand and wait.' When there was a further reference to crossing the Channel, the P.M. mused out loud: 'Sooner or later we all have to die.' He had been drinking, it is true; but he evidently meant, the later the better.

They all watched a Sherlock Holmes movie, about Chinese vases and 'secret messages.' Mackenzie King nodded off, and awoke to hear these words coming from the screen: 'Such great powers should never be given to men. . . .' He could only agree. The democracies were drifting away from cabinet government, and into dictatorships. He noticed that Churchill's influence at the White House seemed to be on the wane. Taking the Canadian aside, Roosevelt revealed that he had just sent a 'secret message' – there was that phrase, but what about the Chinese? – to Stalin proposing that they meet somewhere alone, *i.e.*, without Mr Churchill present: and why not? Had not he gone to Moscow alone in August 1942? 'I feel embarrassed at how Winston might react,' said the president two days later, as they examined creating a pretext for the trip to, say, Alaska.⁶⁵

THURSDAY MAY 20 was dominated by two large-scale conferences, both staged at the White House.

The first was of the Pacific War Council, meeting at midday. After it, Churchill lunched with the president and Mackenzie King in the Oval Office. As they chatted across a centrepiece of red-white-and-blue carnations, the conversation turned to the empire. Roosevelt remarked on the incongruity of Ottawa asking the British monarch's consent before appointing ambassadors; Churchill lectured him: 'He is the King of Canada just as much as of England.' Shortly, he made this passionate appeal to the president: 'I beg of

you not to keep aloof from the European situation once this war is over or in arranging a final settlement of the war. . . There will have to be a Council of Europe, a Council of Asia and a Council of the Americas. Over all will be a world council in which there will be a final appeal.' Roosevelt should have a seat on all three councils, as should Britain, though Churchill would not be averse to Canada representing him on the council of the Americas. Roosevelt was not keen on America being on the European council. Churchill reminded him: 'We have had two wars into which you have been drawn, and which are costing America a lot. . . They will arise again unless some of these countries can be kept in proper control by the rest of the world.'

What they were looking for, said Churchill, was some kind of 'world dictator'; or, interposed Roosevelt, a 'sort of Moderator,' as in the old Presbyterian assembly. Field-Marshal Smuts would have been ideal, suggested Churchill, were he not so old. He nominated Mackenzie King, but the Canadian chuckled, and pulled out his watch. It offered no advice. The wise old Canadian quietly reflected that he had now been prime minister for seventeen years, and that their mothers had all been born in New York State. How tired he felt; he could hardly speak. He could sense invisible electrical influences flickering around the table like St Elmo's Fire. On the wall above Roosevelt's left shoulder he glimpsed a new painting of the president's mother, and she was smiling straight at him.⁶⁶

FROM SIX P.M. that evening Churchill invited the heads of the empire's delegations round to the White House to discuss the war. Roosevelt, who had probably arranged to have the room electronically monitored, just like his own study at that time, provided the White House dining room for the purpose of the meeting. It must strike us as incongruous that such a meeting was not held in the British embassy; indeed even Churchill suggested to them that they keep 'very secret' the fact that it had been held here in the White House. He invited Mackenzie King to speak first; to general assent the Canadian said that they were all anxious to hear Winston, an anxiety in which the P.M. could only concur, as it gave him the chance to repeat his more successful epigrams, like the one about the Huns being 'always at your throat or at your feet.' Mackenzie King noted that Churchill successively used the expressions 'British Commonwealth,' 'all parts of the British empire' and something he called the 'British Commonwealth and empire.'

He again developed his preferred strategy for 1943, namely invading Europe from North Africa, after seizing some Mediterranean islands as step-

ping-stones, in preference to a premature cross-Channel invasion against coastlines that only lent themselves to the defence. 'We will have a dozen Dieppes in a day,' he now said. This startling escalation of his earlier estimate jangled badly in Mackenzie King's ears ('I thought this was pretty strong language'), since it implied that Dieppe had been a total disaster, not the qualified success that the British officially claimed soon after. Italy, continued Churchill, must be weaselled out of the war, even if it meant offering relatively soft peace terms. He was not anxious to see Italy destroyed, and if he could get his hands on her fleet that would be an immense gain.

Altogether Churchill spoke for fifty minutes to this important and secret Dominions gathering. Lord Halifax mocked afterwards: 'I never saw anybody who loves the sound of words, and his own words, more.'⁶⁷



Churchill had also touched briefly on the Chinese – though only most unwillingly because, as Roosevelt once said to Mackenzie King, he still thought of them only as being 'so many pig-tails.'⁶⁸ This attitude did not surprise the Canadian. 'Something still has to go in about China,' he had heard Churchill grumble, dictating his script on the eighteenth. 'The Americans attach a great deal of importance to the Chinese. I do not know what would happen to them [the Chinese] if we do not succeed in Europe.'⁶⁹ This trivialisation of such a populous nation jarred more than one politician in Washington. The Hon. David Bowes-Lyon, head of the Political Warfare Executive in Washington, told Henry Luce, proprietor of *Time*, that Britain would not give up Shanghai after the war. 'You will give it up,' replied the American, 'because we shall make you.'⁷⁰

Since 1938 China had been in a state of siege. After the Japanese had seized Burma the isolation was complete, and the Chinese urgently wanted the Burma Road, the land route from India to China, reopened. In January 1943 General Joseph W. Stilwell – 'Vinegar Joe,' the Chinese-speaking commanding general of the U.S. Forces in China, Burma, and India – had recommended launching an offensive by Chinese troops in northern Burma, code-named ANAKIM, early in March. The Chinese Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek had replied that this was logistically impossible. The British also knew of ample tactical reasons to discount ANAKIM, from monsoons to malaria. Stilwell's handwritten diaries since then made no secret of his hostility toward the British and their snootiness. Here at Washington he found

them still 'belly-aching' about ANAKIM: 'Can't—can't—can't,' he wrote, and he immediately locked horns over it with General Brooke. Arriving together with General Marshall at the Combined Chiefs meeting on May 14, Stilwell objected that the alternative and indirect operations that Churchill was proposing, against Sumatra or Malaya, would 'greatly prolong' the period during which no steps were being taken to open the Burma Road. Churchill retorted that he was not prepared to undertake an operation as foolish as one to reopen the Burma Road merely to placate the Chinese —

he did not see any particular value in carrying out costly operations to no purpose.⁷¹

Those words stuck in Stilwell's craw. 'Hard to say my piece,' this taciturn and painfully shy general confessed to his private diary. '[Admiral] King . . . helped out. Insisted on ANAKIM as indispensable. Churchill said he wasn't going to do anything "silly" just to pacify the Chinese.'⁷²

General Wavell reinforced Churchill's arguments, declaring that if they campaigned in Upper Burma in the rainy season they could expect twenty-five per cent non-combat casualties each month. He said much the same to the Combined Chiefs on May 20; he warned that they had to expect heavy casualties from malaria. Of the fifty thousand Australians who had fought in the tropical jungles in New Guinea, seven thousand were killed or missing; malaria had brought the casualties up to over forty thousand. Those were impressive figures, but the Americans, again led by Admiral King, argued that the Burma Road had a powerful symbolic value to the Chinese.⁷³ For a second time Stilwell failed to make his case. (Stimson, interrogating him afterwards, found 'Vinegar Joe' to be very timid. 'Apparently Stilwell shut up like a clam and made therefore an unfavourable impression.'⁷⁴)

Speaking to the Pacific War Council later on May 20, Churchill spoke of the problems of fighting in Burma — the length of the supply lines, the rainy season, the heat of the jungle. It was immaterial that Britain had two million fighting men available in India; the forests and swamps made the defence of Burma by a few thousand Japanese quite possible. Dr T. V. Soong, the Chinese foreign minister (and Madame Chiang Kai-shek's brother), spoke with feeling about Britain's 'failure' to engage the Japanese in Burma. 'How can the Englishmen,' he asked, 'who were so feeble in their conduct of the war in Malaya, fight such magnificent battles as they have fought in Africa?' The problem, he suggested, was one of military leadership.⁷⁵ The British

had, he said, made at Casablanca 'a commitment' to reopen the Burma Road. To Soong's annoyance, Churchill denied this. Soong insisted that Sir John Dill, General Wavell, and others had signed the document.⁷⁶ Churchill became so heated in his denials that Mackenzie King, a judge of character, privately decided that he 'must have been in error.'⁷⁷

Over the lunch that followed this Pacific War Council meeting the Canadian noticed once again that while Roosevelt and Hopkins talked with warmth and sympathy of China, Britain's prime minister referred to her only as a liability.⁷⁸ There were clear racial overtones in Winston's beliefs. Meeting the empire representatives in the White House later on the twentieth he again described China as a liability and this time added a remark about 'the yellow races,' about which India's Agent-General, Sir Girja S. Bajpai, was less than ecstatic.⁷⁹

His high-handed treatment of Madame Chiang, wife of the ruler of China, was a further instance. She had taken over a floor of the Ritz in New York City and commanded Mr Churchill to visit her. When the Chinese ambassador Wellington Koo asked Halifax to arrange this, the British ambassador replied that he could not see Winston going to New York just for that.⁸⁰

On May 20 Madame Chiang repeated her invitation in more imperious tones. Mr Soong told Churchill that his sister was behaving like a spoiled child. 'The lady,' Winston wrote in an enjoyably indiscreet telegram to Eden, 'gives herself royal airs and considers herself co-ruler of China.' That, in her view, was why *he* must go to see *her*. The Soong family oligarchy, as he described it to London, was a strange arrangement: 'Madame Chiang is always accompanied by an extremely masculine niece dressed as a boy.' She was considered, he added, to have outstayed her welcome here in the United States.⁸¹ He again declined her invitation.

Aghast at this, Roosevelt hastened to invite both to lunch at the White House. Now she declined. Churchill proposed a point half-way between the two cities, but it was too late – not that he minded. Mrs Ogden Reid, proprietor of the influential *New York Herald-Tribune*, would accuse him of insulting China by his 'childish' behaviour in not coming to see Madame Chiang, who was a woman and, she said, ill, in New York.⁸² It would be winter before the two primadonnas finally met.

THERE WAS another revealing near-bathtime encounter on May 21, 1943 when Mackenzie King came to the White House to say his farewells. Churchill sent for him, but evidently mistimed the audience because he was al-

ready half-dressed when the Canadian arrived. 'As I came in,' wrote the latter that day, 'he appeared in his white linen under-garments.'⁸³

Churchill had a talk that day with Alexis Léger, one of his fellow conspirators at the time of Munich who had fled from France just in time. Léger confirmed his views on General de Gaulle: he loathed both Britain and the United States, and his supposed communist sympathies were pure affectation to mask his real 'Fascist tendencies.' 'This again tallies with my own feeling,' Churchill admonished Eden in a telegram that night. He urged that they now tell the general that in consequence of his impossible behaviour all bets were off – *i.e.*, 'We cannot any longer recognise the validity of the letters exchanged between us' in 1940.⁸⁴



Two deeply unpleasant days followed, a near-final showdown with the Americans over General Charles de Gaulle. In rare agreement with Cordell Hull, President Roosevelt challenged the British premier outright to face up to the problem once and for all. The Americans had decided to use Churchill's separation from Eden, the general's protector in this controversy, to persuade him to put down this French mad dog. 'Not a day passed,' the prime minister would later write, 'that the president did not mention the subject to me.'⁸⁵ There is small wonder that the corresponding 'PREMIER' files in the British archives relating to de Gaulle for April and May 1943 were ordered sealed for fifty years; and some remained closed until the new millennium.⁸⁶ The suddenness of the onslaught now clearly unbalanced Churchill. He had made no mention of the general in his speech to the Congress, but he did privately tell the Congressmen on May 19: 'I have raised him as a pup. He now bites the hand that feeds him.'⁸⁷

In a memorandum dated May 20 Roosevelt asked him to settle the general's hash once and for all. He handed to Winston a dossier of extraordinary documents, generated both by the Americans and by the British security services, which the latter had handed to the U.S. embassy after obtaining no satisfaction from the foreign office.⁸⁸ These suggested that de Gaulle was using criminal means, regardless of his obligations to the Allies, to impose himself on France as a future dictator. He forced his officials to swear a secret oath recognising him as the 'sole legitimate leader of Frenchmen.' His brutal young 'Himmler,' the secret service chief 'Passy,' had been heard boasting that he was going to 'do away' with de Gaulle's rival, Giraud, just

as he had done away with Darlan.⁸⁹ Weeks earlier, the diplomatic correspondent of *The Sunday Times* had urged Churchill to defuse the 'time-bomb' that de Gaulle and 'Passy' were building; when Major Desmond Morton, Churchill's expert on such matters, had asked him for 'proof that will stick,' the journalist said the P.M. should resort to intercepting letters, bugging telephones, and codebreaking 'to stamp out this viper in our bosom.'⁹⁰

On May 17 Mr Winant, the American ambassador in London, had cabled to Washington, as they all returned from Shangri-La, a report that de Gaulle had confided to certain French generals that he had lost confidence in Britain and America and would base his policy solely on Russia 'and perhaps on Germany (repeat, Germany)' in the future.⁹¹ On the following day Scotland-yard had told Winant that it had 'come to their notice,' no doubt through monitoring, that de Gaulle had undertaken, in conversation with the Soviet ambassador, to play along with the Russians after this war since it was impossible for him to get on with 'the Anglo-Saxons,' as he called them.⁹² De Gaulle was alleged to have bribed sailors of the French battleship *Richelieu* to come over to his faction. Cordell Hull had sent all these documents round to the White House. 'I feel,' hinted the secretary of state,

that you and prime minister Churchill are becoming more and more equally interested in disposing of this increasingly troublesome, serious, and not to say, dangerous problem.⁹³

One of Roosevelt's officials scribbled this memo: 'Is it possible to ask Churchill to detain de Gaulle in England until Churchill's return and to then accomplish a further delay – a permanent delay if possible?'⁹⁴



Cordell Hull's word *disposing* was not idly chosen. How best to dispose of a house-dog that has gone rabid and started to savage friends and neighbours? The documents used guarded language and jargon. It is in the nature of things that such papers always do. Whether the South African boss, or the Nazis, or the abortionists, or the C.I.A., the 'pro-choice' advocates of murder have ever resorted to ambiguous, harmless – though scarcely opaque – euphemisms like 'special treatment' to mask an essentially homicidal intent. Later, in the 1970s, such papers would have spoken of 'terminating with prejudice.' In London and Washington circles the current word of choice

was 'eliminate' – we saw it surface at the time of Darlan's murder: it could mean as much, or as little, as speaker and spoken-to desired.

With the aid of Scotland-yard, the Americans were amassing material against de Gaulle and his closest officers, implicating them in treason, kidnapping, and murder. Under Eden, the foreign office was turning a blind eye to these activities. Scotland-yard's Inspector Richardson told Ambassador Winant that 'Passy' had even denounced agents of the British S.O.E. to the Germans to further de Gaulle's struggle for absolute power. De Gaulle had given 'Passy' *carte-blanche* to consolidate his stranglehold on the French. Within the headquarters of his terror-organisation, the *Bureau Central de Renseignement et d'Action* (B.C.R.A.), installed at No. 10 Duke-street, behind Selfridge's department store, Passy ruled as an unscrupulous thug.

The coal cellars had been converted into dungeons. There had already been four 'suicides' by hanging in them; since they measured barely five feet six inches from floor to ceiling, and one of the victims, an alleged spy called 'Manuel,' was three inches taller than that, the eminent Scotland-yard pathologist, Sir Bernard Spilsbury, remarked dryly that this wretch must have been 'a very determined suicide.' It all had a very Central European ring: 'Better that nine innocent [people] are killed,' Passy was heard saying, 'than that one who is guilty should escape.'

As he read the Scotland-yard report on all this, American embassy official Jacob Beam was reminded of his years in Hitler's Berlin, and of the Gestapo's cellars. On May 12, the ambassador himself had tackled Eden about Duke-street. Eden had referred him to William Strang, who merely drawled that Duke-street did leave something to be desired. 'He admitted,' reported the embassy to Washington,

that the interrogation methods employed by de Gaulle's organisation had produced examples of extreme brutality. . . He further admitted that these Gestapo methods had resulted in at least several deaths. He insisted, however, that following the 'suicide' of Manuel last January the Duke-street interrogation center has been cleaned up, the head of it removed, and that all is now sweetness and light.

The idealistic Ambassador Winant called the affair a blot on the record of the United Nations. Eden's indifference baffled him. 'I presume,' noted the embassy's 'Doc' Matthews, 'it was all part of their stubborn refusal to admit that de Gaulle, their creation, has any flaws in his shining armor.'⁹⁵

When police arrested a certain Mrs Roberts, an acquaintance of de Gaulle's, for smuggling narcotics, this hardened U.S. embassy suspicions, derived from other sources, that 'de Gaulle's sometimes curious actions were due to his taking drugs,' as their first secretary reported to Washington.⁹⁶

The atrocities-scandal would come to a head when a French army sergeant issued a British High Court writ against de Gaulle, 'Passy,' and half a dozen of their officers.* He claimed damages and a declaration that he was not a member of their 'Free French' forces – the name was now beginning to ring hollow. Two of de Gaulle's co-defendants had beaten the sergeant repeatedly with a steel rod bound in leather. 'We have arrested [your girlfriend],' they warned him, 'and we shall make her speak by whatever means are necessary even if we must rape her one after the other.'

The torture continued for ten nights; he said he was taken down each day to a tiny bare coal cellar at No. 10 Duke-street. Surviving this ordeal, he was taken to French offices at Dolphin-square, then to a French prison camp at Camberley, from which he had escaped in December and hidden out in London.⁹⁷

'How can they believe,' wrote the embassy, forwarding this dossier to Washington, 'that this incipient French Hitler, bent on acquiring personal power for the post-liberation era, will pursue that policy of friendship toward England from across the Channel which is so vital to them and which they might expect from a democratic France?'⁹⁸

ON THURSDAY, May 20, Roosevelt handed this disturbing dossier to the prime minister. Churchill's fury was boundless. It placed him in the most awkward position – in retrospect it can be seen to have weakened his bargaining position with the Americans on matters of far greater moment, including Allied military strategy and TUBE ALLOYS; he promptly offered to the president to move himself and his party, if their presence in the White House was burdensome for Roosevelt, to spend their last weekend (May 22–23) at the embassy.⁹⁹ He was furious with Eden for continuing to cover for this

* The plaintiff, one Maurice Dufour, was injured in June 1940; he had been released from German captivity in March 1941, activated in Vichy by British Intelligence, and brought out to England on March 28, 1942. De Gaulle interviewed him in April. Since he declined to join the 'Free French' he was summoned to Duke-street, where 'Passy's' staff then did, in the words of the writ, 'assault, beat, imprison, and otherwise maltreat and injure' him, attempting to force him to reveal his activities for the British secret service.

French general. His fury turned into a blind and murderous rage. He drafted two long telegrams, totalling over five thousand words, suggesting that the war cabinet urgently consider eliminating de Gaulle.

It would take many hours for London to decipher the long telegrams, and the Americans wanted action this day. Heedless of the time difference, at two A.M. on May 21 Churchill put through a call to Eden in England. The American telephone censor secretly recorded that 'he was obviously very upset, as his voice indicated.' The scrambler telephone circuit was poor and, the censor reported, Eden 'did not seem sure just who was speaking at first, having been awakened by the call. [Churchill] said he was just going to sleep.' The identity of Churchill was 'clear from [his] voice and also from fact that after [a] circuit interruption [Eden] said, "Is that you, Winston?"'

In this dramatic phone call, Churchill said that there had been a 'serious development' with respect to 'Joan of Arc.' Firstly, his men had been using their British-supplied funds to bribe people away from the gun crews of ships. 'It is intolerable,' he said. A rush of details followed. Churchill added that he had sent Eden a long telegram, with the entire dossier given by his 'friends.' 'It is the most serious situation I have ever known.'

There was a danger that great affairs might be compromised. 'The man is intolerable. He owes everything to us and the indictment is very severe. You must strike now.' He continued that his friends had given him another note that evening, and that the long telegram he had just sent told the whole story. This call was, he said, just to prepare Eden for the telegram – he 'should bring the message before the cabinet and see what he can do.'

All the important things were going well, he continued, and it was only the 'antics of malignant careerists' that might upset their plans.

The censors made a garbled note of remarks by Churchill about being not pleased at having to 'give in' to somebody, and 'what else can we do but defend the islands until after the war.' 'These weak tendencies are what led us into this terrible war,' he lectured Eden. Significantly, Churchill was even heard telling the young foreign secretary that he 'breaks his heart.'¹⁰⁰

According to what Mr Attlee now told the cabinet, telegrams were coming in from Winston about de Gaulle. The former, noted Cadogan, wanted 'to execute' the latter.¹⁰¹

The actual cypher telegrams that Churchill had sent to Eden and Attlee were very blunt (though not as explicit as that). 'I must now warn you solemnly of a very stern situation developing here,' he wrote. 'I see real danger developing if matters are not gripped.'¹⁰²

I ask my colleagues to consider urgently whether we should not now eliminate de Gaulle as a political force and face Parliament and France upon the issues. I should be quite ready myself to defend this policy in Parliament and will show them and the world that the 'no surrender' movement in France, around which the de Gaulle legend has been built up, on the one hand, and this vain and even malignant man on the other have no longer any common identity. . . He hates England and he has left a trail of Anglophobia behind him everywhere.

'When we consider the absolutely vital interest which we have in preserving good relations with the United States, it seems to me most questionable that we should allow this marplot and mischief-maker to continue the harm he is doing.' It was just like Winston to use a word that would send his colleagues in London scrambling for dictionaries: a *marplot* was 'a person who hinders or spoils an undertaking.' He urged them to cut off all financial aid to the Free French unless they rid themselves of de Gaulle. To a second telegram, accusing de Gaulle of 'fascist tendencies,' he appended the sheaf of documents given him by Roosevelt, including an F.B.I. report on illegal Free French activities in the United States, and several U.S. embassy telegrams, including some from Winant, alleging that de Gaulle planned to deal with Russia and 'perhaps Germany.'

Talking about de Gaulle after dinner on May 22, Churchill lamented: 'I brought him up as a pup, but never got him properly house trained!'¹⁰³

Attlee convened an emergency meeting of the war cabinet at ten P.M. on Sunday night May 23, to consider Churchill's telegrams. In Winston's absence, Eden had little difficulty in persuading the cabinet to do nothing. He professed himself unimpressed by these telegrams: the items that Churchill had included were, as Oliver Harvey, Eden's personal secretary, put it, 'a miscellaneous collection of "dirt" which covers a number of minor cases of tiresomeness, none of them new.'¹⁰⁴ Churchill's demand for the elimination of de Gaulle was overruled. 'Everyone against,' recorded Eden, adding the ironic comment: '& very brave about it in his absence!' The F.O. drafted a reply rehashing all the old arguments about how Churchill and his government had entered into solemn agreements in 1940 with de Gaulle.¹⁰⁵ Ministers in London cackled that the atmosphere in Washington seemed to have gone to the P.M.'s head – what with Roosevelt's dictatorial powers and all. Attlee and Eden accordingly replied to Churchill accusing him of straying dangerously close to Roosevelt's view of the war:

A precipitate break with de Gaulle would have far-reaching consequences in a number of spheres that the Americans have probably never thought about. . . The Americans are wrong in this and advocate a line that would not be understood here, with possible evil consequences for Anglo-American relations.

Without de Gaulle, both the Resistance and the Free French forces would collapse. 'The de Gaulle whom they follow is of course an idealised semi-mystic figure very different from the man we know,' the reply argued. 'But nothing that Allied propaganda could do would convince the French that their idol has feet of clay.' In any case, the cabinet now informed Churchill, de Gaulle was about to fly to Algeria, ostensibly to strike a deal with Giraud. Churchill's London was obviously getting to be too hot for the French general, and Eden wanted to spirit him out of harm's way. In Algiers he would be among friends. De Gaulle indeed announced that he would leave London for Algiers at the end of the week.

Churchill condescended with the worst possible grace. He had to accept that the general's departure put a different complexion on things, but he made it clear that he would hold Attlee and Eden personally to blame if anything went wrong. 'I should be very sorry to become responsible for breaking up [Anglo-American] harmony for the sake of a Frenchman who is a bitter foe of Britain and may well bring civil war upon France.'

With the London cabinet's blessing, the French general left England on Saturday May 29, 1943 for Algiers. He had escaped 'elimination' by the skin of his teeth. By the end of the year Morton, Churchill's principal liaison to the Free French, was secretly confessing that as they had failed to 'cut de Gaulle down,' they could in future only 'hamstring' him by restricting the size of his army.¹⁰⁶



While still awaiting Eden's reply, and anxious to repair the political fences blown down by this hurricane, Churchill and Halifax hosted an intimate lunch for American cabinet-level officers at the embassy on May 22, 1943.

Before it began, Churchill received General Stilwell once again. Coached by Stimson in how to deal with the prime minister, the tongue-tied general put more vigour into his presentation.¹⁰⁷ He now found Churchill 'very friendly.' The Englishman paced up and down, while Stilwell gave him 'the

works' for half an hour, explaining his objections to the decisions taken on Burma. 'Need of aggressive leadership,' he jotted afterwards in his notebook. 'Hopes for comprehensive plan. Fears for result. Said he understood and was for an impressive fight with every man available in it. Wants me to understand he would help.'¹⁰⁸ Churchill asked him if he thought the British forces had been dilatory, or lacked energy. Stilwell replied simply, 'Yes,' and he felt that the P.M. agreed. Churchill asked if they could not reopen the Burma Road in 1945; Stilwell shook his head, that was too late. 'No,' he said, 'It should be operating by the middle of 1944.'¹⁰⁹

Churchill's attitude was that the 'only way to help China within [the] next two months was by air.' Stilwell replied that 'Peanut,' as he called Chiang Kai-shek, was greatly overrated, and that he was trying to replace the Chinese army with American air power. Churchill warmed to him after that.¹¹⁰ He promised the secretary of war after lunch that he was going to dismiss several commanders over Burma, and put some 'new punch' into it.¹¹¹

In an evident reference to the prime minister's informal attire when they met, Stilwell concluded his diary entry: '[He] had to make a speech at one – old clothes, dirty shirt, collar unbuttoned, walked the floor.'

AFTER A brief word outside with Sumner Welles, Churchill did up his necktie and walked into the dining room, clutching his trademark cigar in one hand and a drink in the other. Around the oval lunch table sat ten of the most influential men in Washington, including Wallace, Ickes, Stimson, and Senator Tom Connally, chairman of the Foreign Relations committee. Ickes noticed that their host dispatched several glasses of white wine, four of brandy, and two large cigars, but he decided that his brain was still keen and that he was 'on the ball' throughout.¹¹² Skilfully dominating the table, Winston called upon Halifax to explain Munich and the Czech president Dr Beneš (to whom he derisively referred in this company as 'Beans.')

The Americans explored his thinking about the post-war world. He explained that he felt there should be one world organisation – comprising Britain, the United States, Russia, and China. The body would arbitrate regional disputes; it would have armed forces – and particularly an air force – to which all member states would contribute troops. 'He frankly admitted,' noted Ickes, 'that he has not much feeling one way or the other about China but is willing to give consideration to American sentiment with respect to that country.' Below this body would be three regional councils, for Europe (in which Britain and Russia would speak with greatest author-

ity), for Asia (in which China would predominate), and for the Americas (in which Washington would hold sway).

Speaking explicitly about a 'United States of Europe,' Churchill revealed that he envisaged post-war Europe as consisting of a dozen states or confederations forming a regional European Council. Germany should be dismembered; Prussia should be amputated – with her forty million inhabitants she seemed a more manageable European unit; Bavaria should also be detached and annexed to Hungary and Austria in a Danubian federation. He talked vaguely of a Balkan federation. He said that he wanted a strong France to arise from the ruins, 'whatever we might think about French [getting their] deserts,' explaining quite candidly that 'the prospect of having no strong country on the map between England and Russia was not attractive.'

Complementary to this idea was Churchill's belief that the United States and what he called the 'British Commonwealth' must work together in some un sinister way, in a fraternal association. The citizens of each should be able to settle and trade with freedom and equal rights in the territories of the other. 'There might be a common passport or a special form of passport or visa.' He hoped, he said, that the practice of Combined Staff discussions would be continued after the war. After the war, the United States would have automatic right to use all bases in British territories.¹¹³

Of course, the king's first minister had neither the right nor the mandate to offer this startling abridgement of the British empire's sovereignty to his hosts, and in sketching this luncheon in his memoirs he was careful to add that he was expressing only personal views.

'The bait was attractive,' summarised the left-wing vice-president Henry Wallace afterwards, 'and most of the Americans present swallowed it. It was better bait than I anticipated, but Churchill really was not as definite as he sounded.' 'Churchill on the whole was quite complimentary to Stalin,' added Wallace, 'but nevertheless was all the time . . . building an atmosphere of "we Anglo-Saxons are the ones who really know how to run the show".'¹¹⁴ Wallace said to Halifax, as he left, that he thought it the most encouraging talk he had heard for two years.¹¹⁵ 'He thinks that Stalin is a man of his word,' recorded Ickes after this luncheon.¹¹⁶

Which was, the archives would later reveal, how the late Neville Chamberlain regarded Hitler at the time of Munich.

After tea Churchill entertained two score Congressmen to cocktails. He handled them admirably, felt Halifax, delivering an address that was as brief as it was good humoured, and saying that when here in June 1942 at

the time of Tobruk he had been the most miserable Englishman in America since 'Gentleman Johnny' Burgoyne surrendered at Saratoga. 'It could not have been better done,' felt Halifax, 'and they were greatly delighted.'¹¹⁷

Over lunch on May 23 with Halifax he developed his 'fraternal association' idea more – the citizens of the United States and British Commonwealth being allowed to move freely in each other's territories. 'A good thought,' said Norman Davis, 'it had never struck me before.' 'I only got it in my bath this morning,' fibbed Churchill happily (in fact he had mentioned it to Halifax the previous night).¹¹⁸



There was one other operation discussed here at TRIDENT.

As a base for their long-range aircraft and warships, Churchill wanted the Allies to seize the Azores, the Portuguese islands far out in the Atlantic. They were a neutral territory, but mere neutrality had not stopped Churchill in the past. While still bound for Washington aboard *Queen Mary* he had sent to Eden a long telegram proposing a sneak invasion of the islands by night. Eden was 'intensely' annoyed by the plan, and suspected that Beaverbrook was egging Churchill on.¹¹⁹ The London cabinet equivocated.¹²⁰

In Churchill's view the demands of the Allied anti-submarine war and the Battle of the Atlantic outweighed the prerogatives of neutral Portugal; besides, there was an ancient treaty dating back to the year 1373, which he felt entitled to invoke.¹²¹ He hoped that the Portuguese would accede to the islands' occupation. Hopkins thought this unlikely, and advised the Combined Chiefs to be sure in their own minds that they were prepared to use force if the request should be refused. Using wording that was of questionable tact, the Combined Chiefs took note that 'on the face of it, it might appear to be an action savoring somewhat of German or Japanese technique.' They quietened their collective conscience by telling each other that Portugal, like many other small nations, depended for her existence on the victory of the United Nations. 'It should not be forgotten,' ruled the Combined Chiefs, 'that it was on the margin of shipping that the Allies depended for their war-making capacity.'¹²²

In London, Eden was horrified by all this. He too felt that they were now trying to legitimise a Nazi-type rape of a small nation. What price the Atlantic Charter now? The war cabinet, emboldened as ever by Winston's absence, opposed the plan.¹²³ 'Attlee,' inked Cadogan into his seditious di-

ary that day, 'read out [a] ridiculous telegram from P.M., demanding immediate (and surprise) occupation of Azores.' 'After some discussion,' he added, 'Everyone (except Morrison) against P.M., which they wouldn't have been if he'd been here!' Attlee and Eden sent to Churchill a telegram asking him not to press the cabinet for the decision that he had demanded by Monday. 'At a full discussion this afternoon,' stated the London telegram, 'the war cabinet felt very strong objection to the course proposed on grounds of principle.' They asked him to postpone the decision until he returned.¹²⁴

Washington was unimpressed by these legalistic arguments. At the Combined Chiefs meeting in the White House at five P.M. that same day, May 21,

the prime minister reiterated the view which he had expressed at the previous meeting that nothing would be gained by a diplomatic approach to the Portuguese government which was not backed up immediately by force. In his opinion, the Portuguese should be presented with the fact of an imminent occupation with only sufficient time in which to send a message in order that there should be no resistance.

This was the 'negotiating' technique which Hitler had used to good effect when determined to invade Prague in March 1939.

At the Combined Chiefs meeting on May 24 the P.M. embroidered on his plan, suggesting that from seven to ten hours before the arrival of the invasion force, 'the Portuguese government might be approached diplomatically and told that the force was on route.' He carried the day. The Combined Chiefs recommended that operation *LIFEBELT* be carried out, whether or not the Portuguese dictator Dr Salazar permitted, as it was 'essential to the efficient conduct of the anti-U-boat war.'

That was not however the end of the matter, which we must briefly see through here to its conclusion. For weeks the indecision over occupying the Azores continued. On July 24 Eden noted, '*LIFEBELT* becomes troublesome again, with Salazar dilatory and Winston impatient. . . We shall have to force the pace, at least to [the] extent of determining a day.'¹²⁵ The date determined was September the fifteenth. After dinner on August 2, the defence committee meeting degenerated into 'something of a shouting match' which lasted for over an hour. Churchill fumed that Britain could have seized the Portuguese islands in June, July, or August if it were not for his foreign secretary's silly insistence on approaching Dr Salazar first; that he had been quite satisfied with Eden's progress there at first, but that it was

now quite clear that the dictator had merely been fooling them. Eden retorted that Britain had been absolutely right, and that she could not have acted otherwise before the end of August anyway; General Brooke confirmed that by acting through diplomatic channels, Britain had freed up vital shipping for HUSKY. As this fraught defence committee meeting ended, Winston took Eden aside and apologised for having been obstreperous, but he felt that Salazar had been intolerable. In the spirit of conciliation, Eden conceded that he feared he had been a mite obstreperous too. 'Oh, you,' chortled Churchill, 'you were bloody!' On which note, recorded the foreign secretary, they said Goodnight.¹²⁶

Churchill instructed Sir Ronald Campbell to convey the ultimatum to Dr Salazar. He had little choice, and he agreed to allow the British – but not the Americans – to use airfields in the Azores.¹²⁷ The prime minister himself made the announcement in the House on October 12, a speech effulgent with glowing references to Britain's 'oldest ally.'¹²⁸

HITLER'S U-BOAT offensive had collapsed. 'Churchill was happy as a lark with the report on submarine sinkings,' observed Henry Wallace on May 24. The enemy had lost twenty-six U-boats already that month, more than one a day. Lunching with the Prof. and the president's staff at the White House, Churchill drank heavily and mocked the Prof. for his abstemiousness. He boasted that he had drunk thirty-four toasts at Stalin's farewell dinner for him last August. With the brandy now burbling in his sinuses and producing the characteristic 'snuffling' sound that several Americans had noticed during his visit eleven months earlier, the P.M. kept reverting to this triumph. 'A submarine a day,' he lisped, 'keeps the famine away.'¹²⁹

He had received a letter from Clementine, with all the London gossip about society weddings, the birth of Duncan Sandys' baby Celia, and four sleepless nights caused by Luftwaffe nuisance-raids: 'Alerts at midnight, two, and four, with the parks' guns and Prof.'s rockets barking and shattering.' He replied, 'I am afraid you have been having disturbed nights lately. But the enemy's spite is only equalled by his feebleness, while we are hitting him really massive and frightful blows.' The R.A.F. had now delivered colossal air raids on individual industrial towns like Düsseldorf and Dortmund in the Ruhr industrial heartland, sometimes dropping two thousand tons of bombs in one night.¹³⁰ Backed by the Prof., Churchill predicted at this luncheon that they could defeat Hitler with their bombing war and the war at sea, and that a cross-Channel invasion might prove unnecessary.

This was not the view of their American hosts, but Churchill claimed to have solid evidence of lowering enemy morale – of Nazi bomber crews who failed to press home their attacks, and of a Dutch movie audience which called out, to hoots of laughter, 'Give our regards to Rudolf Hess!', as a newsreel showed Hitler importantly boarding a plane. More whisky flowed, and Churchill called Roosevelt's presidential rival Wendell Willkie 'a German.' As the remains of this White House luncheon were cleared away, he ignited a cigar and expanded on his new pet theme, joint citizenship for the British and Americans. 'He made it more clear,' wrote the vice-president dubiously afterwards, 'than he had at the luncheon on Saturday [May 22] that he expected England and the United States to run the world and [that] he expected the staff organizations which had been set up for winning the war to continue when the peace came.' The supreme council and three regional councils of which he had earlier spoken were evidently to be only a facade.

Henry Wallace found this notion of an Anglo-Saxon master-race objectionable, and said so. The prime minister was however warmed by the alcohol, of which Wallace recorded he had had 'quite a bit,' and demanded to know why their race should be apologetic. 'We are superior!' When the liberal vice-president mischievously suggested that some other races might be valuable additions to this joint citizenship, Churchill became a painter and explained: 'If you take all the colours on the painter's palette and mix them up together, you get just a smudgy greyish brown.'¹³¹

'So you believe in the pure Anglo-Saxon race,' observed Wallace, and added the rude comment: 'Anglo-Saxondom *über alles!*'

WHEN THE Combined Chiefs reported to the two leaders from 4:30 to seven P.M., Churchill refused to accept the agreement that they had reached about the Mediterranean and spent an hour urging the speedy invasion of Italy with a possible extension to Yugoslavia and Greece. They postponed a final decision at his request until the morrow. 'The prime minister's attitude,' recognised Leahy, 'is in exact agreement with the permanent British policy of controlling the Mediterranean Sea regardless of what may be the result of the war.'¹³²

They all conferred in the president's study at 11:30 next morning, May 25. Churchill's contention of the previous day was not brought up again.¹³³ There was another big White House luncheon, this time for the Combined Chiefs, that day. General Stilwell, recording Churchill's speech, noted words

evidently spoken afterwards to Roosevelt: 'It must have been *Divine Providence* that draped these great events around your personality and position.'¹³⁴

At a forty-minute press conference with Roosevelt and 151 newspapermen on that day, Churchill did virtually all the talking, advising the Italian people to get out of the war while they could, and announcing that the Allies were winning the submarine war. Plans for a second front had been laid, and he hinted that de Gaulle and Giraud would soon end their rivalry.¹³⁵ Questioned by a Miss May Craig – who remained a press corps fixture until the John F. Kennedy era – as to what was going on in Hitler's mind now, Churchill answered amidst laughter, 'I have very little doubt that if he could have the past back he would probably play his hand a little differently. I think he would have hesitated long, before he rejected all the repeated peace efforts that were made by Great Britain, which even brought the name of our government into disrepute, so far did we go on the path of trying to placate and appease.' Hitler was no longer interested in merely restoring Germany's place among the countries of Europe. 'Appetite unbridled, ambition unmeasured – all the world! There was no end to the appetite of this, ah, of this wicked man.'¹³⁶

At the end of the questioning he climbed onto his chair and gave the V-sign, to prolonged applause.

HE WAS going to fly home the following morning. On the evening of May 25 and far into the night Churchill attempted a showdown with Roosevelt on TUBE ALLOYS and the American generals' attempt to keep the future work to themselves. Then their talk turned to the Mediterranean, and Churchill's desire for an invasion of Sardinia to follow that of Sicily. According to Roosevelt, Churchill acted 'like a spoiled boy' when he refused to give up this project. He persisted until Roosevelt said that he was not interested in it and he had better shut up.¹³⁷

After a long solitary duel, Churchill said: 'Well I will give up my part of this if you will let me have George Marshall to go for a trip to Africa.'

This was a new idea. He would return to London via Algiers. Surprisingly, Roosevelt agreed to this horsetrade on the spot. It is not certain what was in Churchill's mind except an uneasy feeling that he had failed to carry the Combined Chiefs on the main point, the military follow-through into the Italian mainland. Trying for a second chance, he would tell General Eisenhower that nothing less than Rome would satisfy the requirements of the year's campaign.¹³⁸ Since he frankly admitted this, that he intended pres-

suring Eisenhower, he wanted the president to attach General Marshall to the party as a balancing spokesman for the American viewpoint.¹³⁹ Marshall, who now appeared at the White House to say his farewells to the British, as he thought, found himself sent literally packing, with instructions to be ready to join Winston's plane in a few hours' time. Marshall told Stimson he hated it – it felt like being traded as a piece of baggage. Stimson too felt that to risk Marshall's life on such a trip seemed to be going 'pretty far.'¹⁴⁰ They were left no choice.

The Americans hoped that for once they had partially got the better of their allies. The British had had to compromise on some of their Mediterranean ambitions. They had even had to set a date for ROUND-UP.¹⁴¹ Stimson agreed that Churchill had had to make a number of concessions.¹⁴²

The British too were not displeased with how things had gone at TRIDENT. Sir John Dill wrote to Admiral Cunningham, 'It has all gone far better than any of us expected.'¹⁴³ Halifax told the departing prime minister that his visit and contacts with Congress at every level had been valuable. Halifax followed this flattery with a letter that would greet Winston on his return to London. He felt in his bones, he assured Churchill, that the visit had done immense good. 'The more I think about our future relations with these people, the more convinced I feel that the solid foundation on which it must be built on our side is that of respect.'¹⁴⁴ Bernard Baruch wrote to Bracken that Churchill had done a good job in Washington: 'We think he is honest, straight, sincere and a tough, hard-fighting man. The best thing he ever said was when he said he had not been made His Majesty's servant to liquidate the British empire.' That had stopped 'a lot of globaloney.'¹⁴⁵

All this did much good for Winston's ego, as it was intended to. Privately Halifax felt that the prime minister was disposed to overrate the value of the Americans' falling for him whenever they met him – their falling for his vigour, his humour, his freshness, and his indiscretions.¹⁴⁶ There was even so a lot to be said for face-to-face meetings like these. Churchill revealed to Halifax 'rather wistfully' that Hitler had twice invited him to meet him in 1937 or 1938, but he had not felt able to do so, since he would have been the Führer's guest, and unable to say what he thought; or if he had said it he would have been generally charged with a desire to warmonger. Both explanations seemed a little unreal.¹⁴⁷

By two in the morning (it was now the day of their departure, May 26) they had still not agreed on the wording of a message to Stalin. 'Let me take it with me tomorrow,' said Churchill. 'I will tidy it up and send it back to

you from Botwood.' 'It will be a good thing if Marshall comes with me,' he added. 'There is plenty of room in the plane.'

He slept for only a few hours. In the morning, Captain Richard Pim, who commanded the P.M.'s travelling map room, brought to him a distinguished-looking document, a specially typeset edition of the Atlantic Charter printed on hand-made vellum. The president's naval aide Lieutenant George M. Eley was hoping to get Churchill's autograph on it. At the time, in August 1941, both Churchill and Roosevelt had taken extravagant care *not* to sign the charter; ambushed like this however Winston saw no alternative, and he scrawled his name at its foot. He mumbled to Lieutenant Eley a few days later that it was first time he had signed it.¹⁴⁸

Roosevelt was mightily relieved to see the British go. For the next three or four days he slept eighteen hours a night, to recuperate from the irregular hours that Churchill had inflicted on him. Winston reminded him of a fictional gentleman –

a certain Count Hermann, a respectable German,
who smoked like a chimney and drank like a merman.

Unlike Churchill, he said, who had nothing on his mind but the war, he as president still had all the domestic cares of a great nation.¹⁴⁹ A few hours after Winston left, he remarked to his old friend Judge Felix Frankfurter at a White House banquet that Churchill's horizons, as a prime minister of Britain, were limited. When the judge suggested that the P.M. was an old man, who just wanted to get the war over, the president shook his head. 'That's the way he talked in all my meetings with him until Casablanca and this one,' he replied. 'But now he no longer says what he used to say – that all he wants is one big victory and he'll quit.'

Roosevelt reflected briefly and added: 'I suppose I ought not to say this, and you keep it to yourself: but when I'm with Winston I have a feeling that I'm twenty years older than he is.'¹⁵⁰

It was a curious pre-echo of what Winston's doctor Lord Moran heard him say in 1952, reflecting out loud on Roosevelt's death: 'I always looked up to him as an older man, though he was eight years my junior.'¹⁵¹

Had the American president become something of a father-figure in Winston's declining years, a ghost of the long dead Lord Randolph Churchill?

33: *Cheated of the Bomb*

WE MOMENTARILY LEAVE Mr Churchill in his Clipper flying-boat thundering down the Potomac river in Washington on May 26, 1943, its four big engines hurling plumes of spray behind them, as he sets out from Washington D.C., accompanied by a perceptibly ruffled General George C. Marshall, on the first leg of his journey home. This is the place at which to resume the parallel narrative of TUBE ALLOYS, the atomic project, and the widening gulf between the Allies.¹

Any independent British bomb effort would require large supplies of uranium ore and, it seemed, heavy water (the potential use of graphite instead of heavy water as the moderator in an atomic pile was at this time recognised only by the Americans). The fractional electrolytic distillation of heavy water required prodigious quantities of electric power. Uranium and power on this scale were available only in Canada. The United States had little native uranium. The British now learned that Washington had gone behind their backs, and that the director of the MANHATTAN project, Major-General Leslie R. Groves, had stitched up Canada's entire uranium and heavy water output in contracts signed with Canada's minister of munitions Mr C. D. Howe, in one of the war's less-explicable transactions.²

Churchill received this 'most disturbing information' from Sir John Anderson when he arrived in Washington. Two days later, Anderson cabled him that Ottawa had had full knowledge of the contracts.³ Whatever the truth of that, the fast footwork by the Americans had exploded Churchill's dream of building an independent British atomic bomb at this stage.

In justice to them, the Canadian signatories may have had no knowledge of the TUBE ALLOYS aspect of the deal. Lord Cherwell had first briefed the Canadian premier Mackenzie King on the project while at the White House on May 19, 1943. Accompanied by the Prof., Churchill had a further talk

on the wider political problems with the Canadian the next evening; he intimated that the British and Americans seemed to be drawing closer on the matter, and assured Mackenzie King that he would let him know if there was a need for him to talk to the president.⁴ The next day, May 21, Malcolm Macdonald, the British High Commissioner in Canada, told Mackenzie King that it was not until his recent visit to England that he learned that Howe had signed that contract. 'Britain,' noted Mackenzie King, 'had been expecting we would control the supplies for them.' Churchill now admitted that they might indeed need him to intervene with Roosevelt, because the U.S. army generals were keeping everything to themselves.⁵

Churchill reviewed this most unsatisfactory position with Lord Cherwell. Britain could not afford to ignore so deadly a weapon so long as Stalin and, it seemed, Hitler might develop it. If Germany got there first, Hitler might win the war after all. 'What is the [American] objection to continued complete collaboration?' asked the Prof. 'We have had frank and intimate exchange of information for many months and it has worked well.' Britain had contributed what she believed to be the best method to extract the fissile uranium-235 isotope, and she had persuaded the Americans that the '49 process' (the plutonium alternative) was feasible. 'What reason,' inquired the Prof. in a note to Winston, 'has emerged for excluding us now?'⁶

They both raised the matter with Roosevelt in Hopkins's presence on May 24; at Churchill's request, Roosevelt called a meeting the next afternoon at the White House, inviting Hopkins, Lord Cherwell, and Dr Vannevar Bush to attend. Challenged here by Cherwell to explain the restrictions on the exchange of information, Bush again referred evasively to security.

It seemed clear to the British that the Americans were hoping to gain an unfair lead, and Cherwell said so. It would take years for the British to catch up after the war, he said: 'Unless this manufacturing information was furnished to the British,' minuted Bush afterwards, quoting Lord Cherwell, 'they might feel impelled to alter the plans and go into manufacturing themselves, to the disadvantage of the balance of the war effort.' Otherwise, he said, the British would find themselves without this weapon after the war, which would leave them insecure – 'He made it clear, of course,' wrote Bush, 'that he did not mean secure as against the United States.'⁷

That evening, May 25, Churchill met Roosevelt; by the time he left at two A.M. they had reached yet another agreement ostensibly restoring the interchange of atomic information to the old conditions, the *status quo*, but again it was a gentlemen's agreement, *i.e.*, purely verbal.⁸

THIS WAS the position as Churchill's Clipper lifted off the Potomac the next day. Gentlemen's agreement or not, it was important to create what would now be called a paper-trail. 'I understand,' the Prof. accordingly wrote to Hopkins, 'that the matter we discussed was concluded satisfactorily and I am sure that this is largely due to your efforts. I am very glad, as it is certainly to everyone's advantage that the old conditions should be restored.'⁹

Churchill sent a telegram to Sir John Anderson reporting, 'TUBE ALLOYS. Conversation with the president entirely satisfactory.'¹⁰ 'The president agreed,' he amplified in a second telegram, 'that the exchange of information on TUBE ALLOYS should be resumed and that the enterprise should be considered a joint one.' This agreement was predicated on the basis that the atomic bomb might well be developed in time for use in the present war, and that 'it falls within the general agreement covering the interchange of research and invention secrets.'¹¹ It might perhaps have been more useful if the message that they sent to Hopkins had spelt it out so clearly.

Churchill wrote to Hopkins, architect in fact of most of the obstacles, on June 10, thanking him for settling the question 'so satisfactorily.' 'I am sure that the president's decision will be to the best advantage of both our countries,' he wrote. 'We must now lose no time in implementing it.'¹²

The stonewalling by the Americans however continued, as Hopkins and the army generals had always intended. Two years later Lord Cherwell would admit that, seen in retrospect, the talks at both Casablanca and Washington had in fact been inconclusive.¹³ London sent Mr W. Akers, British director of TUBE ALLOYS, to Canada; weeks passed, and he did not even receive permission to go to Washington. On June 10 Churchill reminded Hopkins of the recent agreement (of early May 26), and asked him to telegraph as soon as possible so that Akers and his experts could proceed to Washington.¹⁴

A week passed before Hopkins sent back an unhurried reply: 'The matter of TUBE ALLOYS is in hand and I think will be disposed of completely the first of the week.'¹⁵ But it was not.

On July 9 the prime minister telegraphed again, directly to the president, about the matter. 'Since Harry's telegram of 17th June I have been anxiously awaiting further news about TUBE ALLOYS. My experts are standing by and I find it increasingly difficult to explain delay. If difficulties have arisen I beg you to let me know at once what they are in case we may be able to help in solving them.'¹⁶

The situation had barely changed when Henry Stimson and George Marshall visited London later that summer (we shall meet them there in our next volume). On July 17, 1943 Secretary Stimson explained at tortuous length to Churchill what he claimed had happened. He had extracted, he said, five hundred million dollars from the Congress for MANHATTAN while refusing any explanation. He was quite frank about the project's commercial importance, because the bomb might not be ready for use in time for this war. 'There would be difficulties,' Churchill quoted him as saying to him, writing to Anderson the next day, 'in sharing the commercial fruits.' Roosevelt had told his secretary of war nothing of the previous debates with Churchill, and Stimson professed to be alarmed at the British impression that they were being cheated of the bomb. 'We based our demand,' Churchill explained to him, 'entirely upon the engagement entered into and the fact that this was a war secret which might play a great part.' Stimson, he told Anderson afterwards, seemed very friendly and receptive.¹⁷

All this was not without effect. On July 20 the president did write to Vannevar Bush confirming the thrust of his agreement with the British: 'While I am mindful of the vital necessity for security in regard to this, I feel that our understanding with the British encompasses the complete exchange of all information.' He therefore directed Bush to renew the 'full exchange of information' with the British on TUBE ALLOYS.¹⁸

SECURING COMPLIANCE from those who were less gentlemanly, the American scientists and U.S. army generals, was a different ball-game. As Lord Cherwell, unaware that Roosevelt had personally broken the log-jam, warned Churchill on July 22: 'The U.S. generals (especially Groves) think they are on to a good thing and want to keep it for themselves.' Some of Roosevelt's top scientists like Vannevar Bush and Conant, who were, in the Prof.'s informed view, 'apt to receive large donations from American industry,' had fallen into line with the generals. 'In the present political situation,' he advised, 'it is no doubt difficult for the president to make headway against an alliance of such formidable interests.'¹⁹ Visiting London for talks with Churchill and Stimson at No. 10 Downing-street on July 23, Dr Bush adhered rigorously to, and defended, the restrictions.

President Roosevelt put on a display of trying to enforce the agreement. Three days after this meeting a telegram came from him stating simply: 'I have arranged satisfactorily for TUBE ALLOYS,' but it gave no details. He invited Churchill now to send over his 'top man in this enterprise,' to 'get

full understanding from our people.’²⁰ A few days later another reminder came from Anderson, that even if Roosevelt was now back in play, they had still not touched the U.S. army generals: ‘Is there not a danger that General Groves at any rate will simply tell Stimson and Bush that – like all Americans who come to our misty island – they had been taken in by our hypocritical cunning and carried away by our brilliant prime minister?’ Lunching in London with Stimson and Marshall, Anderson heard from the former that their fear was that the British intended to profit from the atomic research after the war, having let the Americans incur all the expense.²¹

As the prime minister was reminded, Groves had a stranglehold on the empire’s uranium and heavy water. Churchill had it in his mind now to do what he should have done in Washington, namely set down the Anglo-American agreement in writing. He directed Anderson to prepare a suitable draft; he wanted to send it round to Stimson that same day.²² This was the birth of the Québec Agreement. Cherwell and Anderson prepared a draft in the form of a memorandum from Churchill to the president. They discussed it first with Stimson’s special assistant Harvey H. Bundy. Even in draft, which Anderson sent round to No. 10 on July 23, it represented a total abdication by Britain’s prime minister of all future atomic rights to the United States.

It assured the United States that Britain would never use this weapon against them or anybody else without their consent; nor would they pass atomic data to third parties without American agreement; and fourthly

in the event of this project proving capable of industrial application, I [Churchill] am prepared to undertake that we will abide by any agreement which you [Roosevelt] may tell me that you consider to be fair.²³

As Dr Bundy later pointed out, it was a unilateral offer by the prime minister; but Churchill evidently saw it as the only way to buy back Britain’s right – her birthright – to participate in a project out of which the Americans, by their finagling and prevarication, had cheated her. During talks between Anderson, Stimson, and Marshall, it was agreed to add a fifth clause, setting up a Combined Policy Committee to supervise the project and its use.²⁴ On July 29 the P.M. sent off the draft, virtually unchanged, to Roosevelt. Some days later, the British ambassador in Washington heard that Anderson ‘had had a good talk with Stimson and Marshall about his particular problems and hopes to see Conant tomorrow.’²⁵

We shall witness the agreement being signed at Québec in August 1943.

OUR NARRATIVE last glimpsed Mr Churchill as he departed from Washington on May 26, 1943. Roosevelt had come down to the Potomac river with Lord Halifax to see them off. Churchill was in a good temper, having just been handed the news that another enemy U-boat had been killed, but his fellow-passenger Lord Leathers could see how tired he had become over the last two days, and the prime minister had in fact left a number of matters with Roosevelt – like TUBE ALLOYS – unresolved in consequence.²⁶

They had what Winston, in a letter to Clementine, called 'an absolutely perfect journey,' flying from Washington up to Newfoundland in one seven-hour 'hop.' The Clipper landed at Botwood in the evening; here they transferred to an American C-54 cargo plane, as Churchill wanted to proceed straight to North Africa. It was the first time a C-54 had attempted this flight non-stop, but he wanted to avoid landing in England in case Eden and Attlee, those two spoilsports, prevented him undertaking another long trip so soon after his recent illness. He dined on Canadian soil, then covered the 2,700 miles to Gibraltar in a further seventeen-hour flight. On the way, Churchill wired to Eisenhower announcing his coming to Algiers with General Marshall; he planned to stay for a day or two and to visit 'the front.'²⁷

The plane rolled to a halt on the Rock's short airstrip, R.A.F. North Front, at five P.M. on May 27. It was too late to go straight on to Algiers before dusk. Wearing his pith helmet and plumes and full imperial regalia, the Governor of Gibraltar, Lieutenant-General Sir Noël Mason-Macfarlane, met Winston, and made him comfortable at the Convent; after dark, 'Mason Mac' had all the Rock's guns fired in an anti-aircraft exercise, a spectacular display. General Marshall was much taken by Churchill's methods and by the exaggerated courtesies which the Crown Colony accorded to him: the American privately referred to Churchill's 'super-salesmanship.'

Harold Macmillan arrived in a Flying Fortress from London the next morning and drove around the Rock to visit Winston, still in bed. Churchill irritably accused him of having disobeyed instructions about the French squadron at Alexandria. Macmillan had been working on Admiral Godfroy to soften him up ever since his appointment in December, and he calmly pointed out that whatever the methods employed, at least they had worked – blackmailed by General Giraud and Macmillan, who had threatened to cut off the fleet's funds, Godfroy had brought the fleet round to Dakar on May 17. 'No thanks to you,' grumbled the prime minister. 'I don't know,'

retorted Macmillan. 'You would have blamed me if the thing had gone wrong, so you must give me the credit when it has gone right.'²⁸

FOR THE onward leg of his journey to Algiers the next morning, Churchill switched to a third plane; an Avro York had been converted for him, an adaptation of the R.A.F.'s Lancaster bomber. Unlike the Liberator in which he had flown to Moscow in August 1942, this was fitted as a V.I.P. plane, with comfortable seats, a galley, and a private cabin. Accompanied now by Macmillan, he and his party flew on from Gibraltar to Algiers at eleven A.M. on May 28.²⁹ The York's autograph book shows that on board for this trip to North Africa and back to England were Churchill, Eden, Marshall, Brooke, Ismay, Tedder, and General Alexander; and Peck, Rowan, Thompson, Millard and Kinna of the prime minister's personal staff.³⁰

Churchill travelled this time in his guise as an 'Air Commodore.' Flying between continents in this comfortable plane, he dictated an affectionate letter to Clementine. 'My darling Clemmie,' this began, 'You really have been splendid in writing to me. Hardly a day has passed that I have not had a letter to give me so much pleasure and delight. I, on the other hand, have been most remiss but I really have been hunted altogether beyond the ordinary.' Not only had he transacted all the 'big business' about which he went to Washington, but he had taken advantage of all the time that the President could give him. 'They all made great complaint I had not brought you with me and made me promise that next time you must surely come.'

He retained pleasant memories of these eight days in Africa. He had been dog-tired when he arrived, but the sunshine and sea-bathing soon revived him. The York landed at Maison Blanche at four-thirty P.M. on Friday afternoon, May 28. Upsetting Eisenhower's arrangements Churchill moved into his villa in Algiers instead of Cunningham's, where he was supposed to stay, and settled straight into a comfortable chair on the porch with a glass and some ice. One morning Eisenhower's valet saw that the P.M.'s breakfast consisted of a bottle of white wine, a bottle of soda water and a dish of ice.³¹ The Americans seem to have hidden the liquor after that, because Churchill's staff wired their London colleagues urgently to give Eden three bottles of liqueur brandy to bring out with him. Eisenhower's staff now routinely referred to Winston as 'The Man Who Came To Dinner.'³²

They talked until dinner over at Cunningham's. Churchill criticised Eisenhower's failure to plan a quick follow-through with an invasion of Sicily after Tunisia – the 'Dunkirk' argument. He was completely overlooking the

need for landing-craft, observed Bedell Smith.³³ After HUSKY, Churchill persisted, they should go for the toe of Italy at once, 'provided that not too many German divisions had been moved there.' Otherwise nothing would be happening between August of this year and the invasion of France in May 1944. They talked about Hitler's coming battle for Kursk; the ULTRAS showed that he had 'teed-up' a gigantic tank offensive by the army groups of field-m Marshals Hans-Günther von Kluge and Erich von Manstein, and that Stalin was preparing for it in great depth. The Americans expected Hitler to lose a million men in the coming battle. Eisenhower yawned, wearying of this rehash of the strategic debate. 'The P.M. recited his story three different times in three ways last night,' he grumbled to his staff the next day. 'His method is to talk loudly until he has worn down the last shred of opposition.'³⁴ He was now glad that General Marshall was there to share the load.

Late on the thirtieth, Commander Thompson telephoned Harry Butcher, his counterpart on Eisenhower's staff, inquiring if the P.M. might go over at 10:45 P.M. to see him. Eisenhower agreed, though reluctantly, anticipating another session grinding on until one-thirty A.M. Churchill arrived fifteen minutes late, which infuriated Eisenhower – who had momentarily forgotten which was the more important, an American lieutenant-general or the prime minister of Britain. Churchill began by flattering Eisenhower – after all, he said, he was the Allied supreme commander, coming directly under the Combined Chiefs, who represented two great allies of which Britain was one; he complimented him on having created a unified Anglo-American command in which national prejudices were submerged. He added that he had 'sensed' a strong feeling by the Americans that the British were more eager to fight it out in the Mediterranean, than to launch a cross-Channel assault. He urged that the difference was only a matter of 'emphasis' – now that they were gaining the upper hand here in the Mediterranean, they should knock out Italy while they had the chance.

Eisenhower responded that he would be much wiser about such a decision once HUSKY had begun: if the Italians fought stubbornly there, as they had in Tunisia when well dug in, it was going to be 'hard sledding' all the way. Churchill had Italy on the brain, however. The British people would be glad to go on half rations, he volunteered, if this released enough shipping to solve the supply problems for the conquest of Italy. 'I confidently look forward to having Christmas dinner with you in Rome,' he concluded.³⁵

General Eisenhower hated these nocturnal arguments. Around one A.M. Churchill noticed Captain Butcher pacing around at the door with a flash-

light. 'I have used a variety of schemes to hustle visitors away at night,' this aide later recalled: sometimes he paraded in his bathrobe before the lingering guests. Whether or not the prime minister took the hint he left ten minutes later, and trudged up the driveway to Admiral Cunningham's villa.³⁶

He could see that Eisenhower had profound misgivings about HUSKY. Six weeks later, with the worst behind them, Churchill would scoff to his cabinet that the Americans had been in terror of invading Sicily, and that Eisenhower had declared that even two enemy divisions holding the island would render any Allied landing impossible; yet these same Americans, said Churchill, kept pressing for a cross-Channel invasion operation which would fill the Channel with the bodies of 'untrained American troops.'³⁷

There was a deeper reason. The Americans never liked campaigning in the Mediterranean. Both Stimson and Hull distrusted British intentions. 'They are straining every nerve to lay a foundation throughout the Mediterranean area for their own empire after the war is over,' reflected Stimson.³⁸



It will not surprise us to learn that, even now, most of Churchill's energies in Algiers were expended on the continuing political crisis over the French. On his orders a British plane had evacuated his elderly French friend, General Alphonse Georges, from occupied France on May 16; Georges, as a four-star general, far outranked de Gaulle. Churchill revealed to Eisenhower on May 30 that the rescue had gone without a hitch, though there was evidence that de Gaulle's 'nasties' had betrayed details of the general's escape plans to the Gestapo.³⁹ Although Georges was now sixty-eight, Winston intended to use him in London as chief of a French military mission attached to H.M. Government.⁴⁰ In Algiers he had long separate talks with General Georges and with General Giraud.⁴¹ He told Georges to keep his head down here in Algiers, and to stay out of the way of de Gaulle, to whom Winston, ever the linguist, referred four times as a 'prime sonofabitch,' when conferring with the American diplomat Robert Murphy on May 29.⁴²

Brigadier-General Charles de Gaulle arrived at Algiers' French airfield on May 30. His departure from London did not end his private war with the British, and the British foreign office continued to protect and pander to him; on their orders the B.B.C. that day announced, in the same bulletin, the transfer of the French fleet from Alexandria to Dakar and his arrival in Algiers, as though the credit for the fleet movement belonged entirely to

him.⁴³ Churchill continued to loathe him intensely. On hearing of the prior arrival of General Georges, de Gaulle knew who was behind it and was displeased.⁴⁴ On May 30 Jean Monnet, a leading French economist whom the Americans had imported from Washington, found the newly arrived de Gaulle bristling at both the British and the Americans, and again talking quite openly of allying France with Germany and the Soviet Union after the war; he felt that de Gaulle was either mad or bad, or both.

The hostility to him as a 'renegade' was widely shared by the French officer corps in Algeria; feelings were running so high that Murphy, Roosevelt's point man here, fully expected somebody to assassinate de Gaulle, and said so out loud.⁴⁵ Nobody took the hint, if hint it was.

Negotiations began between the rival Frenchmen; it was Casablanca all over again. Visiting Eisenhower on June 1 Churchill disparaged de Gaulle as an 'ego-maniac,' and declared that when the 'divorce' finally came through he would cut the general and his 'Gaullist' followers off Britain's payroll, and require the B.B.C. and Britain's other propaganda agencies to drop them too. 'However,' noted Eisenhower's aide, recording this emotional conversation, 'much depends upon the outcome of the current discussions.'

They were now victims of their own efforts to create a French leader. Like Frankenstein's monster, said Churchill, de Gaulle was out of control.⁴⁶ Seeing fresh trouble brewing Macmillan must have alerted the foreign office, because Anthony Eden flew out from England posthaste to 'untangle' the warring French generals. He arrived at three p.m. on the last day of May. Macmillan fetched him personally from the airport and brought him to the admiral's villa, where Churchill had a long talk with him. 'He is worried about French negotiations,' recorded Eden on a sheet of notepaper,

& strongly anti de Gaulle in part at least as a result of stories told him by [General] Georges whom I met later at dinner & who struck me as a reactionary old defeatist. Winston said I might have to intervene if matters took a turn for the worse.

Eden professed to be most reluctant to do anything of the kind. The matter was not pressing anyway, they agreed, since he and Churchill were off to 'the front' in Tunisia for forty-eight hours. (Churchill at one point panicked Eden by asking what he thought of one or both of them flying on from here to Russia, to see Stalin, from which quarter further real trouble was also coming. He asked Eden to think it over until the morrow.⁴⁷)

Churchill called a staff conference at five P.M., and Eisenhower invited them all to dinner. Grateful that Eisenhower was taking Churchill off his hands, Cunningham declined the invitation and fled to his cabin on a battleship. At Eisenhower's villa that evening, the others – fourteen of them crowded round a table with barely room for ten – ate and drank their fill. Boozily sizing them up, Eden decided that he rather liked generals Eisenhower and Marshall after all. Churchill, raising pressure on his second Scotch and coming up to a full head of steam on his third, invited Eisenhower to come along with him the next day on his trip to 'the front' in Tunisia. Eisenhower pleaded that he had work to do.⁴⁸

Eisenhower and Cunningham boarded a British cruiser at Bône and steamed toward Pantelleria, a fortified Italian island between Tunis and Sicily, to watch its bombardment the next day. Their bombers would hurl six thousand tons of bombs at this little rock. Churchill and his party, which now included Randolph once more, flew over to Tunis, stopping briefly to watch an American bomber unit being briefed for the mission. Churchill had wanted to go along on the invasion of the island, but Pantelleria surrendered without a shot. He had estimated there were 3,000 soldiers on the island; Eisenhower said there were far more. Churchill said he'd give him five centimes for each one over that figure. Eleven thousand Italians were taken prisoner here. Churchill paid up, remarking that at one-twentieth of a cent each he'd take all the Italians Eisenhower could get his hands on.⁴⁹

He motored out to the Roman amphitheatre at Carthage, where thousands of troops were waiting to hear him speak. At dinner with Eisenhower, back in Algiers, Churchill would reflect, 'I was speaking from where the cries of Christian virgins rent the air while roaring lions devoured them.' He paused for a moment, visualising in his mind's eye the not unpleasing prospect. 'But I am no lion,' he said, 'and certainly not a virgin.'

For a while he motored down the route of the battle, past destroyed Nazi weaponry. There was a giant troop-carrying Messerschmitt transport plane with six engines. It was a rarity – so many of its fellows now lay at the bottom of the Mediterranean with their late cargoes. He also saw a captured Tiger tank; its big 88-millimetre gun was the terror of its opponents.

THE DAYS were baking hot and the sunshine of a quality not often encountered in southern England. On June 2 Churchill held court at Air Vice-Marshal Sir Arthur Coningham's luxurious seashore villa at Hammamet. 'Mary' Coningham was commander-in-chief of the Tactical Air Force which

had contributed powerfully to Montgomery's victories. This villa, marvelled one air marshal, summoned now to meet Churchill and Tedder, was complete with a bridal suite and a sunken marble bath. 'Before lunch a bathe,' he wrote in his private diary – 'P.M. refused to be persuaded to go in pool but walked through house clad in a cigar and shirt tails. Found him in sea – also Anthony Eden, C.I.G.S., Alex[ander], Ismay, Mary, Randolph, George B., Tedder, – not a costume among the lot.' The sea was colder than elsewhere. They had a good lunch in the patio alongside the pool with Macmillan and General Richard Keightley, commanding the Armoured Division.* Churchill and Eden addressed assembled ('properly clad') R.A.F. men before parting, then rejoined the York after lunch and flew back to Algiers.⁵⁰



During, or perhaps even because of, Churchill's absence from Algiers, on June 1, 1943, the French commanders began to resolve their differences. They all met, including Churchill's ancient friend General Georges. Georges, as the most recent arrival from France, warned that de Gaulle was overstating the strength of his own following there; he told Macmillan afterwards that de Gaulle was another Hitler in the making. Small wonder that, speaking to Macmillan, de Gaulle spoke very ill of Georges; he also insisted on the dismissal of a number of Vichy-orientated French generals in North Africa, and snarled to Murphy, in Macmillan's presence, 'I represent future France, and it will be better for us all if you will support me.'⁵¹

Wild reports filtered around Algiers. That day, rumours reached Eisenhower that de Gaulle had infiltrated two thousand French troops, hardened in the fighting for Tunisia, into the city of Algiers, where he was planning to stage a coup against Giraud and take over from Allied Forces headquarters and the acting governor General Juin. Eisenhower ordered a survey of the American and British troops available to quash a Gaullist putsch; they were not many, but the firepower of two British battleships and an aircraft-carrier would give him the whip hand.⁵² No coup happened. On June 2 Giraud sent a letter to de Gaulle demanding that he rid his entourage of 'his fascist generals' and in particular of 'Passy,' whom he too accused of 'Gestapo

* Both would be involved in the controversial forced repatriation in April and May 1945 of thousands of civilians from Austria to Marshal Tito's Yugoslavia. – Nikolai Tolstoy, *The Minister and the Massacres* (London, 1986).

methods' and maintaining 'secret torture chambers' in London.⁵³ This was the state of play as Churchill and Eden returned from Tunis that evening.

BACK IN Algiers, both Churchill and Eden had private and separate interviews with both Giraud and de Gaulle. It was the first time that Churchill had met de Gaulle since the frustration of his edict that the general was to be 'eliminated.' Macmillan and Murphy urged Giraud to be conciliatory. Georges, who had seemed 'more Giraudist than Giraud' only a few days earlier, now moderated his attitude. The talks went on far into the night (June 2–3) while Eisenhower's patrol cars still scoured the streets of Algiers looking for signs of a Gaullist putsch.

After that angry letter from Giraud impugning de Gaulle, the storm was spent. A sudden calm descended, and June 3 saw the seven feuding French primadonnas meeting, agreeing, and setting up what shortly became the French Committee for National Liberation (F.C.N.L.). Giraud gave de Gaulle a cordial if nervous greeting. De Gaulle made a speech and even embraced Giraud. 'Moved and embarrassed,' reported an O.S.S. observer, 'Giraud returned the embrace.' Later that day, June 3, Macmillan spent a delightful evening with Eden, Churchill, Eisenhower and the latter's staff – Tedder, Cunningham, and Montgomery. There was cause for celebration. Macmillan's methods had forced the French to see reason.

THERE HAD also been a final military conference with Eisenhower and Marshall on June 3, 1943 at Algiers, at Eisenhower's house. They agreed that Eisenhower should advise the Combined Chiefs to exploit the campaign after HUSKY into the toe of Italy. So Churchill had got his way.⁵⁴ Under pressure from Churchill, they also agreed that Eisenhower should go ahead with bombing the railroad marshalling yards just outside Rome, subject to approval from London and Washington. There was a danger that the Italians might bomb Cairo in revenge but Churchill rather welcomed this risk as it might finally cause Egypt to declare war.⁵⁵

The press published news of the de Gaulle–Giraud rapprochement on June 4, 1943. Giraud, it was announced, had had several conferences with de Gaulle in the interests of national unity and was on the very best of terms with him.⁵⁶ A new French Committee of National Liberation had been set up in Algiers, to which de Gaulle and Giraud could each nominate two members. De Gaulle would now move his organisation from London to Algiers.⁵⁷ Admiral Cunningham hosted a luncheon for the seven mem-

bers of the new Committee to meet Churchill and Eden before they left. The prime minister spoke a few words in his own French patois, speaking with an alcoholic *tendresse* of his fondness for France and the French army since he had first made their acquaintance thirty-five years before.

Generals Giraud, de Gaulle, and Georges repaid his eloquence with speeches of their own – the one moment of black humour being when the General Georges made an innocent reference to 'Joan of Arc' which won belly-laugh from the British present, a response which both baffled and pleased the French guests. Giraud paid tribute to Churchill, and expressed gratitude for the kindness shown him as he passed through Gibraltar; he was unaware of the nocturnal scene that his posturing had provoked, causing Eisenhower, it will be remembered, to cry, 'What I need around here is a damned good assassin,' and Mason-Macfarlane to offer a little airplane accident and the services of his excellent 'body-disposal squad.'

For reasons we can without difficulty surmise, de Gaulle announced at this time that he intended to stay here in North Africa, rather than London, 'until the invasion of France.'⁵⁸

After that June 4 luncheon, Churchill rode out with Eisenhower to the airfield for the flight back to England. The York took off at 3:40 P.M., and landed at R.A.F. North Front at 6:30 P.M. for a refuelling stop. It took off at ten-thirty from Gibraltar for England, landing at six A.M. on the fifth. Word was sent ahead that they were flying direct to Northolt airfield, just outside London. The English welcoming party waiting at Northolt, deprived of such Mediterranean vacations, seemed a pale and sickly lot. Eden's private secretary Oliver Harvey found Winston 'strangely brown.' 'I arrived at the airfield,' wrote Churchill's secretary, John Martin, 'in time to see the great aircraft arrive with its escort, like a lot of small birds round a cuckoo.'

CHURCHILL TOLD his cabinet that, while he had now formed a high opinion of George Marshall, both as a man and as an intellect, his Joint Chiefs seemed incapable of grasping how important it was to knock Italy out of the war. 'It was only by getting the president to agree to Marshall's tying up the loose ends on the spot,' recorded one participant in this cabinet meeting, 'that Winston feels that he has altered reluctant acquiescence in our plans to wholehearted support.'⁵⁹ He repaired that afternoon to Chequers for two days' well-earned relaxation, inviting besides Clementine and Sarah only the Prof., Bracken, and John Martin, to whom Winston's return brought 'an end to the convenient lull at No. 10.'

There was one other guest at Chequers, 'Bomber' Harris, chief of R.A.F. Bomber Command.⁶⁰ As an enthusiastic area-bomber and unrepentant mass killer, Sir Arthur Harris was not everybody's idea of the ideal weekend house-guest. Lord Halifax, who spent a night with him a few weeks later found however that while he was 'a rough fellow, and not very attractive to me as an individual,' Harris was 'exactly the right man for his present job.'⁶¹ Churchill liked him, and was much in his debt.

The relationship between the prime minister and his bomber commander Sir Arthur Harris was one of the pillars of the war effort. Each provided courage to the other in the darker moments of their campaigns – Churchill was notoriously prone to fits of manic depression, what he termed his 'Black Dog.' He might be disappointed when foul weather thwarted the bomber squadrons, but he would end his harangue, down the telephone line to Bomber Command headquarters at High Wycombe, with the words: 'I am not pressing you to fight the weather as well as the Germans; never forget that.' He often invited Harris down to Chequers now. The air chief marshal watched with fascination the spectacle of Churchill 'on the prowl,' as he later described, in siren suit, embroidered slippers, and as he mastered, with sonorous phrase and valiant gesture, each crisis which arose.⁶² It had sufficed for Winston to mention to 'Tommy' over dinner – with Harris as guest of honour – on the Sunday night before he left for Washington that he wanted a list of 'important German towns and their population,' and the list and map were rushed across the Atlantic as soon as they were ready.⁶³

Now Harris was back at the country mansion, bringing the famous Blue Books, the bound volumes of maps, pie-charts, histograms, bomb-plots, and damage-photos showing where the thousands of tons of high explosive and firebombs had rained down on the enemy during Churchill's absence. There were photos of the flooding caused by the breach of the Ruhr Dams, and of the swathe cut through the valley town of Wuppertal-Barmen by Harris's 791 bombers on the night of May 29–30, the first such raid to kill people in their thousands. The raging fires and exploding bombs had killed over 2,450 civilians in thirty minutes, most of them burned alive; forty Pathfinder bombers had first cascaded loads of pure incendiaries onto a tight ring of red 'target-indicator flares' laid down precisely by Mosquito bombers flying blind on the new OBOE radar-beam system.

There was one disturbing factor that Harris mentioned: their own loss rate was climbing fast, as the Germans developed new night fighting tactics and better radar equipment. The five per cent casualty threshold was ap-

proaching beyond which, so popular wisdom had it, the bomber crews' morale would be fatally affected. Each aircrew member, and they were the cream of Britain's young men, knew that when the five per cent loss-rate was reached, his odds on surviving a tour of operations were almost zero.

It was only these steadily mounting losses that caused concern among the public, according to the morale reports. The public were perversely proud of the saturation bombing campaign, though some people did condemn newspapers for publishing pictures of Guy Gibson and his fellow airmen after the brilliantly executed raid on the Ruhr dams, fearing that if they were taken prisoner the Germans would subject them to 'cruel treatment.' According to these surveys, the public expressed bitterness at the few who ventured to suggest that the R.A.F. bombing was 'inhuman.'⁶⁴ The public was of course in the dark as to the real nature of the strategic bomber offensive, and remained so until the official history appeared in 1961.

THOSE WERE the days when one of the B.B.C.'s most successful weekly radio comedies was *When Ignorance is Bliss*; it was an era before television networks competed to bring the visual realities of war into every living room. Other than at Wuppertal, the war's civilians, in Britain, Germany, and Japan, still did not know what lay in store – the terrifying V-weapons, the firestorms, the machine-gun strafing attacks, the public halls filled with hundreds of corpses laid out in rows, the sealed air-raid bunkers superheated by the outside conflagrations until their thousands of human inhabitants had been reduced to foot-thick layers of ash. To Churchill, the bombing raids were a vital political tool, essential to impress Joseph Stalin. He never dwelt with his thoughts upon the horrors his bombers were inflicting. That same month, June 24, 1943 would bring the first firestorm to Germany: an R.A.F. attack on Elberfeld, the other half of Wuppertal, killed three thousand more people in under half an hour in this little industrial valley town.

Was it having any effect? Until now, the enemy had seemed to be taking the bombing in their stride. An analysis of German mail captured in Algiers, much of it from the most heavily bombed areas of Germany, revealed little hatred of the British. Anthony Eden, a supporter of saturation bombing, was perplexed to find that these letter-writers betrayed no remorse, no understanding that 'they began it.' While a longing for peace generally ran through the letters, there was 'no hint' against Hitler and his regime. 'Goebels [*sic*] has done his work well,' concluded the foreign secretary.⁶⁵ The strategic bombing offensive would have to become crueller still.

34: *'Soldiers Must Die'*

THEY HAD ALL but forgotten about General Wladyslaw Sikorski, prime minister of Poland in exile.

Some time before Churchill's arrival in North Africa at the end of May 1943 he had received a letter from the general, expressing Poland's resolute desire to take part in the invasion of the Continent: 'As you know,' the letter concluded,

I am leaving shortly for the Middle East to inspect the Polish forces in those parts, but before my departure I feel I must congratulate you with all my heart on your American speeches. I am sure you will like to know that all Poles, those who fight and suffer in Poland as well as those who are within the orbit of the British empire, put an almost mystic trust in Great Britain and in your leadership.¹

Having signed that letter, General Sikorski had left England.² His position had become virtually untenable. The Kremlin was clamouring that he must restructure his government; he was adamant that he would not.³ He would spend June in the Levant, touring Polish units in Iraq, Syria, and Palestine.⁴ The two prime ministers were at opposite ends of the balance-arm of fortune: as Sikorski went his unhappy way around the Middle East from unit to unit of Poland's crushed and – since Katyn – virtually officerless forces, Churchill was savouring the early fruits of victory. He was being driven through raucous City crowds to receive the Freedom of the City at the Guildhall, cheered by people of every Allied hue, in overalls, in uniform, and in office garb, who had lined the streets to see their premier.

One unexpected event clouded Churchill's horizon: the Vatican announced that it was recognising Sikorski's government. His was the first

exile government to receive this blessing. It was a slap at the Kremlin. Then a larger and more sinister cloud loomed: on June 28 the Soviet ambassador Ivan Maisky called at the foreign office, and told Eden that Moscow was recalling both him and his colleague A. Y. Bogomolov, ambassador to the exiled governments, to Moscow 'for consultations.' In diplomatic language, this was a very stern rebuke; Cadogan commented: 'I don't like this.'⁵

RELATIONS WITH Joseph Stalin were under a strain. There were rumours that he was contemplating doing a deal with the Nazis for the second time. Churchill was assiduously feeding Stalin with reports – originating from Bletchley Park, although the Russians were not told this – about the colossal tank offensive, CITADEL, which Hitler was now expected to start early in July. This flow of ugly news may have been counter-productive. In Stalin's view, his armies were bearing 'almost single-handed' the pressure of the Wehrmacht in the east. He was all the more disheartened to learn from Roosevelt that the Allies had decided to postpone the cross-Channel invasion. He had been promised after Casablanca that it would take place this coming summer.⁶ He lodged a furious protest with Roosevelt, and he ordered his ambassador Ivan Maisky to visit Churchill on June 9 to inquire precisely what the Allies did intend to do for the rest of 1943.

Freshly back from Algiers, Churchill could only reply that their current intent was to knock Italy out of the war. This would indirectly assist the Soviet Union, as Hitler would have to replace the missing Italian divisions in the Balkans and elsewhere. He also referred to how R.A.F. Bomber Command would be stepping up its onslaught on Germany; this would tie down one and a half million Germans in flak defences and factories. Harris's 'Battle of the Ruhr' was at its climax. The spring of 1944 would be 'terrifying' for the Germans, he promised. Of course he regretted the postponement of the cross-Channel invasion but, he said, they were doing the best they could. Maisky asked if the European war would end in 1944; Churchill avoided definite reply. He turned the conversation instead to Turkey, saying that he would press her to grant air and naval bases to the Allies. He described at some length the conflict in American public opinion over whether the defeat of Germany or Japan should come first; some 'ill-informed' Americans, he added, even considered the Chinese militarily more valuable than the Russians. He mentioned in conclusion that while in the United States he had often been asked 'why Russia did not join in the war against Japan.' He had always answered, 'We have never asked her to do more.'⁷

This was mostly guff and easily recognised as such. Stalin's reply was correspondingly uncompromising: the Allies were in default on their military obligations. On June 12 Churchill had a long telephone talk with Eden about the underlying implications of such a remark. Eden did not take it too seriously; Stalin, he said, had always preferred to see Britain striking across the Channel rather than into Italy or the Balkans.⁸ After waiting a week, Churchill replied to Stalin in language of unprecedented frankness, saying that he would not allow a senseless massacre of British troops just to dispel Russian suspicions. 'I am getting rather tired,' he wrote to Stalin,

of these repeated scoldings considering that they have never been actuated by anything but cold-blooded self-interest and total disdain of our lives and fortunes.

It would be of no help to Russia, he lectured Stalin, 'if we threw away a hundred thousand men in a disastrous cross-Channel attack.' The Germans could reinforce a counter-attack through Europe's roads and railways far faster than the Allies could maintain their build-up across the beaches. 'I cannot see how a great British defeat and slaughter would aid the Soviet armies,' he said. The Allies were winning other victories elsewhere, he reminded Stalin. As for the lack of consultation, about which Stalin had complained to Roosevelt, Churchill again invited him to come and meet them, perhaps at the main British naval base in the north of Scotland, Scapa Flow.⁹

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT heard these distant sounds of Kremlin disquiet and decided on a different approach. He now explored the possibility of a meeting with Stalin – but only the two of them, a summit *à deux*, without Churchill and without their staffs, just as he had discussed with Mackenzie King. Bearing secret messages to this effect, Averell Harriman, the president's special emissary, arrived from Washington in London on June 23; he was accompanied by Lord Beaverbrook, who had shared the two-day plane journey with him. Churchill invited them to dine that same evening.

Robbed of two nights' sleep, Beaverbrook was short-tempered; dinner, with Clemmie and Harriman's daughter Kathleen, brought out the worst in Winston too. He was visibly testy, and Beaverbrook sensed the prime minister's old 'anti-Red' blood coming to the boil again. Since the pneumonia, Max told one associate, the P.M. was losing his grip; his legs had begun to fail him, and his buoyancy and capacity for work had diminished.¹⁰

Harriman saw none of these symptoms. He assured Hopkins that he found the prime minister better in both health and vigour.¹¹ After Beaverbrook left around midnight the American stayed on, because the president had entrusted him with several messages for Churchill's eyes alone: he revealed Roosevelt's ambition to meet alone with Stalin somewhere. Churchill was to be excluded, 'so as not to disturb the intimacy' of their *tête-à-tête*, as Harriman put it. This cannot have pleased Winston. For two hours they discoursed on every other topic that currently possessed the two great Allies – de Gaulle, China, India, and Poland, and then back through the Soviet Union to the delicate matter of that Roosevelt–Stalin meeting.

Churchill concealed his alarm. Maintaining his bonhomie toward Harriman, he argued firmly for a Three-, not Two-, Power meeting, and one held if possible on British soil. When Harriman explained that American public opinion believed that their president was too much under his influence, Winston suggested that British public opinion would not take kindly to what Roosevelt was proposing either. Arguing subtly, Harriman said that in precisely the same measure as it annoyed the British, it would both flatter Stalin and impress American opinion. He suggested that there was no urgency, but Churchill was deeply upset, and he sent for Eden at midnight, after the American withdrew; he then had Harriman brought back in at one A.M., and told him to explain all this to the foreign secretary, along with current American views on Portugal (operation LIFE BELT), France, and a projected visit by the American emissary Myron Taylor to the Vatican in Rome – a visit which Eden did not 'much like' just now.¹²

Churchill detained the foreign secretary until two-thirty A.M. Again Eden tried to placate him: he thought it unlikely that such a Roosevelt–Stalin meeting would ever take place, given that 'Joe doesn't much like wasting his time.'¹³ Churchill however drafted an argumentative reply to Roosevelt the next day with Eden, and he called Harriman back to No. 10 Downing-street at one A.M. on Friday morning, June 25, to receive it.

HE INVITED Harriman down to Chequers that weekend. Their remaining talk revolved around the knotty problem of de Gaulle. Harriman could now report secretly to Roosevelt that the prime minister was indeed ready to seize any opportunity to lay the general's ambitions, even to the point of his 'elimination,' if it should come to that; it was that word again (the passage is omitted from the printed version).¹⁴ From the language being used, and the august station of its users, it could have seemed that sooner or later

an inconvenient general was going to meet with an airplane accident; and that Mason-Macfarlane would be needing his body-disposal squad.

De Gaulle continued to obsess Churchill. It was as though Algiers had changed nothing – the enemy was no longer that German in Berlin, but this Frenchman in Algiers. He had again been heard threatening to deal with Moscow and Berlin. Churchill filled a cabinet meeting on June 28 with the subject, stating that he had no intention of allowing de Gaulle to affect relations with Roosevelt – ‘he would be quite prepared to dispense with his [de Gaulle’s] services if he gave trouble,’ as Brooke summarised their talk.¹⁵

The storm signs multiplied. Just as the Vatican had recognised Sikorski’s government, Moscow unexpectedly recognised the French Committee of National Liberation without consulting London or Washington. Churchill recommended that they not follow suit until the F.C.N.L. proved its good intentions.¹⁶ He found support from the Americans – Eisenhower, Murphy, and Winant – for this, but not from his own foreign office. Macmillan, taking an independent line that bordered on insubordination, favoured the Soviet line, lamenting that he was unable to get London to impress the true position about de Gaulle on Washington.¹⁷ Eisenhower eventually backed his line; at least, on July 6 a telegram arrived from Macmillan stating this.¹⁸

De Gaulle seems to have cast a spell on Macmillan because, ‘disgusted’ with the stupidities of London and Washington, and despite strict orders to the contrary issued for precisely the reason that the Free French had always been regarded as security risks, the minister informed de Gaulle at six P.M. on July 9 that HUSKY, the invasion of Sicily, was to begin at dawn.¹⁹

IT HAD been agreed that before any bombing of Rome began Eisenhower had to obtain the approval of both the cabinet in London and the Combined Chiefs in Washington. It was not an easy decision. After seeing Archbishop Spellman the prime minister had assured Roosevelt that he would not bomb Rome for the present; but during discussions in Algiers on HUSKY he had decided that whatever the objections to bombing the Eternal City itself, the marshalling yards were proper objectives.²⁰ He had seen enough of Harris’s post-raid photos to know that there was no real distinction.

Tedder had explained to Churchill the tactics he would be using to disrupt the enemy communications through Italy. Tedder ‘much wished,’ as Churchill reported to Roosevelt, to bomb the railroad facilities in Rome. The two principal targets were the rail junction at San Lorenzo and the Littorio marshalling yard, said Churchill, each over three miles from the

Vatican. A large force of bombers would attack them in daylight; there would be a 'small chance' of damage being done to Rome, but 'none' of damage to the Vatican.²¹ On June 8 the British chiefs of staff asked Churchill for a go-ahead.²² Churchill secured cabinet backing for this operation on the tenth.

Communicating this British opinion to Cordell Hull on the eleventh, Admiral Leahy said that the Joint Chiefs now agreed with the British; Hull directed Myron Taylor, his emissary to the Vatican, to indicate this in confidence to the Pope. Taylor did so, 'discreetly.'²³ Eden asked for the Pope to be reassured that the bomber crews would not attack the Vatican City; but he could not exclude the possibility that the Axis powers would deliberately do so and blame the Allies.*

Everybody who had seen Harris's famous Blue Books knew what even such limited air raids would do to Rome. People around Churchill began to get cold feet. Eden, who had not previously opposed bombing civilian targets, pointed out to the chiefs of staff on June 18 that four important Papal buildings were located outside the Vatican, and quite close to the marshalling yards.²⁴ Churchill told the president on June 21: 'I think we ought to instruct our pilots to observe all possible care in order to avoid hitting any of the Papal buildings in the City of Rome listed in Article 13 of [the] Lateran Treaty, especially St. John Lateran.'

The latter, San Giovanni in Laterano, the 'Mother Church of Christendom,' was a mere thousand yards from the San Lorenzo marshalling yards. Though telling young British or American airmen to avoid this or that building, when striking from altitudes of twenty or thirty thousand feet, might seem to reek of sophistry, it salved Winston's conscience; and Roosevelt's too, for he seized upon it and called it an excellent suggestion.²⁵

Cadogan, ever the diplomat, advised the chiefs of staff to argue that their right to bomb Rome derived from the Italian participation 'at Mussolini's personal request' in Hitler's bombardment of London in 1940.²⁶ The Italians had not bombed Washington however, and American planes would be doing much of the bombing. The Combined Chiefs of Staff sent a slew of directives to Eisenhower cautioning him. Their cumulative effect can be assessed from a follow-up telegram from the R.A.F. delegation in Washington to Sir Charles Portal: 'There is no question of running out,' this assured him, 'but the reverse, as they [the C.C.S.] are most concerned not to tie

* Hitler did in June 1943 consider bombing Italy's Brenner Pass using unexploded British bombs; but not the Vatican. David Irving, *Hitler's War*, millennium edition, page 591.

Eisenhower or frighten him into abandoning the project.' Marshall remained in favour, referring to the bombing of St. Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey in London and of the churches in Malta, and saying that if Americans had had their churches bombed 'they would have no qualms about Rome' either. If it would 'reduce casualties on beaches,' Marshall would accept the risk of 'destroying the churches' in Rome. The Joint Chiefs endorsed this robust view.²⁷ Their British colleagues held to the view that Rome contained military objectives 'in the strictest sense,' and 'there is therefore no reason why it should be immune for all time merely because it happens to contain a number of religious and cultural monuments.' If, by good luck, the treasures escaped damage, then photographs proving this should be 'immediately distributed.'²⁸

Their superior inter-Allied authority, the Combined Chiefs, were however nervous, urging Eisenhower to be the first to get out word of the attack, to pre-empt any 'enemy version.' 'This will avoid [the] enemy seizing an opportunity of asserting that we have attacked the shrine of Christendom and thus attempting to create misapprehension which might not be confined to the Catholic world.'²⁹

Fearing that the time was not far off when Rome would start to burn, the Vatican did what it could. The Italian government repeated its attempts to have the city recognised as an 'open city,' since they had removed their military commands months before. On June 9 the Italian government confirmed to the Vatican that the German liaison offices had also left Rome. The Vatican declared that the entire city was 'the Episcopal See of the Holy Father' and if the British bombed it the Pope would protest to the world and arouse Catholics everywhere.³⁰ The Vatican diplomats informed Myron Taylor of this on June 28; they added a warning that should a 'spontaneous uprising' follow an air raid on Rome, they could not guarantee the safety of the Allied diplomats harboured within the Vatican walls.³¹ Taylor's outraged British colleague termed this 'blackmail,' and he informed London that if the Vatican tried that language on him, he would respond that the result would only be 'further and more severe' bombing of Rome.³²

The prime minister wanted to see Rome in flames. President Roosevelt cabled him on July 5 that Field-Marshal Sir John Dill had told him of this desire: 'It is my opinion,' he wrote, 'that Eisenhower should be given full discretion as to the necessity from a military point of view of bombing the marshalling yards and should be given full discretion as to the time if and when he considers the attack advantageous.'³³ Dill signalled to the war cabi-

net offices on July 11, discouraging any effort to prepare the religious community or public opinion in advance for the bombing of Rome.³⁴

TO THE irritation of the prime minister, political considerations still constrained the main force of heavy bombers.

'Butcher' Harris now repeated to him a proposal which he had first made in December 1942, to use his No. 617 Squadron, the 'Dambusters,' to deliver precision attacks on Benito Mussolini's office at the Palazzo Venezia and his residence at the Villa Torlonia.

In an operation which Harris provisionally code-named *AUDAX*, Guy Gibson's Lancasters would fly across France under cover of darkness, and roar in across the city at rooftop height at nine-thirty one morning – dropping thousand-pound bombs fused with three-second delays on the Fascist leader's office, and simultaneously on his residence 'in case the Duce is late that morning.'³⁵ At the time Harris had first mooted the plan, it was turned down because of the general ban on bombing Rome.

Portal liked the idea and asked the Intelligence service to check up on the Duce's routine. He passed it on to Churchill. 'I suggest that if Mussolini were killed or even badly shaken at the present time,' the chief of air staff added, 'this might greatly increase the chance of our knocking Italy out at an early date and I therefore ask your permission to lay the operation on.'³⁶

It is noteworthy that on all sides of this brutal conflict the warring statesmen instinctively shied away from killing identifiable opponents (vexatious ex-opponents like Darlan and allies who had become an inconvenience were a different proposition). No R.A.F. air raid would ever be launched against Hitler's 'Wolf's Lair'; and now Anthony Eden proved oddly averse to this particular idea of striking at the Duce in pompous person.

Of course, Eden had conferred with Mussolini face to face, and like Churchill had at one time even professed an admiration for him. 'I do not like this,' he wrote, referring to Harris's proposal. 'The chances of killing Mussolini are surely very slight, and those of "shaking" him not much greater. If we fail to kill him, we shall certainly not do his reputation any harm, we may even raise his stock of waning popularity. Meanwhile we shall have incurred the odium of knocking the older part of the city about' – again, an uncharacteristic squeamishness in Eden – 'and causing civilian casualties without achieving any military result.'

Churchill agreed, though not for those reasons. He was after a more all-encompassing bombing raid on Rome than that.³⁷

In the month after his return from Washington, Averell Harriman saw a lot of Churchill. He believed that everything was functioning just as Roosevelt had wanted, except for the tricky business with 'Uncle Joe.'

Churchill received two lengthy messages from Stalin dated June 24 and 26; the second was a cold, offensively worded missive which even hinted in its closing remarks that he suspected that the British were considering approaches by Nazi Germany. Stalin reminded Churchill that the British had assured Molotov earlier in 1943 that no such feelers would be entertained.³⁸

Couched in such terms, it was an ominous and insulting message. Ambassador Maisky telephoned Sir Alexander Cadogan at the foreign office upon receiving it on the afternoon of the twenty-sixth.

A flurry of 'phone calls followed between Churchill and Eden, about what the latter, in a marked understatement, called a 'bad telegram from Joe,' as they discussed a suitable reply.³⁹

Churchill wondered what was behind Stalin's ill humour. Was it still rancour over Poland and General Sikorski, or was it in fact the Soviet dictator who was planning a change of policy – perhaps nervous in the face of the German onslaught about to begin at Kursk? We now know that Hitler's foreign ministry had received on June 21 what he regarded as a feeler from Moscow via Stockholm, and there were similar straws floating in the wind which British Intelligence may have intercepted.

Churchill showed Stalin's rude cable to Harriman as well as his own no less robust retort. He admitted that he had already sent it off, without consulting Roosevelt. On reflection, perhaps it had been a mistake to succumb to this temptation; but he could not ignore the charge of bad faith implicit in Stalin's final paragraph.⁴⁰

It was on the very next day, June 28, that the Soviet ambassador Ivan Maisky announced that Moscow was recalling him and his colleague A. Y. Bogomolov, Soviet ambassador to the Polish and other exile governments in London, 'for consultations.'

After pondering the matter, Churchill sent a message out to General Sikorski at Cairo. 'Am delighted to hear from Casey of general success of your visit,' it read. 'Should be glad to welcome you home.'⁴¹ Eager for re-acceptance, the Poles took the second sentence as a sign of impatience, but it was not; it was urgency. Recalling an ambassador was an act just one step short of breaking off relations, and only two steps short of war.

In Germany, speaking at the impressive mass funeral ceremony for the six thousand air raid victims at Wuppertal, Dr Goebbels hinted at the coming of reprisals. This added to the sounds of alarm in Whitehall that Hitler was preparing a secret and deadly revenge for Bomber Command's air raids.

On Friday June 11 a summary reached Churchill about the interrogation of a German soldier, who had spoken of giant rockets he claimed to have seen in production.⁴² The next day the R.A.F. obtained further high-altitude photographs of the mysterious site at Peenemünde, on the Baltic coast; it appeared to have huge launching arenas and test rigs. The Prof.'s diary shows that he spent much of that weekend at Chequers. On Monday June 16 Churchill called a secret meeting at the underground Cabinet War Rooms off Whitehall to show his ministers the detailed plans of these strange weapons.⁴³ When he viewed them under a stereoscope, the photographs of Peenemünde, with its mysterious factories, elliptical earthworks, gantries, and cranes, were deeply interesting. Just what was Hitler up to? 'I have myself given many hours of thought and attention to it,' he wrote to Sir Stafford Cripps, now minister of aircraft production, on June 17.⁴⁴

Codebreaking filled in part of this disturbing picture. Bletchley Park had been watching a low-grade cypher, BROWN, used for signals between missile scientists working on the Baltic coast. They found references in them to rockets and to 'heavy water.'⁴⁵ To Lord Cherwell's annoyance, Churchill had put his son-in-law, Duncan Sandys, in charge of the Intelligence attack on the enemy missile threat. Sandys rapidly decided that the Germans were building giant rocket missiles; the Prof. thereupon announced that they were not. By June 18 Sandys had evidence from these intercepts and other ULTRAS of frequent test launchings of some kind of missile or missiles from Peenemünde. Since the ULTRAS now generated better clues about precisely where to look, he called for photographic cover of Peenemünde, Rügen, and Bornholm Island, and of all enemy-occupied territory within 130 miles of London, the presumed target for the missiles; he suggested that they bomb the research and production sites, together with any suspicious works found in north-western France.

Harris was not keen to see any diversion of effort from his area bombing offensive against the cities. Churchill insisted however that Peenemünde must be bombed. The nights were short, and the air staff explained that this target was too distant to reach before August. Meanwhile, on June 23 an

aircraft brought back new photographs of Peenemünde. These were of great clarity; they showed two finned rockets near the mysterious elliptical arena at Peenemünde. One was thirty-eight feet long. On the airfield were four tailless aircraft. Sandys postulated that the Germans were developing both a rocket and jet-propelled aircraft, as well as what he termed 'airborne torpedoes' – pilotless weapons, a forerunner of today's cruise missiles.

He was right on all three counts. Under Dr Wernher von Braun, a team of army scientists was working on the A4 rocket – later notorious as the 'V-2'; in competition with them, on Peenemünde's airfield, the Luftwaffe was developing a cheap pilotless missile, later christened the 'V-1' or 'doodlebug'; and that very week, inspired by a test flight by Colonel Adolf Galland, the German fighter ace, Hitler's air ministry had taken the risky step of ordering the Messerschmitt-262 jet plane straight into serial production.

Remarking, 'We cannot delay much longer taking stock of this serious matter,' on June 25 Churchill ordered a defence committee meeting called for late on Tuesday the twenty-ninth.⁴⁶ Sandys circulated an update to the cabinet. He was redeploying the capital's gun defences, and adapting the early-warning system to watch for rocket-launchings from France. He warned that the German missile attack might start within a very few months.

When it met on June 29 to consider this threat, the defence committee decided to step up the air reconnaissance effort; they asked Bomber Command to eliminate Peenemünde and any missile launching points identified in France. These were seen sprouting all over the Pas de Calais, near to the Channel coast. By July two huge excavations had also been sighted – at Watten near Ypres and at Bruneval near Fécamp. The shock of all these discoveries was considerable. It might be said that all the pleasure goes out of a saturation bombing campaign when it turns out that the target population has been secretly developing a means of response. Making certain assumptions about the size and nature of the warhead, Sandys predicted that each rocket missile might kill six hundred Londoners. The government laid plans for the partial evacuation of London.

On that same day, June 29, the foreign office received a report that the Germans were preparing an air attack on Britain during August using 'liquid air bombs of terrific destructive power.' 'Attack will be novel in method and irresistible in intensity, and the effect is promised as a major rebuff. Probable decisive Axis victory.' Was this a reference to the Nazis' atomic bomb research? Churchill inked on it in red: 'Lord Cherwell and Mr Sandys. wsc, 1.7.43,' and ordered it printed for distribution to the war cabinet.⁴⁷

On July 16 the chiefs of staff authorised the bombing of Peenemünde and Watten (the latter was indeed a ballistic-rocket launching silo). Sandys came down to Chequers on Sunday evening, the eighteenth, to show Churchill the latest photographs and models, and on the nineteenth he reported to the war cabinet that there was evidence that the enemy were speeding up the construction of special railway sidings, locomotive turntables, and concrete launching structures for the missile programme in north-western France.

Under Lord Cherwell's jealous influence, Churchill began however to take a more sceptical line about the nature of the weapon. The Prof. thought that Sandys' rocket scare was a 'mare's nest,' or even a Nazi hoax.

Accordingly Churchill decided that, while it would be prudent to move extra Morrison shelters into London, there was no need to manufacture more. 'If,' he ruled, 'as is on the whole probable, the rocket peril does not materialise, those extra shelters now concentrated in London can be sent back to their present storing places.' He was anxious to see Peenemünde bombed, but he now agreed to wait for longer hours of darkness, and for the experts to find out more about the Pas de Calais construction sites.⁴⁸

Even so, with all this talk of 'liquid air bombs' about, it seemed that August 1943 might be an excellent time for Mr Churchill to leave England for a month of talks with that great statesman, his friend Franklin Roosevelt.



Much of the wrangling between Churchill and his heir-presumptive, Eden, at this time still centred on the personality of Charles de Gaulle, as Eden's private manuscript diary shows. The public was also showing its frustration at the very public snarling between Giraud and de Gaulle.⁴⁹

The harmony in Algiers had not lasted long. No sooner had Churchill and Eden left for London than the bickering broke out again. At the very first 'cabinet' meeting of the new French committee on June 9, de Gaulle demanded the post of Commissioner for National Defence himself and he asked for the dismissal of General Boisson, the commander at Dakar who had co-operated with the Americans in TORCH.

Admiral Leahy, observing de Gaulle's tactics, decided that he was becoming a drag on the Allied wheel, and he told his private diary that he would have to be 'completely eliminated,' however difficult this might prove.⁵⁰

President Roosevelt sent furious telegrams to both Churchill and Eisenhower about this problem on June 10, expressing firmly the views that he wished to be respected.⁵¹ If de Gaulle should move into Dakar, he said, then he would send American warships and regiments into the port to stop him taking over in French West Africa. 'Such things would be highly unfortunate,' pointed out the president, using stiff and formalistic language of the kind that Churchill had recently used over TUBE ALLOYS. Churchill telephoned Eden early on June 11 to tell him of this latest telegram. Even Eden admitted that de Gaulle's behaviour left much to be desired. 'American hatred is keen,' he agreed, '& maybe they want Dakar too. But de Gaulle has done much to shake all confidence in him.' This was one of the first signs of self-doubt, even remorse, to be found in Eden's private diaries.⁵²

General Giraud flatly refused to subordinate the French army to the new seven-man French Committee of National Liberation. De Gaulle boycotted the next F.C.N.L. meeting, again insisting that he have control of the French armed forces.⁵³ After Murphy conveyed Roosevelt's extreme anger to these French generals, Giraud merely said '*très bien*,' but de Gaulle launched into an hour-long, tricolour-waving diatribe which included the remark that he expected double-dealing from the British, but never from the Americans.⁵⁴ In the circumstances, Churchill felt it unwise of Roosevelt to have invited Giraud to Washington right now, as he had, since de Gaulle was capable of staging a putsch in Algiers against his absent rival.⁵⁵

Concerned by the favours that sections of the British press were still bestowing on de Gaulle, Churchill issued a confidential briefing note to editors on June 12. Although de Gaulle owed everything to British aid, this warned, he could not be trusted, as witness his antics in Syria and his notorious Brazzaville interview of August 1941. The prime minister prophesied that he would ditch both Allies just as soon as he could – he had described the British to French paratroops on February 4 as France's 'hereditary enemies.' De Gaulle's organisation, he added, had leaked to the Nazis details of General Georges' escape plans.⁵⁶ On June 14 the entire British press carried editorials which faithfully followed these confidential guidelines.⁵⁷

Roosevelt fired off increasingly acid telegrams to Churchill and Eisenhower, warning against allowing the Frenchman his own way. In one, on June 17, he used frank language: 'I am fed up with de Gaulle,' he wrote,

and the secret personal and political machinations of that Committee in the last few days indicates [*sic*] that there is no possibility of our working

with de Gaulle. If these were peace times it wouldn't make so much difference but I am absolutely convinced that he has been and is now injuring our war effort and that he is a very dangerous threat to us.

Eisenhower was instructed to break off all dealings with de Gaulle and to treat French North Africa as he would an occupied territory.⁵⁸ Shown these uncompromising telegrams arriving in Algiers, Macmillan had to admit that the French general's temperament made him unreliable, but to break with him now would make a bad situation worse.⁵⁹ In London the next day, June 18 – an English summer morning, pouring with endless rain – Churchill read out the telegram over the phone to the foreign secretary. It seemed 'pretty hysterical' to Eden, and he decided that somehow they would have to pull the Americans back into line, to prevent them committing some nameless folly which would give de Gaulle a martyr's crown, or the control of the French army, or both. 'F.D.R.'s mood,' he noted, 'is now that of a man who persists in error.' Churchill drafted a reply to Roosevelt; Eden and Attlee inevitably disliked it, but were able to secure only one amendment each.⁶⁰

Summarising this worsening situation a week later, 'Doc' Matthews reported from the U.S. embassy in London to Washington. Eden and his foreign office, he feared, had converted Churchill; but de Gaulle was using tactics 'reminiscent of the early days of Adolf and his boys.' The British had built up 'this French Adolf' for the last three years as the symbol of courage, democracy, honour, and the soul of France, and they were now hoist with their own petard. A great many people would one day ask, 'Why, if de Gaulle is a Fascist, Anglophobe, intriguer against the Allies, etc., have we backed him and played him up for three years?' 'Why have we permitted this man freely to operate a Gestapo headquarters of the most brutal type in the center of London while negotiating agreements with him giving him free and generous access to our Exchequer and to our propaganda facilities?'⁶¹ In both Washington and London the knives were out for de Gaulle.



Despite or perhaps even because of the war, anti-Semitism was increasing, even outside Nazi Germany. This may explain why so few people, whether in Churchill's cabinet or elsewhere, expressed concern at the horrors rumoured to be happening in Hitler's new dominions.⁶²

In Canada and the United States, as letters intercepted by Churchill's Intelligence services showed, more hotels than ever were refusing to accept Jewish guests. 'In every [American] city, village and settlement,' found one letter-writer, 'there are hotels and boarding houses bearing the sign RESTRICTED, which means Jews may not stay there.' Malicious rumours spread readily. A non-Jewish resident of a Jewish 'ghetto' area of North London wrote on June 28: 'I don't think Jews can do as much to stop it as non-Jews. . . I have heard things said myself in the shopping queues and I don't know how much is justified, but hatred very easily grows and spreads.' In the Middle East, the Arab-Jewish conflict had led to the most virulent strains.

'I don't think there is a single British person out here,' ran a typical British soldier's letter, intercepted in Palestine, 'who isn't anti-Jewish.' This writer felt that Jews were the people who should have most respect for the British, as the British were fighting Hitler. 'They whine about the sufferings their people have to put up with in Europe, but they do absolutely nothing to alter the conditions. They are not interested in the war in the slightest, all they are interested in is making money. . .'⁶³

Other agencies of the British Intelligence services were forming a stark picture of how the Nazis were solving 'the Jewish problem.' The German word *Sonderbehandlung*, 'special treatment,' was cropping up more frequently in the S.S. and police messages deciphered at Bletchley Park.

From clues worked into some of the letters intercepted by the censors, like the Hebrew words for *help*, *passport*, *killing*, and *despair*, it seemed that Jews were being deported from Norway, France, Belgium, Holland, Bulgaria, and the Government-General of Poland, and meeting an as yet indeterminate fate in camps in Poland and Silesia.

'Transport in cattle trucks nine days without eating and drinking,' one writer had heard, 'on arrival the dead are shovelled out.' 'Every Wednesday fifty persons are taken from Sosnovice to Oswiecim [*Auschwitz*] into the lime kiln as victims,' read a letter, mailed from Jerusalem to Australia. 'If the prescribed number is not complete they take newly born babies away from their mothers in the hospitals and throw them into the transport van.'

The signs were conflicting. What was hysteria and what was cruel deception? 'We are all right,' read one card dated May 1943, from a Jew incarcerated with her child at Trawniki, near Lublin. 'We are not lacking anything. I should be quite content if I were not totally without news.'⁶⁴

THE ZIONISTS cynically sought to exploit this very real suffering of others to achieve their own long-term political ends. In April 1943 Churchill's office received a letter from Dr Chaim Weizmann, the world Zionist leader, writing from the luxury of the St. Regis hotel in New York.

This again implored the prime minister to adopt a policy which, notwithstanding the 1939 British White Paper on Palestine, would deal with what Weizmann himself called 'the Jewish problem,' namely 'by assigning Palestine to the Jews.' 'The slaughter of European Jewry,' he argued, 'can only be redeemed by establishing Palestine as a Jewish country.' Eden had privately assured him that no commitments would be made to the Arabs regarding Palestine. 'I appeal to you,' wrote the Zionist leader, 'to . . . open the way for a new dispensation in Palestine.'⁶⁵

Churchill sympathised with the Zionists' position. While avoiding replying in person to Weizmann, he forwarded the letter to Oliver Stanley and Lord Cranborne, commenting that he could not agree that the White Paper was 'the firmly established policy' of their government. He added a postscript which suggests that he never really grasped the single-mindedness of Zionist ambitions: 'The Colonial Secretary would be well advised to consider at the same time the use of Eritrea and possibly of Tripolitania as additional Jewish national homes.'⁶⁶

Stanley had to warn him that the Jewish agitation in Britain and the United States was provoking reactions in the Middle East. 'Our primary concern now,' he explained, 'is with the war and the first object of our policy [is] to prevent military operations being hampered by a serious outbreak of disorder throughout the Middle East.'⁶⁷ Lord Cranborne wrote much the same, expressing surprise that Dr Weizmann did not understand this.⁶⁸ Annoyed by Winston's independent line, Eden insisted that the cabinet must discuss any reply before it went to Weizmann.⁶⁹

WEIZMANN NEVER gave up. While Churchill was in Washington, another letter arrived from him at the White House. He pleaded for Winston to receive him, and offered this time the argument that he had been in North America for more than a year and had gathered impressions of great value:

The sufferings of the Jews and the great anxieties which beset the communities have of late produced certain phenomena which cause everybody interested in the good relations between England and America a great deal of pain.⁷⁰

Was this not a hint that Weizmann was prepared to mobilise the Jewish lobby to disrupt those 'good relations' to get his way? Caught between his sense of obligation and the dictates of the foreign office, Churchill decided to make no reply. Three weeks later Weizmann went to see the president; Roosevelt asked him, 'Did you see Churchill here?' Weizmann replied: 'No, Churchill doesn't like to see me because he has very little to tell me.' The American president assured him that he would attempt to bring together the two sides in the Middle East – the Jews and Arabs (it had a familiar ring even then). Weizmann insisted that the democracies must go into any such conference prepared to din into the Arabs 'the Jewish rights to Palestine.'⁷¹

Reading these words in the Zionist leader's own *mémoire* on this conversation a few weeks later, Oliver Stanley dryly pointed out that this was very different from Jewish rights *in* Palestine.⁷²

IN BRITAIN, as the government learned from its mail censorship, the Jewish lobbying had largely subsided, despite a string of functions organised by the Committee for a Jewish Army with 'wealthy Jewish business men' at May-fair hotels. This committee, run by a Captain Helpern with the backing of Commander Stephen King-Hall, American broadcaster Ed Murrow, and none other than Randolph Churchill, had found itself left high and dry; and Helpern's entire correspondence with New York now consisted of protests and entreaties. Their principal American backer had now turned its attention to demanding Allied intervention to rescue Europe's Jews.⁷³

On July 2, 1943 the cabinet discussed the case for and against a Jewish Army. Richard Casey, the Minister Resident in Cairo, left no doubt about his feelings that the Jews in Palestine had 'gone extremist and terrorist.' Endorsing Eden's plea for a joint Anglo-American warning to these terrorists, Casey said that they were endeavouring to enforce a Jewish State in Palestine, by means of the illicit stores of arms which they had accumulated: the Jews here had begun fighting a private war of their own.

Churchill then spoke. He had already circulated to the cabinet the text of his May 1939 speech attacking the White Paper. His own interest was at that time perhaps less well known than it is now: while crossing that wilderness from 1936 to 1939 he had been sustained by financial contributions from his anti-Hitler and often pro-Zionist circle.* The statement which he made at this July 1943 cabinet meeting was one of such pronounced Zion-

* Vol. i, chapter 6: 'The Hired Help.'

ist leanings that, after lunching that day with Baffy Dugdale, the Gentile Zionist, the India Secretary Leo Amery noted in his diary that she would have been thrilled had she only known the line that Churchill had taken just that morning: the prime minister spoke for the partition of Palestine between Jew and Arab (regardless of the injustice this would do to the Arabs dispossessed of their ancestral land); he demanded that the British forces allow into the territory the balance of the seventy-five thousand Jews allowed by the White Paper, even after the March 1944 deadline for closure, and he added that meanwhile they ought to allow into Palestine as 'illegal' immigrants all and any Jews who escaped the German terror.⁷⁴

All of these things were easily said in secret, where they could occasion no Arab uproar. In public however there was nothing that Churchill was willing to be *seen* to do. A few days later Dr Weizmann, now back in London, wrote asking yet again if there was any chance that the prime minister would see him.⁷⁵ Winston scrawled on the letter, 'No.' He directed that either Stanley or Eden should see the Zionist leader. Eden ducked out, and the lot fell to Stanley.⁷⁶ Weizmann angrily put it about, to Brendan Bracken and no doubt to others, that because Churchill refused to see him their enemies were now saying that the Jewish Agency was a *quantité négligeable*.⁷⁷

It would be October before Churchill relented and invited him in for a luncheon. Immediately after that Weizmann tackled Martin to demand the restoration of the Jewish Agency's communications facilities to Palestine through the secret S.O.E. cypher channels. Churchill hedged; he could not say Yes, but was loath to say No. His panic was infectious. Terrified of refusing Weizmann himself, Martin wrote an internal minute to a junior secretary directing him to write to the Zionist leader ('on behalf of Martin, who is away for a few days') refusing to restore the cypher facilities.⁷⁸

EARLY ON July 5 Churchill was awakened with terrible news. There had been an airplane accident. General Sikorski was dead. A telegram had arrived in Whitehall from Lieutenant-General Mason-Macfarlane, the Governor of Gibraltar, at 3:55 A.M., reporting this and the disposal of the bodies:

Regret Liberator with General Sikorski's party crashed shortly after take off at 2300 4th July. Have recovered four dead bodies including General Sikorski and General [Tadeusz] Klimecki. Pilot badly injured is only live body recovered. Very little hope of any other survivors. Will keep you informed.⁷⁹

Shortly after eleven P.M. the night before, the general's plane, provided by No. 511 Squadron of Transport Command, had plunged into the Mediterranean only seventeen seconds after take-off from the North Front airstrip. Among those killed were the general's only daughter, and two Members of Parliament, Brigadier J. P. Whiteley, and Victor Cazalet, who was the godfather of Mary Churchill. The odds against such a serious accident occurring were great. Of 52,418 aircraft movements from North Front in 1943 this was the only such fatal crash.⁸⁰ As though by a miracle the pilot alone had survived (and not in fact 'badly injured' having suffered only a damaged ankle); he owed his escape to the fact that only he had had the foresight to put on a 'Mae West' life-jacket, for the first time in his career, before the take-off run.⁸¹ There may have been other survivors, for the bodies of the co-pilot Squadron-Leader Wilfred Herring and two unofficial passengers who joined the plane at Cairo were never found.⁸²

With an ease born of many such sorrowful occasions Churchill wrote that morning to the Polish prime minister's widow, telling of his grief to hear of the death of her husband and daughter. 'No words of mine can ease the pain of this double loss. Nevertheless I trust you will accept my sympathy with you in the death of one who was a personal friend of mine.'⁸³

It has to be said that thirty years of reading in private diaries or in foreign office and other files, so far as they have been released, have not turned up, in connection with Sikorski, any of the euphemisms for murder that we have found circling like vultures above the names of de Gaulle and Darlan. In our view however the revelations of the S.O.E.'s role in the murder of Darlan have significantly shifted the balance of probabilities. The desk diary of Mason-Macfarlane contains one entry for that day which can be read as 'Sweet Escot'; Bickham Sweet-Escott was a high-ranking officer in S.O.E.*

The Nazi propagandists inevitably announced that Sikorski, like Darlan, had been assassinated. *Das Reich* published a gleeful cartoon of a *femme*

* We did not mention this in *Accident* (London, 1967), as Mr Sweet-Escott denied to us that he was in Gibraltar. He was later successful in a British High Court libel action against a foreign author who claimed otherwise. His memoirs, *Baker Street Irregular* (London, 1965), one of the first inside accounts of the S.O.E., make plain that he flew from London 'early in July' 1943 (page 166) and landed in Algiers on July 5 (page 168). This would indeed have put him in Gibraltar on July 4, but in 1967 Sir Roger Makins, the later Lord Sherfield, who flew with him, denied they made any stopover there. All this may be coincidence, and nothing more sinister. Some writers have made out that the entry in the governor's diary reads 'swear escort,' and even 'swear Carrera.'

fatale asking an exiled general, 'Will you take the tea, or do you prefer the aeroplane?'

To some senior British diplomats, the same unworthy notion occurred immediately. 'The pilot,' recorded Lord Halifax, 'oddly enough, was the only person not killed. . .'⁸⁴ And, later: 'No more information at present about Sikorski's plane; I wonder whether it can have been sabotage; it looks very mysterious.'⁸⁵ Britain's information services refrained from answering the German allegations.⁸⁶ Upset at the Nazi claims that the British government had 'deliberately compassed,' as he put it, the death of Sikorski, the Polish chargé d'affaires in Cairo urged his own government in London to call for the publication of the findings of the R.A.F. inquiry.⁸⁷ The general's widow was sure that there had been foul play. She heard that the Governor of Gibraltar had urged him to take another plane without explaining why.⁸⁸

For two weeks speculation about this airplane accident dominated the secret morale reports in Britain. People spoke of the need for an inquiry, expressing puzzlement 'how four engines could "cut out at once."⁸⁹

When the suspicion was voiced that Churchill himself might have engineered this troublesome Pole's death, it was robustly rebutted by his wartime colleagues; one of them would write that assassination was utterly foreign to the P.M.'s nature, and added that he never hid anything from his 'secret circle,' as it came to be known.⁹⁰

Another recalled that when he remarked that their agents had never succeeded in assassinating Hitler, the prime minister had exclaimed: 'Political assassination is something I would never countenance.'⁹¹ Adolf Hitler had however said much the same to his colleagues.⁹²

As for Sikorski, the records that have been released do not assist us, even now. The first official court of inquiry was bungled and inconclusive, but ruled out sabotage and pilot error.⁹³ The second fared no better. No evidence of any malfunction was found in the wreckage when it was raised. Sir Archibald Sinclair also rejected overloading of the plane as a factor.⁹⁴

ON JULY 6, 1943 Churchill paid tribute to the general in the House, calling his death 'one of the heaviest strokes we have sustained.' He referred, quite wrongly in the light of what we now know of their arguments about the Katyn massacre and Poland's eastern frontier, to Sikorski's conviction that 'all else must be subordinated to the needs of the common struggle.'⁹⁵ Broadcasting to the Polish people, Churchill mourned their tragic loss, and added these oddly chosen words about General Sikorski:

I knew him well. He was a statesman, a soldier, a comrade, an ally, and above all, a Pole. He is gone; but if he were at my side I think he would wish me to say this – and I say it from my heart – soldiers must die, but by their death they nourish the nation which gave them birth.

'Prepare yourselves to die for Poland,' he adjured in his peroration; and: 'We shall not forget him.'

Harsh reality soon overbore such noble sentiments. Sikorski's body was brought back to England aboard the destroyer *Orkan*, formerly HMS *Myrmidon*, which had been loaned to the Polish government. Supported by Eden, the First Lord remarked to Churchill that it might be fitting to make a public gift of this warship to the Polish nation. Churchill demurred, expressing the fear that the Norwegians, Greeks, and other Allies who had borrowed British warships might take this as a precedent.⁹⁶ When the Polish president hinted that he would appreciate a formal visit from Churchill to thank the British for their help to Poland in her travails, Churchill again demurred, and asked Eden to go.⁹⁷

As with the murder of Darlan, the British investigation into Sikorski's plane crash turned up no hard evidence. On July 17 Churchill asked the air ministry why he had not received the further report about 'the accident in which General Sikorski was killed.'⁹⁸ But the R.A.F. court of inquiry was sitting at Gibraltar, and the Liberator's wreckage still had to be lifted from the seabed. On the eighteenth Churchill wrote to Portal that he had now heard that Air Marshal Sir Frederick Bowhill, chief of Transport Command, had informed Mason-Macfarlane of the probable cause: 'Pray inform me at once of the position without awaiting the result of the Court of Inquiry.'

Portal replied that on July 12 the pilot Prchal had stated to Bowhill that the aircraft had taken off normally, and upon reaching about 130 m.p.h. he had pushed the nose down slightly to obtain more speed; he had then found 'his controls locked solid.' He had shut off his engines and shouted 'crash land.'⁹⁹ In September 1943 the government formally announced that the reason for the crash was this 'jamming of the controls' – for which there was only the pilot's word; the technical investigation provided no evidence that it ever occurred.*

Polish aviation experts protested to the air ministry that since this 'would not normally happen on a Liberator,' Nazi propaganda would have a field

* See Appendix III for Harold Wilson's 1969 comments on this investigation.

day with this explanation. Far from insisting that this explanation was the truth, the ministry insisted that there had to be a technical explanation, 'as otherwise there would be far more publicity and public enquiries.'¹⁰⁰ Like Katyn, the controversy would continue until the late 1960s and beyond.¹⁰¹

THE YELLOW roses heaped on the dead general's coffin had already begun to fade. Churchill paid his last respects to General Sikorski at the Requiem Mass, and many saw tears in his eyes; he and Clementine were noticed to kneel for some moments before taking their seats. Newspapermen noticed that otherwise he was obviously at ease: 'He's always so natural,' one remarked. His eyes were red-rimmed and swollen with tears as he filed out with the congregation past the widow, Helena. She kept her thoughts to herself. Over the coming years she maintained a firm distance from him.¹⁰² Invited to sit next to him at the Victory Parade in 1945 she wrote back refusing, saying she could not accept until Poland was free again.¹⁰³

Although Churchill's colleagues expressed proper regret, Sikorski's untimely death eliminated an obdurate politician who had, since April, caused Churchill scarcely less *ennui* than General de Gaulle.¹⁰⁴ The two generals had been very similar personalities; in fact, de Gaulle had once stalked out of a banquet when he found that Sikorski, as head of an exile government, was seated higher up the table than he.¹⁰⁵ Churchill invited the Polish *éminence grise*, Dr Joseph Retinger, to come round after the cabinet meeting at midnight on July 5–6, to talk about successors, because this delicate task could clearly not be entrusted to Polish machinations alone.

We have Retinger's account of their interview. 'I found the prime minister alone,' he wrote, 'wearing his light blue siren suit. As soon as he saw me he got up and started to cry. He told me that he had loved General Sikorski as a younger brother, and had watched his career not only with interest but with affection.' Retinger advised him that Sikorski once stated that he saw Stanislaw Mikolajczyk as his successor – adding, 'Though not for a long time, of course.' Churchill affected not to know Mikolajczyk. Retinger described him, and Winston asked: 'The man who looks like a fat, slightly bald old fox?'¹⁰⁶ His disparaging remarks about Mikolajczyk would continue throughout the war, whether at Moscow or at Potsdam.¹⁰⁷ He wanted a Polish prime minister whom he could boot around.

Mikolajczyk was pliable, and he lacked Sikorski's warrior-charisma. Retinger would later observe that Churchill treated Mikolajczyk with none of the courtesy that was his due, steamrolling through anything that stood

athwart his own views on Polish-Russian relations. Churchill owed him nothing, and he had sworn no promises to him like those that he had sworn to Sikorski on June 19, 1940, at Britain's darkest hour.

After the next day's agenda had been prepared, there was a late insertion on his desk card: 'C,' head of the secret service, at ten A.M.¹⁰⁸ The P.M. then lunched as usual with the king at one-thirty. Eden asked the president of Poland, Wladyslaw Rackiewicz, not to appoint a new supreme commander until the foreign office had had time to inquire in Moscow as to Stalin's preferences. The Poles do not appear to have heeded either Eden or Stalin's wishes, as they appointed General Kazimierz Sosnkowski, whom the Soviets did not like. At the same time however Raczynski was replaced by Tadeusz Romer as foreign minister, at the demand of the Polish socialists.¹⁰⁹

AFTER THE demise of Sikorski, the remaining unfinished business was more easily liquidated with his successors. On June 30 the Gestapo had captured General Stefan Grot-Rowecki, commander-in-chief of the Polish underground army. The Polish exile government asked Churchill to intervene with the Germans for his release, and perhaps even to threaten harm to Rudolf Hess if anything happened to Grot-Rowecki; or perhaps they might even exchange him for a top German general held by the British. The matter was raised in cabinet on July 19. Victor Cavendish-Bentinck, head of the Joint Intelligence Committee, spoke in favour of an exchange; he suggested that they let General von Thoma return home where this anti-Nazi panzer general would probably be bumped off anyway. The problem was that Grot-Rowecki, as an irregular, had no claim to be regarded as a prisoner of war.¹¹⁰

Stricken perhaps with conscience about Poland, Churchill said he would agree to the exchange, but he did not believe that the Germans would. As it turned out, Himmler had a soft spot for Grot-Rowecki; he was held in Sachsenhausen camp, and not executed until after the Warsaw uprising in August 1944.

On July 21 Churchill had his first meeting with Mikolajczyk. The new Polish prime minister thanked him for having taken up so much of his time with the funeral arrangements. In the warmest language, Churchill described Sikorski as a personal friend, and his death as a great loss. Sikorski had known how to deal with people, especially the Russians. 'The Russians are odd people, however,' mused Churchill, 'sometimes it is impossible to understand their motives.' He had observed their savagery during the talks with Stalin in August 1942. Stalin had often expressed himself in brutal

terms, so that more than once Churchill found that he had to react with equal brutality, even rudeness. 'We're going to have a lot of trouble with him yet, believe me,' he added. 'But believe me, I shall be on your side.' He asked the Poles what prospects there were of compromise in their dispute with Moscow. Mikolajczyk replied that this depended on the Russians respecting Poland's sovereign rights. Churchill asked if the Poles would object to Britain making use of the Polish troops in the Middle Eastern theatre in four or five months' time. Mikolajczyk replied that, judging from Sikorski's telegrams, it seemed that their forces would be ready.¹¹¹

A few days later, on Monday July 26, the Polish president invited Churchill to lunch at Claridge's; Count Raczynski, now ambassador, O'Malley, and August Zaleski were the other guests. While couching his remarks in his familiar old-world courtesy, in this conversation the British prime minister made cruelly clear that he had no intention now of defending the integrity of Poland's pre-war frontiers; but he undertook to fight for the rebirth of a strong and independent Poland after the war. 'I promise that I shall do what I can as long as I live,' he said. 'I am, of course, a servant of the House of Commons' – a favourite phrase of his – 'and not a dictator; but I am not its lackey either. I say what I think, and expect the House to take notice.'

According to Raczynski's note he then mused out loud:

I wonder how far Stalin is really master in his own country and the source of all decisions? In some ways I am more so than he – well, perhaps not more, but anyway not less. That does not mean that I can have somebody's throat cut five minutes after I have been talking to them. I have never asked Parliament for such powers as that, but I can get my own way in ordinary matters.¹¹³

Having 'somebody's throat cut'? It was a callous remark to make to the Poles, their hearts still riven by the sudden death of their prime minister and the murder of their own soldiers at Katyn; it was not entirely innocent of a soupçon of menace to the new Polish leadership in exile.



One day that July there was another unexplained death. Eden broke it to Mr Churchill that 'Munich Mouser,' No. 10's famous black cat, had passed away that afternoon in a room at the foreign office. Churchill had never

liked the F.O. He joked heartlessly that the cat must have died of remorse, and had chosen his deathbed accordingly. He feared the dead cat had probably been thrown into a trash can – he would have been prepared to give him a decent burial in the garden behind No. 10. 'Yes,' scoffed Eden. 'R.I.P. MUNICH MOUSER would look well there.' Together the two men laughed a lot about that wretched cat, a last relic of Neville Chamberlain, architect of Munich and the 1939 White Paper on Palestine alike.¹¹⁴

'We are avoiding publicity,' recorded Winston's secretary, 'for fear of being flooded with black cats from all over the country to take his place.'¹¹⁵

A FEW hours after Sikorski's plane crashed, on July 5, 1943, fifteen hundred miles from Whitehall, the Battle of Kursk began. Hitler had thrown two thousand tanks into the battle – half of them the now ageing Mark III, but the rest the more formidable Mark IV, the still trouble-plagued Mark V Panthers, the Ferdinands, the dreaded Mark VI Tigers, Hornets, and hundreds of self-propelled guns. Stalin had three thousand tanks dug into his defensive lines. The Luftwaffe's Fourth and Sixth Air Forces flew over four thousand sorties on this first day. Hitler had been preparing this grand attempt to excise the Soviet salient ever since April, with great attention to detail, and he had kept postponing it as his generals offered better tank-strengths later. But now it had begun, and by July 7, the operation, which Churchill's military experts had at first taken all too lightly, seemed very serious indeed.¹¹⁶

The press spoke of bloody fighting between thousands of tanks, supported by armadas of Luftwaffe bombers and fighter planes. In Winston Churchill's Britain, the ordinary people were heard voicing dismay at the sheer size of it. By the eighth of July, Hitler's field-marsals had destroyed 460 Soviet tanks. With that common sense, that grasp of the heart of the matter, which is the despair of authoritarian governments, the man in the street asked his neighbour, as the secret reports told Churchill, 'where such numbers of tanks are produced by the Germans, if we have smashed their industrial centres.'¹¹⁷ What price Harris now?

To bolster Stalin's spirits, Churchill informed him that the invasion of Sicily was imminent. The enemy had three hundred thousand troops in 'HUSKY-land,' he said, without being precise about its location. 'Meanwhile,' he added, 'we have sunk fifty U-boats for certain in seventy days.'¹¹⁸

On the night of July 9 the amphibious Allied operation, the invasion of Sicily, began. As the squadrons of bombers, gliders, and escorts stood by

for their dawn assault, nearly three thousand vessels carrying some 160,000 warriors and their implements, sailing from many different harbours in North Africa, bore down on the shores of the Italian island.

The weather that night in London was vile, with winds and heavy rain.

These were unstable, troubling, times. Churchill remarked to Roosevelt's special ambassador Averell Harriman a few days later that he had received no answer to his messages to Stalin, announcing the HUSKY assault.

Nor would he for many weeks.¹¹⁹ The uncertainty was worrying him.

'My guess,' observed Harriman, reporting to President Roosevelt, 'is that this is what Uncle Joe wants.'¹²⁰

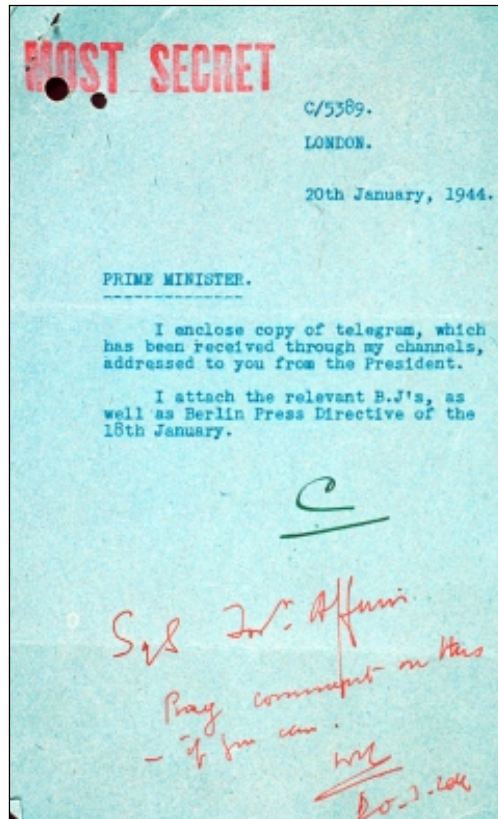


'Soldiers must Die...'

Sikorski's plane lying on the Mediterranean seabed,
July 5, 1943 (AUTHOR'S PRIVATE COLLECTION)

Pray comment On January 20, 1944 the head of the S.I.S. sent to Churchill a message he had received from Roosevelt through his channels

(PRO file HW.1/2344)



APPENDIX I: 'Received through C's Channels'

IT SEEMS THAT there are items of Churchill–Roosevelt correspondence which, if not lost or destroyed, are still awaiting release. These were just some of the two or three hundred signals which Sir William Stephenson's organisation in the U.S.A. passed each week via the radio station of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (F.B.I.) to the Secret Intelligence Service (S.I.S.) in England, using a code readable only by the British. (Stephenson was director of 'British Security Co-ordination,' with headquarters in New York.) Some items have now reappeared, having been removed from the three depositories of Churchill papers (Chartwell trust, Churchill papers,

and Cabinet Office) between 1960 and 1963 by the security authorities and Government Communications Headquarters (G.C.H.Q.).¹

As we saw in our first volume (*e.g.*, page 194), Winston Churchill took an almost schoolboy delight in establishing clandestine channels of communication. Quite apart from the 'Tyler Kent' series of Churchill–Roosevelt exchanges from 1939 to 1940, which began even before he replaced Neville Chamberlain as prime minister, he used intermediaries to outflank the regular channels, and then delighted in going behind the backs of those intermediaries as well. He established private radio links to Lord Cork in Norway and to Lord Gort in France, by-passing both the war office and Britain's own allies; and to General Auchinleck in 1941 and 1942.

All this is well known. It is now clear that after Churchill took office at No. 10 Downing-street in 1940 he and Roosevelt created a secret conduit – a link which was quite distinct from the radio-telephone link (on which see Appendix II) and did not only handle exchanges on codebreaking. Its genesis can be seen in a letter from Desmond Morton, Churchill's friend and confidant on Intelligence matters, released to the Public Record Office in January 2001; written on July 22, 1940, this advised the prime minister that 'C' (head of the secret service) had been in close touch with J. Edgar Hoover, director of the F.B.I., for some months, and that Hoover was keeping Roosevelt briefed on this. The United States were at that time of course nominally neutral. The president, Major Morton reported, had now notified 'C' through Hoover that, if Mr Churchill ever wanted to convey a message to him without the knowledge of the state department (or, by implication, of the foreign office), 'he would be very glad to receive it through the channel of "C" and Mr Hoover.' In the past, Hoover explained, there had been occasions 'when it might have been better' if the president had received messages by such means.² This was a reference to the unfortunate Tyler Kent affair in which a U.S. embassy clerk in London had nearly blown the gaff on their secret exchanges (see our vol. i, chapter 1).

When Churchill and the president started to serial-number their correspondence, Lord Halifax, the ambassador in Washington, realised that there were items that he was not seeing. The secret prime-minister/president ('PRIME–POTUS') exchange was the next stage. Hoover claimed to his superiors in July 1941 that Stephenson was using this PRIME/POTUS exchange to explain why no American official could be permitted to know the code used. Hoover's political chief, the attorney general Francis Biddle, tackled the British embassy about this anomalous situation on March 10, 1942.

Halifax however stated that 'he had inquired of Stephenson whether these cypher messages going forward were kept secret because they reflected a correspondence between the President and Mr Churchill,' and that 'Stephenson denied that he had ever made any such statement.' This was not quite the same thing as the *ambassador* denying it: Lord Halifax was seen to be smiling blandly as the Americans left his embassy, causing Biddle to remark: 'Somebody has been doing some tall lying here.'³

It is evident that the link was used for more than just 'codeword' transactions. We have seen on page 193 anecdotal evidence of Roosevelt, shortly before Pearl Harbor, passing a crucial message ('negotiations off. . .') through his son James and William Stephenson to Mr Churchill; Stephenson and H. Montgomery Hyde, who worked for him in New York, both confirmed this. Other items of this submerged correspondence that are of purely 'codeword' significance are now floating to the surface in the archives. A month after Pearl Harbor, Churchill wanted Roosevelt to be shown a particular intercept, of Japanese Ambassador Hiroshi Oshima reporting from Berlin on Hitler's winter setbacks and on his future military plans: on February 9, 1942 the prime minister accordingly directed 'C' to 'make sure President sees this at my desire.' Since the message bears the annotation that Commander Alastair Denniston, the deputy director of Bletchley Park, was 'wiring Hastings,' the Washington end of the link is established as being through Captain Eddy Hastings, the S.I.S. station chief there.⁴ The passage of the German naval squadron through the English Channel in 1942 provides further graphic evidence. On February 21, reading Bletchley Park's secret report on the mining of *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*, Churchill wrote to 'C' that it should surely be laid before the president, and he added these words of high significance: 'I am inclined to send it with a covering note by my secret and direct line.'⁵

This conduit operated in both directions. On March 20, 1942 Roosevelt sent through it to London the American intercept of a message from Oshima reporting that Ribbentrop, Hitler's foreign minister, had urged Japan to seize Madagascar, at that time a Vichy-governed colony. 'C' forwarded it to Churchill, stating: 'President Roosevelt has requested that you should see the attached BJ Report, No. 102,443. C.' Churchill initialled it, 'wsc, 20.3.'⁶

THIS APPENDIX presents necessarily only an interim survey of this secret exchange, but it evidently continued throughout the war. In January 1944 the Soviet Communist Party organ *Pravda* published a mischief-making story

about Churchill negotiating personally in Lisbon with top Nazis. The American codebreakers translated a Japanese dispatch from Madrid alleging that Ribbentrop had paid a visit to Lisbon to meet Churchill (who had not however turned up). Roosevelt cabled to Churchill about this on January 20 (illustration); 'C' forwarded it 'through my channels.'⁷ Roosevelt's message read: 'As a possible clue to [the] original *Pravda* story, refer to Madrid–Tokyo 1342 of 23rd December in MAGIC part one of two-part message. ROOSEVELT.'⁸ Of course, if believed, this intercept might well have caused concern in Washington. Churchill sent a reply to Roosevelt (drafted by 'C') on January 22; it is missing. On January 23, an S.I.S. official in Washington (O'Connor) responded to London, for the attention of 'C' alone: 'Your telegrams 395 [hand-written: '*Telegram re MAGIC to President*'] and 399 of 22nd January. He [Roosevelt] is away for a week but the messages are going by safe hand air bag tomorrow Sunday morning and I shall destroy remaining copy of 399 on Monday.' In his telegram CXG.395 (which has the interesting pencil endorsement '*PM file*'), the prime minister had quoted only paragraph 6; the rest, being of lower security, had gone by regular embassy channels. Paragraph 6 concerned a MAGIC intercept of a dispatch by the Irish minister in Rome about the political confusion reigning in Italy.⁹

So it went on. Eleven days after the crucial interception of a FISH (*Geheimschreiber*) message on June 17, 1944 (see our vol. iii) in which Adolf Hitler elaborated his coming strategy in Italy, Churchill's private secretary, T. L. Rowan, penned a TOP SECRET letter to the prime minister: "'C" asks that you will agree to send the message through his channels to the President.' The message began with the words: 'Attention is also directed to BONIFACE of June 17 wherein Hitler is said to have ordered the Apennine positions to be held as the final blocking line. . . Kesselring's task [is] to gain time till the development of the Apennine position was achieved, a task which would require months.' In a handwritten comment, also sent to Roosevelt, Churchill pointed out among other things that the new heavy fighting east and west of Lake Trasimene showed that Hitler's orders were being carried out.¹⁰

These secret communications obviously continued until Roosevelt's death. On July 18, 1944 Churchill ordered 'C' to send to him down their secret conduit the BJ No. 133,668 (a dispatch by the Turkish minister in Budapest on the seventh, about the crisis caused there by the Jewish problem and the failure of a coup against the Regent, Admiral Horthy); Churchill instructed 'C,' 'This shd reach the President as from me.'¹¹

In conclusion: some of the more astute historians have already drawn attention to the lack of explicit discussion of ULTRAS, MAGICS, and similar materials in the published Churchill–Roosevelt correspondence.¹² Equally, the operations of agencies like the S.I.S., Special Operations Executive, and the O.S.S. are scarcely touched upon in that series. It is now evident that these and other communications went by a special secret conduit.

The ‘weeder’s’ have not been able to prevent us from catching glimpses of a paper trail that documents its existence. The complete files of messages themselves may have sunk, but not entirely without trace. Sufficient ‘slicks’ remain on the surface to prompt us to ask for proper search to be made for survivors.

APPENDIX II: ‘Telephone Jobs’

SOME OF THE negotiations between Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt were transacted by radiotelephone. A ‘telephone job’ (vol. i, chapter 42) would settle outstanding problems. This raises two issues: the possible existence of transcripts (we have conducted a thirty-year search for them); and the danger that the enemy could eavesdrop on these conversations.

In theory, security was strict. In wartime Britain, the censoring was performed by the Postal and Telegraph Censorship Department, directed by Sir Edwin Herbert, with headquarters in the Prudential Buildings at Nos. 23–27 Brooke-street in the City of London. His telephone censors first issued a standard warning to the caller, then monitored the conversation. Callers were immediately disconnected, regardless of rank, if they mentioned sensitive topics like bomb damage or, later, the V-weapon attacks on southern England. The censors also transcribed the conversations in shorthand. It is therefore not idle to speculate that the transcripts may survive in the archives. Indeed, the secretary of the cabinet informed ministers in August 1942 that the department of censorship would ‘send a record of every radio-telephone conversation’ to the ministry responsible, both as a record and as a lesson on indiscretions.¹³

That being so, where is the Cabinet Office file of Mr Churchill’s transatlantic (and for that matter, other) ’phone conversations? There are so many

unanswered questions: what passed between him and President Roosevelt before May 10, 1940 – was the 'phone call that Churchill received on October 5, 1939 (vol. i, page 194) really their first such communication? We simply do not know. What part did Churchill and Hopkins play in the fateful decision to impose oil sanctions on Japan with their midnight 'phone call to Roosevelt on July 24–25, 1941 (pages 20 and 96 above)?

The censors cannot have had an easy task with Mr Churchill. One girl who acted as a censor after December 1941 remembered that he was morose, taciturn, and sometimes sarcastic. When she issued the standard warning to him, he told her to 'get off the line.' Once, after a German bomb caused heavy casualties at Holborn Viaduct in London he began telling Eden, who was in Ottawa, 'Anthony, my dear, a terrible thing has happened –.' She cut him off, and repeated the censorship warning to him; connected again, he resumed, 'Anthony, a terrible thing happened at –' and got no further. She was struck by the difference between the prime minister's real (telephone) voice and the voice she heard making speeches on the radio. At the end of his calls, instead of 'Goodbye,' Churchill habitually grunted, 'KBO' – keep buggering on.¹⁴

In the United States 'phone, cable, and wireless communications were at first monitored by the U.S. navy, from an office headed by Captain Herbert Keeney Fenn, usn. Fenn was Assistant Director of Censorship from September 1940 to August 1945, and Chief Cable Censor in the Office of Censorship. His naval personnel were transferred to the Office soon after it was created on December 19, 1941; in February 1942 it employed 1,819 personnel, manning fourteen stations.¹⁵ President Harry S. Truman ordered the records of the office sealed in perpetuity when he closed it by executive order on September 28, 1945 (they are housed in Record Group 216 at the National Archives). So we have no way of knowing whether transcripts of the PRIME–POTUS 'phone conversations exist in Washington.¹⁶

THE INHERENT deficiencies in 'phone security were a matter of growing concern throughout the war. General George C. Marshall testified that he had always been conscious of the risks. The conversations were originally carried by commercial radiotelephone (the transatlantic cable had been deliberately interrupted to prevent leaks); they were shielded only by 'privacy' arrangements – a scrambler which offered no real security. At their meeting on January 14, 1942 the president and prime minister agreed to improve their telephone communications.

Both allies recognised, but overlooked, the danger that the Nazis would intercept these conversations. We now know that this danger was very real indeed. Hitler's minister of posts, Wilhelm Ohnesorge, controlled a telecommunications research laboratory, the *Forschungsanstalt der Reichspost*, which had established listening posts in Holland in a direct line behind the aerial arrays in England; this *Forschungsstelle* (research unit) at Wetterlin was capable of intercepting both ends of the transatlantic radiotelephone traffic. They were scrambled, but the scrambling technique employed was one originally devised by Siemens, a German firm; the Nazis readily created a device for unscrambling the conversations.

This device was certainly in use from 1941 onwards. The Nazi scientists intercepted and recorded hundreds if not thousands of the conversations. Where are the recordings and transcripts – documents of no doubt considerable embarrassment to the Allies – now? The records of Wetterlin have vanished, like those of Hermann Göring's parallel codebreaking agency, the *Forschungsamt*. British Intelligence officers are known to have cleansed the captured German files of sensitive materials after 1945 (*e.g.*, those concerning the Duke of Windsor); they may also have weeded the files of any 'phone transcripts before restoring them to Bonn. Ordinarily, such intercepts would have ended up in the archives of the S.I.S. or of the U.S. National Security Agency at Fort Meade, Maryland. Some experts questioned by us believed that they had seen references to the intercepts in U.S. Army Security Agency files at Arlington Hall, Virginia; others directed our inquiries to the depository of communications materials at Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. The late Professor Sir Frank Hinsley came across no trace of them in preparing his Intelligence histories.¹⁷ These lines of inquiry must be regarded as 'in suspense.'

The weeding, if indeed it was carried out, has not been one hundred per cent – it never is. A few transcripts survive, scattered about the archives of the German foreign ministry and in Heinrich Himmler's files. Himmler's papers indicate that he forwarded the Wetterlin transcripts by landline direct to Hitler's headquarters, certainly on occasions during 1942, and his files confirm that there were by then already many hundreds of reels of recording tape. On April 9, 1942 S.S.-*Gruppenführer* Gottlob Berger (chief of the S.S. *Hauptamt*, or Central Office) wrote to Himmler asking for two *Geheimschreiber* – the code-transmitters known to Bletchley Park as FISH – to speed up the transmission of the transcripts to headquarters. 'The yield so far is meagre,' he conceded, 'for the reason that we lack the type of

people who can understand American telephone jargon.' Just as some Allied generals did not appreciate the value of ULTRA, Himmler did not seem too excited by the break-through that Ohnesorge's boffins had achieved; he replied a few days later merely, 'Meanwhile we have indeed received the further reports, of which I am forwarding a suitable selection to the Führer.'¹⁸ Inevitably this disappointed Ohnesorge. On May 21, 1942 Berger wrote to Himmler's office advising that the Post Office minister wanted to discuss Wetterlin with the S.S. chief in person: 'Please tell the Reichsführer S.S. that he and not *Obergruppenführer* Heydrich must get his hands on the reports.' The new teleprinters would carry the reports direct from the listening post to the Führer's headquarters. Berger advised: 'He [Ohnesorge] is going to ask: What does the Führer say?'¹⁹

In July 1942 Harry Hopkins and General Marshall visited London for staff talks. Wetterlin intercepted the resulting 'phone conversations between London and Washington. ('The people talking,' reported Berger, 'are primarily staff officers, deputy ambassadors, and ministers.') On the twentieth, Berger wrote to Himmler: 'Although they operated only with codewords in the 'phone conversations that we tapped, my appreciation is as follows: today and tomorrow there is to be a particularly important conference between the British and Americans. At this conference they will probably determine where and when the Second Front is to be staged.'²⁰

On July 23 Berger read a transcript recorded at 4:10 P.M. the previous day (on 'reel 599') between a 'Mr Butcher' in New York and the prime minister in London ('The operator called out several times: Hello, Mr Churchill').²¹ There are references to other similar intercepts in the German files. Joseph Goebbels's diary records that the Nazis listened in on Anthony Eden's 'phone calls from Washington to London about the Italian crown prince Umberto in April 1943.²² Lapses like these may explain why the archives captured by the British are now almost bare of these transcripts.

Aware of the dangers to security, the British progressively restricted the number of users until only government ministries had authority to use the system. Sir Edwin Herbert had written to all users in July 1940 about the risk of the radiotelephone: 'It must now be accepted that conversations by this medium can be, and are being, intercepted by the enemy, and such indiscretions may therefore have a far-reaching and very serious effect on the security of this country.'²³ Churchill was in favour of all such conversations being monitored (though not his), given that 'frequently high officials

make indiscreet references which give information to the enemy': so Sir Edwin, spending several weeks in Washington assisting the Americans in setting up their own censorship system after Pearl Harbor, told his American counterpart, Byron Price. Sir Edwin's advice was that interruption of indiscreet conversations was a necessary evil, since 'scrambling has been shown to be ineffective.'

Not everybody agreed. Roosevelt argued on January 27, 1942 that there should be exceptions to the mandatory 'cut-off' rule.²⁴ Herbert too was uneasy, asking Price in one subsequent telegram: 'Can censors in the last resort be expected to over-rule the President or Prime Minister in person?'²⁵ British government ministers objected that during talks with American cabinet members and higher levels, the censors 'should not break the connection,' but merely issue their verbal warning. Roosevelt concurred, and directed his private secretary to 'phone Byron Price that nobody of cabinet level or above should be subjected to cutting-off.'²⁶ This new regulation took effect on the last day of March 1942. Once an operator identified such a high-level call by the codeword *tops*, the censor was forbidden to cut off the call if the party at either end overruled him.²⁷ The *tops* list was periodically updated, *e.g.*, Edward Stettinius replaced Sumner Welles in November 1943.²⁸ Moreover, only the censor in the originating country could cut the call.

This new system seems in retrospect particularly perverse, since by the spring of 1942 the British firmly suspected that the Nazis were listening in on the transatlantic radiotelephone. 'Experts here,' wrote one Canadian official in London, 'consider that the security devices . . . while valuable against a casual eavesdropper, afford no security whatsoever when tapped by a fully-qualified radio engineer with ample resources. Therefore . . . it is practically certain that they are all overheard by the enemy.'²⁹ Only limited conclusions were drawn from this. Very few people were allowed on any ministry's 'permitted list.'³⁰ Private calls were not allowed. Journalists had to provide a pre-censored script. The cabinet secretary Sir Edward Bridges repeatedly warned all ministries against indiscretions. Writing with a precision that suggests detailed knowledge of the Wetterlin operation, Bridges warned in August 1942 – only a few days after the Himmler–Berger letters that we have quoted – that there was no security device which gave protection against skilled Nazi engineers: 'It must be assumed that the enemy records every word of every conversation made.' No 'phone censor, he advised, could prevent every indiscretion, he could only cut off the call and

then inevitably too late, and he had no control over the distant party's indiscretions.³¹

Churchill was an uncomfortable but nevertheless frequent user of the link. 'I do not feel safe with the present free use of the radiotelephone either to USA or to Russia,' he confessed to Eden in October 1942.³² Besides, there were others than just the Nazis whom he did not want to listen: 'You will appreciate,' Canadian government officials were warned before 'phoning from London, 'that your conversation will be listened to by the American Censorship.'³³

Over the next months the information about Wetterlin must have hardened. In February 1943 the foreign office sent a 'most secret' warning to Sir Edwin Herbert that the Germans had set up a big interception station employing four hundred people at The Hague in Holland for monitoring the transatlantic radiotelephone.

'We already knew,' this warning stated, 'that they had the necessary apparatus in Berlin to "unscramble" the Transatlantic telephone. . . The Hague would be the best place for the Germans to do this job, as you will notice that it is practically in line with London and New York.'³⁴

WHEN IT was seen that the commercial scrambling device in use until then, the 'A-3,' was insecure, inventors working at the Bell Telephone Laboratories had begun developing another system. This was X-RAY – also known as PROJECT X and THE GREEN HORNET (because it emitted a buzzing sound like the theme music of a popular American radio programme of that name). It was a scrambling system of great complexity, and terminals were eventually located in Washington, London, Algiers, and Australia; and thereafter at Paris, Hawaii, and the Philippines. An X-RAY telephone scrambler terminal would be carried to Sebastopol aboard the U.S.S. *Catoctin* for the Yalta conference in February 1945. In June 1945 a terminal was installed at the I.G. Farben building in Frankfurt which housed U.S. army headquarters.

The system was so secret that the corresponding patents, entitled 'secret telephony,' were awarded only in 1976 to the inventors.³⁵ It was as secure as could be. Not even the operators could listen in. At the sending and receiving end, electronic equipment sampled the power in each of ten frequency bands in the user's voice fifty times a second, and assigned a different signal amplification value to each sample. Unique matching pairs of phonograph discs of random noise were used to encode and decode at each end. Known to the U.S. army as SIGSALY, each X-RAY terminal was

large, taking three rooms to house and six men to operate. The equipment at each terminal included over thirty seven-foot racks fitted with 'vocoders,' oscillators, high-quality phonographs, filters, and one thousand vacuum tubes; these radio valves consumed 30,000 watts of power, necessitating in turn the installation of air conditioning equipment.

The Washington terminal was installed in March 1943; it was located in Room 3D928 at the new Pentagon building. Originally, General Sir Hastings Ismay learned, another X-RAY terminal was to have been installed in the White House itself, but Roosevelt did not fancy being 'phoned by Churchill at all hours and in April Ismay told the prime minister that it would not be fitted there after all. The second terminal was installed in the Public Health Building in downtown Washington instead. The London end initially terminated in the Americans' communication centre in the sub-basement of Selfridge's department store annexe at No. 14 Duke-street, not a hundred yards from where these words are being written.

The Americans began installing this X-RAY system in London too, but it would be a year before Churchill would or could use it. 'A United States Officer,' General Ismay informed him on February 15, 1943 referring to a Major Millar, 'has just arrived in London with instructions to install an apparatus of an entirely new kind for ensuring speech secrecy over the radio-telephone.' One strange feature, which struck the British government quite forcibly, was that their allies insisted on retaining physical control of the secret equipment and the building housing it in London.

At first they would not let the British even see it in operation in America; by February, only the legendary Dr Alan Turing of GC&CS had been allowed to inspect it. The dangers of letting themselves in for this arrangement seemed obvious to the British, but Churchill merely minuted 'good,' and the installation went ahead.³⁶

The London end was installed during May 1943 and seems to have been serviceable soon after. The Americans made an overseas test call over the X-system on June 29, and a formal inaugural call was made between London and Washington on July 15.³⁷ On the nineteenth, Henry Stimson, visiting London, 'talked over the new telephone with Marshall,' in Washington.³⁸ On July 27 the American military authorities informed the British joint staff mission in Washington that this transatlantic scrambler link to Selfridge's was now 'in working order.' At first the British were told that onward extensions to Whitehall would not be possible.³⁹ During August however the Americans installed the link from the Selfridge's terminal to the war cabi-

net offices in Great George-street.⁴⁰ Later a further extension known as an OPEPS was run to a special cabin in the underground Cabinet War Rooms, where largely fruitless attempts were made to remind Mr Churchill of the transatlantic time-difference by fixing an array of clocks on the wall above the door (where both 'phone extension and clocks can still be seen today).

Mysteriously, despite the July 1943 calls, the new X-RAY system proved ineffective right through to October, when extra valves were supposedly added; the British had by then unsuccessfully attempted four calls from the Cabinet War Rooms extension. The Americans blamed atmospheric, but the British harboured their own suspicions, believing that this excuse was pure invention.⁴¹ Probably because it provided better voice quality than the tinny SIGSALY, Churchill continued for many months to prefer the insecure 'A-3' scrambler to the evident delight of the Nazis who continued to listen in. They certainly recorded Churchill's call to Roosevelt on July 29, 1943, and deduced from it that, whatever the Italian regime's protestations to the contrary, they had done a secret deal with the Allies. This indiscretion gave Hitler sufficient warning to move Rommel's forces into northern Italy.⁴²

Tantalisingly, the files show that the Americans routinely offered verbatim transcripts of each conversation to the respective calling party.⁴³ Churchill's lapses remained however a source of worry both to the Americans and to his own staff. One example was at eight P.M. on October 7, 1943: announcing himself as 'John Martin' (his principal private secretary's name), he telephoned the White House and evidently asked for the president by name. Roosevelt was four hundred miles away at Hyde Park, and Hopkins took the message.

Churchill, he noted, had telephoned to ask whether Hopkins had read his 'long dispatch' that morning – evidently a secret message sent to Roosevelt along Churchill's secret conduit (see Appendix I) – referring to Anglo-American differences over the campaign in the Aegean Sea. Hopkins retorted that it had not been 'received well,' and was likely to get a dusty answer. The prime minister now stated that he had additional information which he was cabling at once, and proposed to fly to Africa to see Eisenhower about the matter personally, as it was of urgent importance. 'It was clear,' concluded Hopkins, 'that he was greatly disturbed when I told him that our military reply would probably be unfavorable.'⁴⁴

Just over an hour later, at 9:10 P.M., Churchill again called Hopkins (still using the old 'A-3' scrambler system), 'and,' according to Hopkins's memo, 'stated that if the President would agree, he would like to have General

Marshall meet him, presumably at General Eisenhower's headquarters, at once.' Hopkins assured him that he would talk to FDR about this and let him know.

We know that the censors at both ends were appalled by Churchill's breach of security. The next day, on October 8, 1943, Captain Fenn himself contacted Harry Hopkins at the White House to recommend that in future President Roosevelt and Churchill, when telephoning each other, call an agreed anonymous 'phone number in the United States, rather than that calls should be put in specifically for the 'prime minister' or the 'president.' He also urged them to use the new Army scrambler system, the X-RAY, which Hopkins confirmed he understood was in existence.⁴⁵

Underscoring the point, on October 12 Colonel Frank McCarthy (Marshall's secretary) warned Hopkins that the censors had listened in and that, while Hopkins had tactfully but consistently urged Churchill to watch his tongue, 'the prime minister cited names and places in such a way as to create possible danger for himself and others.'⁴⁶

Such a conversation – given the type of 'phone equipment used – would necessarily come to the attention of ten or even twenty people from the censorship clerks and their immediate superiors to the actual 'phone operators and others. 'In addition,' McCarthy reiterated, 'this equipment furnishes a very low degree of security, and we know definitely that the enemy can break the system with almost no effort.'⁴⁷

The British censors simultaneously echoed these warnings, but Churchill adopted a churlish attitude. The British files reveal his unhelpful response. Francis Brown, his secretary, reported to the cabinet secretary Sir Edward Bridges on October 11 that Sir Edwin Herbert, the chief censor, had come to see him on the tenth:

We agreed to draw the Prime Minister's attention to the records of his recent talks with Mr Hopkins on the transatlantic telephone and in particular to the fact that there were two things which would be evident to the enemy from these talks:–

- (1) the fact that there was grave disagreement at least between the Prime Minister and an American authority;
- (2) the fact that this disagreement was such that the Prime Minister might well have to make a journey.

The Germans could make great propaganda use of (1), and could take steps to find out more about (2) from their various agents.

Churchill's secretary sent the censorship reports back to Bridges, and asked him to arrange their return to Herbert, the Director General of the Postal and Telegraph Censorship – which is an important clue as to where the records may now be expected to reside.⁴⁸ Having read the damning note of his alleged transgressions, Churchill inked the comment: 'None of this has any operational significance. No one cd know what it was about. Shut down. WSC 11.X.' Regrettably, the transcripts are not in the file.

These and other lapses clearly tested General Marshall's patience. He referred to them only two years later, in a December 1945 hearing before the United States Congress on the Pearl Harbor disaster, when explaining his own fateful reluctance to use the 'phone to warn the commanding generals in Hawaii and the Philippines of the imminence of Japanese attack. This public accusation came to Churchill's ears, and he cabled a pained, and secret, message to Marshall on December 10, 1945:

You are reported to have stated to the Senate Committee that President Roosevelt and I had telephone conversations which were tapped by the enemy. I should be very much obliged to you if you would let me know exactly what it is you have said on this subject.

Of course the late President and I were both aware from the beginning even before Argentina [*sic*. ARGENTIA] that anything we said on the open cable might be listened into by the enemy. For this reason we always spoke in cryptic terms and about matters which could be of no use to the enemy, and we never on any occasion referred directly or indirectly to military matters on these open lines.

It will probably be necessary for me to make a statement on this subject in the future, and I should be very glad to know how the matter stands. Yours ever, WINSTON S. CHURCHILL.⁴⁹

Marshall cabled a courteous response: 'I testified in connection with the security phase of the use of the telephone to Hawaii and the Philippines and the Panama Canal Zone in the following words:

I say again, I am not at all clear as to what my reasons were regarding the telephone because four years later it is very difficult for me to tell what went on in my mind at the time. I will say this, though, it was in my mind regarding the use of [the] Transocean telephone. Mr Roosevelt – the president – had been in the frequent habit of talking to the prime

minister by telephone. He also used to talk to Mr Bullitt when he was ambassador in Paris and my recollection is that that (meaning the talks with Bullitt) was intercepted by the Germans. I had a test made of induction from telephone conversations on the Atlantic Cable near Gard[i]ner's Island. I found that that could be picked up by induction. I talked to the president not once but several times. I also later, after we were in the war, talked with the prime minister in an endeavor to have them be more careful in the use of the scrambler.

'I trust,' he concluded his message to Churchill, 'my statement will not prove of any embarrassment to you.'⁵⁰

Some time after the October 1943 episode, Churchill finally began using the X-RAY system, and he did so until the end of the war. A March 1945 memorandum specified: 'Stenographic transcription of all calls over the X-RAY system will be made,' as well as an electrical recording.⁵¹

We have found however only scattered transcripts of these X-RAY conversations, almost solely between army generals: *e.g.*, between Jacob Devers in London and Omar Bradley and others at the Pentagon in September 1943, and between Brehon Somervell in London and General Code at the Pentagon in August 1944.⁵²

Disappointingly few transcripts of Churchill's conversations are in the public domain. In the diary of President Truman's assistant press secretary we find this entry on April 25, 1945: 'Around noon, the President went to the Pentagon without warning. The press got wind of it, and were told it was an "inspection." Some learned that he went into the communication room. The fact was that he went over to talk over the European telephone, I believe, to Churchill.'⁵³ The transcript shows that they discussed the surrender of Germany.⁵⁴

Churchill also 'phoned Colonel McCarthy and Admiral Leahy on May 7, 1945 about arrangements for the surrender of Germany (the transcripts run to two and four pages respectively).

Transcripts of Churchill's other transatlantic conversations must have been made at the time; we must ask, where are they?

APPENDIX III: *Sikorski's Death*

IN 1967 THE GERMAN playwright Rolf Hochhuth produced a drama, *Soldiers*, about air warfare. Churchill's role in the 1943 death of the Polish prime minister Wladyslaw Sikorski was a secondary element of the play. This resulted in fierce controversy. After our book *Accident* was published,* David Frost devoted three special TV programmes to it. A highly defamatory book appeared, written by one Carlos Thompson: *The Assassination of Winston Churchill*. A number of officers and other witnesses contacted us: we spoke with the widow of the missing second pilot, and an S.O.E. officer based on the Rock told us what he had seen. Early in 1969 we asked the prime minister, Harold Wilson, to reopen the 1943 R.A.F. Court of Inquiry, and Woodrow Wyatt, MP, tabled a parliamentary Question.

The relevant government files were released to the Public Record Office just before this volume went to press. These reveal that in February 1969 the Intelligence Co-ordinator provided a background memorandum for the cabinet secretary Sir Burke Trend to forward to Wilson. This concluded that our book had conveyed as clearly as was possible without risking a libel suit that the Liberator's pilot, Edward Prchal, had 'assisted in the plane's sabotage.' 'He [David Irving] has clearly done a good deal of research among people involved in the Gibraltar arrangements and the Court of Inquiry and among United States and Polish émigré archives.'

In advising the prime minister to refute the sabotage allegations most robustly, Sir Burke warned him however to temper his remarks with caution since, not only were High Court writs flying, but 'the report of the contemporary R.A.F. court of inquiry contains some weaknesses which, if it were published, could be embarrassingly exploited.'

The 1943 inquiry did not 'exclude the possibility of doubt' on the possibility of sabotage, explained the cabinet secretary:

The shadow of doubt is certainly there; and a skilful counsel could make good use of it. Irving, in his book *Accident*, points to the weaknesses in the report, a copy of which he has certainly seen and may possess; and if challenged he might publish it.

* David Irving: *Accident – The Death of General Sikorski* (London, 1967). Extracts from the file on our website at fpp.co.uk/books/Accident.

Anything that the prime minister might say must therefore be consistent with what might need to be admitted if the inquiry's report later came into the public domain. Meanwhile, as Wilson was informed, the Intelligence community was limiting its response to providing 'unattributable' and 'discreet' help and 'encouragement' to those anxious to defend the late Sir Winston Churchill, notably his grandson, Mr Winston Churchill Jr., his wartime 'secret circle,' and the 'rather enigmatic' Argentine author Carlos Thompson (husband of the actress Lilli Palmer) whom Randolph Churchill had commissioned to write a book.

It was also hoped to destroy both ourselves and the playwright Hochhuth with legal proceedings (only Hochhuth was eventually sued). 'Irving,' Harold Wilson was advised, 'has called for a re-opening of the R.A.F. Court of Inquiry which he (rightly) claims is permissible under R.A.F. Rules.' Sir Burke Trende warned the prime minister:

It would be most unwise to agree, not least because of the weaknesses in the proceedings of the [1943] Court of Inquiry.⁵⁵

Harold Wilson concurred in this view. He did however inquire *en passant* whether Winston Churchill had in fact ordered the assassination. Sir Burke assured him in one word ('No') that he had not.

updated Wednesday, April 4, 2001

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Notes and Sources

Introduction: **Never Forget Your Trademark**

- 1 From a speech by Gen. Sir Ian Jacob at Churchill College Cambridge, 'Looking Back at Churchill,' Mar 13, 1969.
- 2 Eliot A Cohen: 'Churchill at War,' *Commentary*, New York, May 1987, 40ff.
- 3 Sir Ian Jacob to Mrs Long, May 25, 1954 (Alanbrooke papers, 12/xi/2/11).
- 4 WSC to Brooke, Mar 12, 1957 (Alanbrooke papers, 13/3/1/3); WSC saw only the version published by Bryant.
- 5 In the proof copy of the prewar book by Churchill (hereafter 'WSC'), *Step by Step*, the final chapter written in about March 1939 held that the world could still 'welcome and aid a genuine Hitler of peace and toleration.' When the book was published in June 1939, this chapter had been cut out (Longwell papers; Hoover Library, Stanley Hornbeck papers, box 117; *Evening Star*, Washington, Dec 12, 1965). The papers of Sir Walter Monckton in the Bodleian Library contain as items 23 and 24 correspondence with Queen Elizabeth revealing her desire to accept Hitler's 1940 peace offer; access to these items was restricted until 1999.
- 6 See the letter from R A Butler to Lord Halifax, May 9, 1940, on the terms on which the Labour Party agreed to enter into WSC's coalition government (Hickleton papers, A4.410.16).
- 7 See Paul Addison, in Nick Tiratsoo (ed.),

From Blitz to Blair: A New History of Britain since 1939 (London, 1997).

- 8 See comment of P J Grigg to his father, Feb 23, 1941 (Grigg papers, 2/4).
- 9 Thus Brendan Bracken revealed to Mirror group newspaperman Bartholomew on May 1, 1942 that 'the Government knew the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* had run on some mines when escaping through the Channel . . . because we at that time knew the naval code and had picked up their report to that effect.' Bartholomew at once retailed this to Cecil King: hand-written diary, May 5, 1942 (Boston Univ., Mugar Memorial Library, Cecil King papers) (hereafter: Cecil King diary).
- 10 See Halifax's secret diary, Jul 10, 1941.
- 11 The British Channel 4 television broadcast on Nov 16 and 23, 1995 a documentary entitled 'Edward VIII. The Traitor King,' which rehashed, though without attribution, the evidence we presented that his right-wing and anti-war leanings were the real cause of his enforced abdication in 1936 and his enforced exile, at pistol-point, to the Caribbean in Aug 1940.
- 12 Morton to WSC, Aug 23: a Prof. Rougier had arrived in Switzerland from Paris, with word that Weygand wanted to get in touch with WSC and de Gaulle (PREM.7/6; this file was closed until 1996). Again on Oct 5, Morton to WSC: 'Monsieur Rougier, who was to have come here as an emissary from Pétain, has ar-

rived. He has been seen by Lord Halifax, Cadogan and myself. I have found him disappointing.' 'He has no real mandate to commit Pétain in any way but he carries a signed note showing that his visit is known to Pétain.' Rougier, said Morton, 'was manifestly bewildered at finding food, petrol and normal intercourse in London. He expected to clamber over piles of smoking wreckage to discover the Prime Minister hiding in a cellar' (PREM.7/3). Rougier saw Halifax on Oct 24, and WSC with Halifax on Oct 25.

Before leaving the UK on Oct 28, he drafted an outline of arguments he would put to Gen. Weygand; Strang and Halifax inserted manuscript amendments, which Churchill approved (Hickleton papers, A2.278.35). While Halifax was careful to go on the record on Dec 15, 1942 – at the height of the poisonous Darlan controversy – that in September 1940 'the government of Marshal Pétain wished to reach an agreement with HMG, were determined to prevent at any price the seizure by the Axis of the French fleet and bases, and were anxious to prepare the way for a large scale landing of Allied forces on African soil,' he also warned the FO that were Rougier to reveal this now it could only damage. 'It is a great pity that we ever had any dealings with this unpleasant man,' lamented one FO official, while Eden virtuously minuted, Dec 21, 1942: 'I don't think that I know this apparently nasty piece of work. But this reply [threatening Rougier with ugly consequences if he publishes] seems [the] only possible one.'

From a letter from Desmond Morton to WSC on Apr 9, 1945, released only in 2001, it is evident that there was 'a secret agreement' between the British Govern-

ment and Vichy which Eden and WSC later took pains to deny. Pierre Flandin, on trial for his life for collaborating with Vichy, had appealed through Morton to WSC to come clean (PREM.7/7).

It was during the trial, on Feb 26, 1945, that Flandin first publicly revealed the existence of this 'secret agreement' between Vichy and WSC's government. After the latter issued denials, through Reuters on Feb 28 and Mar 31, Rougier published a pamphlet in Canada, May 2, entitled 'Mission secrète à Londres.' Kenneth de Courcy, the incorrigible *arriviste*, printed a translation in his *Review of World Affairs* that same month. Pétain, by then also on trial for his life, likewise built the agreement into his defence. Speaking in the House on Jun 12, 1945 WSC had to deny for a third time that there had been any such agreement, but he admitted that talks had taken place in 'a neutral capital.'

In a further book, *Les Accords Pétain–Churchill*, Rougier published in Jun 1945 some of the documents, forcing the outgoing Churchill government to publish a White Paper, during the Pétain trial, of which it sent copies to defence and prosecuting counsel. Its repudiation of the 'agreement,' noted the FO's E M Young, was couched in 'unduly strong,' meaning unwarranted, terms.

See too the War Cabinet paper WP (40) 486, 'Contacts with the Vichy Government,' Dec 19, 1940, and FO.371/32077, from which however a key item has been removed until 2018. See White Paper, *Despatch to HM Ambassador in Paris regarding relations between HMG in the UK and the Vichy Government in the autumn of 1940*, Cmd. 6662, published Jul 13, 1945.

13 Deakin to Strang, Feb 11, 1964 (Churchill College, Strang papers, 2/13); this file

- was closed until 1996. It includes a 'Chronological outline of events relating to M Rougier,' Oct 24, 1940 – Jun 15, 1964, by E M Young.
- 14 'Hitler is anti-Christ. The whole fight is against anti-Christ.' Mackenzie King, memo on a conversation with FDR and WSC, May 20, 1943 (Mackenzie King papers).
- 15 WSC to Lord Halifax, Aug 3, 1940 (Public Records Office [hereafter: PRO] file PREM.4/100/3).
- 16 Sir John Colville diary, Jun 1 – Sep 30, 1941 (Churchill College, CLVL.1/5) (hereafter: Colville diary), Aug 20, 1940. Extracts were published as *The Fringes of Power. 10 Downing Street Diaries 1939–1955* (London, 1985).
- 17 On Aug 15, 1940 (Hoover Libr., Edouard Táborsky papers).
- 18 Cf. Nigel Nicolson (ed.), Harold Nicolson, *Diaries and Letters 1939–1945* (London, 1967), entry for Jan 22, 1941 (hereafter: Nicolson diary). WSC spoke very similarly to Cecil King over luncheon on Feb 19, 1941 (Cecil King diary): as soon as one got away from platitudes when speaking about war aims, one ran into difficulties. Thus, recorded the newspaperman in his diary, Lord Vansittart wanted to oppress Germany after the war, while WSC believed in a European family of nations and would treat the Germans generously, while denying them any arms.
- 19 Lester B Pearson to Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, Sep 11, 1943 (Canadian National Archives, Ottawa, Hume Wrong papers, MG.30, E.101).
- 20 The Führer had enthused to his staff, 'War is the father of all things' on Aug 15, 1938, May 20, 1942, Jan 27, 1944, Jun 22, 1944, and Jan 9, 1945. David Irving, *Hitler's War* (London, 1991), 123.
- 21 OSS report 35343, Apr 10, 1943 (NA, RG.226, Records of the Office of Strategic Services).
- 22 Brooke diary, Oct 26, 1941 (Alanbrooke papers); some of the entries were published by Sir Arthur Bryant (ed.), *The Turn of the Tide* (London, 1957).
- 23 P J Grigg to his father, Feb 23 and Jul 14, 1941 (Grigg papers, 2/4).
- 24 Pound to Cunningham, May 30, 1943 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52561).
- 25 Tovey to Cunningham, Oct 5, 1943 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52571).
- 26 Clive Ponting, *Churchill* (London, 1994).
- 27 John Charmley, *Chamberlain and the Lost Peace* (London, 1989), 54; Maurice Cowling, *The Impact of Hitler* (London, 1995), 1–2, and 242. For the Focus files see Churchill College, CHAR.2/236 and /282–6.
- 28 Quoted in Martin Gilbert, 'The most horrible crime,' in *Times Literary Supplement*, Jun 7, 1996, 5.
- 29 WSC's mother Jenny Jerome was 'outed' in the *Jerusalem Post*, Jan. 18, 1993: editorial columnist Moshe Kohn wrote: 'Cunning, no doubt, came to Churchill in the Jewish genes transmitted by his mother Lady Randolph Churchill, née Jenny Jacobson/Jerome.' As Prof. William Rubinstein of the Univ. of Wales has shown, the case of Winston's schoolfriend and later India Secretary, Leo Amery, was 'possibly the most remarkable example of concealment of identity in 20th century British political history.' In his 1955 autobiography Amery wrote that his father was English and that his mother was born Elisabeth Leitner, a Hungarian exile who had fled via Constantinople to England; Rubinstein's convincing research establishes that she was born Erszebet Saphir in Pest, in the Jewish quarter of the Hun-

- garian capital. *Ibid.*, Jan 12, 1999 ('Balfour Declaration's author was a secret Jew'). Both of her parents were Jews. Amery – later one of the authors of the 1917 Balfour Declaration – changed his middle name from Moritz to Maurice when he entered Harrow c.1887. *History Today*, Feb 1999, and letter from Prof. Rubinstein, Nov 22, 2000.
- 30 FDR to Col. The Hon and Mrs Arthur Murray, Argyll, Scotland Jun 2, 1941 (FDR Libr., PSF, box 53, 'Great Britain: Arthur Murray.')
- 31 Lord Moran [Sir Charles Wilson], *Winston Churchill. The Struggle for Survival, 1940–65* (London, 1966); hereafter: Moran, 'diary.' Compare for instance page 218 of Moran with page 841 of Robert Sherwood's *The White House Papers of Harry Hopkins*. Lord Moran's heirs did not grant our requests for access to his original notes, which are now in a medical library. In Beaverbrook's papers is a letter from Moran quoting from his WW1 diary, which seems to be of the same style; on Feb 5, 1963 Moran wrote to Beaverbrook about finding an editor for the Diaries (Beaverbrook papers, C.249).
- 32 Moran to Beaverbrook, Dec 11, 1962 (*ibid.*).
- 33 In his history of Naval Intelligence (Naval Historical Branch, London: Vice-Adm. John H Godfrey papers).
- 34 Martin Gilbert freely draws on the Moran 'diaries' in *Winston S Churchill*, vol. vii: *Road to Victory 1941–1945* (London, 1987) (hereafter: Gilbert, vol. vii), but seems to have suspected them after a while; initially, *e.g.*, page 30, he would write of Moran, 'nothing in his diary later that day,' but later in the volume Gilbert no longer calls them 'diaries' *tout court*, but 'Sir Charles Wilson, notes relating to' etc., or 'diary and recollections.'
- 35 *In Search of Churchill* (London, 1994).
- 36 John Charmley, reviewing Gilbert, vol. vii, in 'The Gilbert and Churchill Show,' notes that Gilbert 'a little naught[il]y' gave the source of documents in his companion volumes as 'the Norwich papers' when he had not in fact had access to those; they were in fact all quoted from the autobiography of Duff Cooper (Lord Norwich), with one exception, Cooper's account of the night before his resignation over Munich: Duff Cooper had sent it to Churchill in 1953, who refused him permission to publish it. 'Gilbert's copy comes from the Churchill papers,' Charmley concludes, 'not the Norwich papers.'
- 37 *The Holy Fox – A Biography of Lord Halifax*.
- 38 A J P Taylor, *English History 1914–1945* (London, 1965).
- 39 Isaiah Berlin, 'Winston Churchill in 1940,' included in his anthology, *Personal Impressions*; published in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1949 as 'Mr Churchill.'
- 40 John Charmley, *Churchill – The End of Glory* (Harcourt Brace, New York, 1994).
- 41 Alan Clark, writing in *The Times*, in 1994. Reviewing Ponting's Churchill biography in *The Spectator*, Apr 23, 1994, Clark calls vol. i of our biography 'underrated (as well as, in this country, effectively suppressed by the book trade).'
- 42 Paul Johnson, in *The Wall Street Journal*: 'A Revisionist's Look at World War II.' Readers familiar with Britain's political dependence on Washington ('the special relationship') and with the alien invasion inflicted on her by her governments since the 1950s, without any mandate from the people, will dissent from Johnson's smug concluding sentence, that Britain 'was still democratic and independent at the end of the 20th century.'

- 43 Diary of Walther Hewel, Ribbentrop's liaison officer to Hitler, Jun 2, 1941 (author's microfilm D1-75).
- 44 John Charmley, *Churchill's Grand Alliance: The Anglo-American Special Relationship* (New York and London, 1995); see the splenetic review of this work by Eliot A Cohen, in *Wall Street Journal*, Oct 16, 1995.
- 45 John Lukács, 'Revising the Twentieth Century,' in *American Heritage*, Sep 1994, 86; and see his study, *The Hitler of History* (New York, 1997), 26-27, 29, 229-31. A possible reason for his bias is to be found in John Toland's papers in the FDR Library. Lukács lamented in Mar 1972 that he had hoped to write a definitive biography of Hitler, but no mainline publisher would commission it since our *Hitler's War* had scooped the pool.
- 46 Geoffrey Wheatcroft, 'The Saviour of His Country,' *Atlantic Monthly*, Feb 1994, 116ff.
- 47 Re-released by Decca in 1983 as *Winston Churchill, a Selection of his Wartime Speeches, 1939-1945*. Decca claimed them to be 'historic recordings, taken from radio transcriptions dating from 1939 to 1945.' The BBC asked Decca to drop this claim.
- 48 Barry Fox, 'We Shall Trick Them in the Speeches,' in *New Scientist*, London, May 18; *The Independent*, London, May 16; *The Guardian*, Jul 4, 1991. Robert Berkovitz of Sensimetrics Ltd. summarised, 'Something very fishy has been going on.'
- 49 Letter by Sally K Hine in *The Guardian*, Apr 22, 1991 ('Here in the Archive we have watched this story grow with great interest and some irritation'); she says that other wartime speeches were recorded in 1949 by WSC for the Decca twelve-record set. She told the Melbourne *Herald Sun* that in their archives was also an interview with Shelley revealing that he stood in for Churchill's voice in broadcast speeches. The matter was resolved in our favour when a British newspaper reported that Shelley's son Anthony had just found among his father's possessions an original 78 rpm disc of the Jun 4, 1940 speech, stamped, 'BBC, Churchill: Speech. Artist Norman Shelley.' See *The Observer*, Oct 29, 2000: 'FINEST HOUR FOR ACTOR WHO WAS CHURCHILL'S RADIO VOICE.'
- 50 Beaverbrook to Mrs Ince, Mar 3, 1942; and memo, Mar 16, 1942 (Beaverbrook papers, D.448); PM's card.
- 51 P J Grigg to his father, Aug 15, 1941 (Grigg papers, 2/4).
- 52 John Barnes et al. (ed.), *The Empire at Bay. The Leo Amery Diaries, 1929-1945* (London, 1988) (hereafter: Amery diary), entry for Apr 28, 1941.
- 53 Findings of the British Institute of Public Opinion, published in *News Chronicle*, Nov 4, 1941. WSC's acceptance ratings were as follows: 1940, Oct 89%, Nov 88%; 1941, Feb 85%, Mar 86%, Jun 87%, Oct 84%. For an expert analysis of WSC's popularity, see Tom Harrisson, head of Mass Observation, writing ('Who will win?') in *Political Quarterly*, vol. xv, No. 1.
- 54 Gallup poll of Jul 11, 1941; Gallup asked the same question on Dec 15, 1941 and found little change.
- 55 Sir Hugh Linstead (Conservative MP for Putney, 1942-64), Macmorren Lecture: 'The Infinite Adventure of Governing Men,' Oct 24, 1976, in *The Pharmaceutical Journal*, Dec 25, 1976, 598.
- 1: **A Very Big and Very Ugly War**
- 1 Anthony Cave Brown, *The Secret Servant. The Life of Sir Stewart Menzies, Churchill's Spymaster* (London, 1988) (hereafter Cave Brown, *Menzies*), 315.
- 2 Colville diary, Jun 22, 1941.

- 3 Ambassador Anthony Biddle to FDR, Jun 27, 1941 (FDR Libr.).
- 4 Cecil King diary, Jun 26, 1941; and PM's appointment card, a copy of which is in our possession (hereafter: PM's card). The 16 x 18 inch cards record WSC's daily appointments; we 'rented' these from a gentleman who acquired them under questionable circumstances, and we have donated copies to Churchill College archives (Author's microfilm DI-51, 'Prime Minister's desk diaries, 1939-45').
- 5 See *e.g.*, Tokyo to Washington, No. 867, Dec 2; *British* intercept No. 098,540 dated Dec 4, 1941 (HW.1/297). For the suppression of references to FECB in the PRO, see *e.g.*, Adm. Sir Geoffrey Layton's file in which Section 280, 'Transfer of FECB from Singapore to Colombo,' has been physically chopped out of the bound vol. in 1971 before its release to the PRO as file ADM. 199/1472a. As for the records of FECB (PRO series HW.4), the PRO would have us believe that records for 1941-3 'have not survived.'
- 6 Sir Frank H Hinsley *et al.*, *British Intelligence in the Second World War: Its Influence on Strategy and Operations* (Cambridge, 1979-84), 3 vols. (hereafter: Hinsley), vol. ii, 59f.
- 7 Hinsley. Only late in 1994, and then very selectively, were the first 'BJ'-intercepts released to the PRO (series HW.1). For typical 'BJ'-numbers see also FDR Library, Map Room file 166, Aug 1943, with its references to BJ.121,257, 121,258, 121,273.
- 8 Cadogan diary, Jun 28-9 (Churchill College, Cambridge: Sir Alexander Cadogan papers, ACAD.1/10) (hereafter: Cadogan diary); and see David Dilks (ed.), *The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan, O.M., 1938-1945* (London, 1971) (hereafter: Dilks); and the diary of John Martin (WSC's Principal Private Secretary), Jun 28, 1941 (hereafter: Martin diary; in Sir J Martin's papers, complete copy in our possession).
- 9 WSC to Beaverbrook, M.683/1, Jun 30, 1941 (Beaverbrook papers, D.417).
- 10 WSC to Portal, Jun 23 (PREM.3/111/1); and to Ismay, Jun 23, in Gilbert, vol. vi, 1122f; *cf.* Eden to WSC, Jun 24, 1941 (Eden papers, FO.954/24).
- 11 Martin diary, and letter, Jun 29; chiefs of staff meeting, Jun 23, 1941, COS (41) 225th.
- 12 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Jun 25, 1941, minute 8 (CAB.69/2; *cf.* PRO, CAB.44/54); tank statistics from COS aide-mémoire, (41) 123(O)
- 13 Pownall diary, Jun 30, Jul 23, 1941.
- 14 Personal and secret, Randolph Churchill to WSC, received Jun 7, 1941, in Winston S Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. iii: *The Grand Alliance* (London 1950) (hereafter Churchill, vol. iii), 311f.
- 15 PM's card; Lyttelton, 223ff (his dates are incorrect). WSC's paper was WP (41) 148, Jun 28, 1941. The PRO file on this is CAB.120/250.
- 16 WSC to Margesson and Dill, Jun 29, 1941, in Martin Gilbert, *Winston S Churchill*, vol. vi, *Finest Hour 1939-1941* (London, 1983) (hereafter: Gilbert, vol. vi), 1128.
- 17 Elizabeth Layton (Nel) diary, Jun 30, in Gilbert, vol. vi, 1129; Martin diary, Jun 30, 1941. In general, Elizabeth Nel, *Mr Churchill's Secretary* (London, 1958).
- 18 WSC to Ismay, Jun 27, 1941 (PREM.3/119/2). The important files of this Special Secret Intelligence Centre were opened in 1995, PRO series CAB.121.
- 19 WSC to Dill, Jul 6, in Gilbert, vol. vi, 1130; *cf.* defence committee (Operations) meeting, Jul 3, 1941 (CAB.69/2).

- 20 Gen. Raymond Lee, letter, Jul 4; and diary, Jul 1–3, Aug 16, 1941, in James Leutze (ed.), *The London Observer. The Journal of General Raymond E Lee 1940–1941* (London, 1972) (hereafter: Lee diary).
- 21 Frank Owen, quoted by Cecil King diary, Jul 7, 1941.
- 22 Cecil King diary, Jul 3, 1941.
- 23 Churchill, vol. iii, 340.
- 24 MEW to Moscow, Jul 4 (CAB.65/18); cf. Hugh Dalton's diary, Jun 16, 1941.
- 25 Cripps to FO, Jun 29, 1941 (PREM.3/401/1).
- 26 *Daily Worker*, Jul 9, 1941. Marshal Philip I Golikov, *S' Voennoi Missiei v Anglii i SShA* (On a Military Mission to Great Britain and the USA) (Moscow, 1987) (hereafter: Golikov), 31.
- 27 Golikov, *op. cit.*, 33ff. A formal Soviet military mission under Rear-Adm. Kharlamov was established in London in July: N M Kharlamov, *Difficult Mission* (Moscow, 1986).
- 28 Golikov, *op. cit.*, 43f.
- 29 *Ibid.*; and *New York Times*, Aug 1, 1941.
- 30 WSC to Portal, M.712/1, Jul 7, 1941 (PREM.3/14/5; and AIR.20/2214).
- 31 WSC to Stalin, Jul 7, rec'd Moscow Jul 8, 1941 (PREM.3/401/1); Churchill, vol. iii, 340; and in *Correspondence between the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the Presidents of the USA and the Prime Ministers of Great Britain during the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945* (Moscow, 1957) (hereafter Stalin–Churchill Correspond.), vol. i, No. 1.
- 32 For the Soviet record of the Cripps–Stalin conversation, see *Sovetsko-angliiskie otnosheniya vo vremya velikoi otchestvennoi voiny, 1941–1945: dokumenty i materialy*, two vols., vol. i, 1941–1943 (Moscow, 1983), (hereafter *Sov.-angliiskiye*), vol. i, 69ff. We are indebted to Richard Ogdon for drafting translations of these documents.
- 33 Harvey diary, Jul 9, 1941 (British Library); and see John Harvey (ed.), *The War Diaries of Oliver Harvey 1941–1945* (London, 1978) (hereafter: Harvey diary).
- 34 Cadogan diary, Jul 9; WSC to Stalin, Jul 10, 1 A.M. (PREM.3/170/1); WSC to Cripps, Jul 10, 1941: Churchill, vol. iii, 341f, and *Sov.-angliiskiye*, vol. i, 76.
- 35 Colville diary, Jul 9, 1941.
- 36 Lyttelton, *op. cit.*, 244ff.
- 37 WSC to Attlee, Aug 6, 1941, in Gilbert, vol. vi, 1157.
- 38 Cecil King diary, Jul 19, 1941.
- 39 *Ibid.*, Jul 17, 1941.
- 40 Elizabeth Nel, *Mr Churchill's Secretary* (London, 1958) (hereafter: Nel), 59f.
- 41 Elizabeth Layton (Nel) diary, Jul 18, 1941.
- 42 WSC to Cherwell, Jul 10, 1941 (PREM.3/22/4).
- 43 Menzies diary, Mar 28, 1941 (National Library of Australia, Canberra, Robert Menzies papers, MS.4936/1/57).
- 44 Cecil King diary, Jul 17; cf. Nicolson diary, Jul 18; and Martin diary, Jul 18, 1941: 'Active afternoon in connection with new ministerial appointments.'
- 45 Pownall diary, Jul 25, 1941.
- 46 WSC to Auchinleck, Jul 1, 1941 (PREM.3/291/1).
- 47 Auchinleck to WSC, Jul 4, 1941 (*ibid.*).
- 48 WSC to Auchinleck, Jul 6, 1941 (*ibid.*).
- 49 Auchinleck to WSC, Jul 23, 1941 (*ibid.*).
- 50 Ismay to J Martin, Jul 26, 1941 (*ibid.*).
- 51 Stalin to WSC, Jul 18, 1941 (PREM.3/170/1); *Sov.-angliiskiye*, vol. i, 854; Churchill, vol. iii, 342; and in *Stalin–WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, No. 3.
- 52 Maisky to Molotov, Jul 19, 1941, in *Sov.-angliiskiye*, vol. i, 86ff.
- 53 Jacob diary, record of ARCADIA conferences, Dec 1941, 43 (Churchill College,

- JACB.1/12).
- 54 Eden diary, manuscript, Jul 21, 1941 (Avon papers, 20.1.21). This MS is substantially more revealing than the few extracts published by Sir Anthony in *The Memoirs of Anthony Eden. The Reckoning* (London, 1965): hereafter, Eden, *Reckoning*.
- 55 Lee diary, Jul 15; and *cf.* Jul 25, 1941. There are 118 microfilm reels of Hull's papers in the US Library of Congress. Harriman, born Nov 15, 1891 in New York City to a railroad-building family, was chairman of the Illinois Central Railroad (1939–42) and of Union Pacific. He died in 1986.
- 56 As reported at COS (41) 254th meeting, minute 3 (*cf.* CAB.44/54, 84).
- 57 Lee diary, Nov 12, 1940.
- 58 *Ibid.*, Jul 21, 1941. Every room in the MI6 safe house near Aldershot where Hess was being held was bugged with hidden microphones.
- 59 Minutes of war cabinet (defence committee) meeting (Supply), Jul 22, 1941, attended by Harriman and Hopkins: DC (S) (41) 6th Mtg (Hopkins papers; Sherwood collection, box 307, folder 'Hopkins returns to London, #2').
- 60 Eden diary Jul 21, 1941.
- 61 Harvey diary, Jul 21, 1941.
- 62 Dalton diary, Jul 21. The minutes are also in Hopkins's papers. Minutes of war cabinet (defence committee) Supply meeting Jul 23, 1941, 5 P.M.: DC(S) (41) 7th Mtg (Hopkins papers).
- 63 Lee diary, Jul 21, 1941.
- 64 War Cabinet, Minutes of a Special Meeting held in Conference Room A, Ministry of Labour, on Jul 24, at 3 P.M., attended by Bevin, Hankey, etc., and Hopkins, Harriman, Lee, and Bridges; there were further meetings in Hankey's room on Jul 28 and 29 (*ibid.*). See too Churchill, vol. iii, 377ff; Lee diary, Jul 24; COS (41) 21st meeting (O), Jul 24, 1941; and Hopkins's version in Robert Sherwood, *The White House Papers of Harry Hopkins*, two vols (New York, 1948–1949), 31ff.
- 65 Hopkins to FDR, Jul 25, 1941 (FDR Libr., microfilm 6, 0387f; and FDR Libr., PSF, Hopkins).
- 66 Colville diary, Jul 24–5, 1941.
- 2: **Prime Minister with Nothing to Hide**
- 1 Neville Butler of the North American dept. of the FO was informed on Sep 8, 1941 that 'all our [FO] files go to show that they had *not* met before.' Cdr C R Thompson, WSC's personal assistant, stated that 'the question was raised when they met, and it was decided conclusively that they *had* met before' (PREM.4/71/1).
- 2 Churchill, vol. iii, 380.
- 3 PM's card, Jul 16; Cadogan diary, Jul 29, 1941.
- 4 Mackenzie King diary, Apr 20, 1941.
- 5 On relations with the United States at this time, see in general William Roger Louis, *Imperialism at Bay 1941–1945: The United States and the Decolonisation of the British Empire* (Oxford, 1977); Christopher Thorne, *Allies of a Kind: The United States, Britain, and the War against Japan, 1941–1945* (London, 1978), and David Reynolds, *The Creation of the Anglo-American Alliance, 1937–1941: A Study in Competitive Co-operation* (Chapel Hill, 1982).
- 6 Jacob diary, Aug 11, page 47: the governor then hurried over by train to Placentia for lunch with WSC. See Malcolm Macdonald to FO, Aug 13, 1941: Mackenzie King felt that the Dominions should have been informed in advance of the charter. E E Bridges' file shows the trouble taken

- to keep the Dominions in the dark on RIVIERA (CAB.120/20).
- 7 WSC to King George VI, Jul 25, 1941; this and the king's reply are in PREM.4/71/1, 'Meeting between PM & President Roosevelt Aug 1941'; about 20 pages appear to have been blanked out in this file.
- 8 Hopkins, note on meeting with King George VI (Hopkins papers, microfilm); the passage was deleted from Sherwood's edition; the king made similar disparaging remarks to Eleanor Roosevelt, Mackenzie King, and others. On Aug 7 Eden (diary) noted Sir Alec Hardinge's report that the king was 'nervy' (*i.e.*, on edge), and agreed on Aug 8 that 'he is certainly "nervy" as Alec had warned me. I still do not find him easy to talk to. . .'
- 9 WSC to FDR, Jul 25, 1941 (FDR Libr., microfilm 6, 0384f; and Churchill, vol. iii, 380).
- 10 WSC to FDR, Jul 26, 1941 (*ibid.*).
- 11 Hopkins to FDR, Jul 25, 1941 (*ibid.*, 0387f; *cf.* undated postwar memo by R Sherwood in Beaverbrook papers, C.175).
- 12 WSC to Stalin, Jul 28, 1941 (PREM.3/170/1; *Sov.-angliiskiye*, vol. i, 91; in *Stalin-WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, No. 6; Churchill, vol. iii, 346).
- 13 On Cripps see Gabriel Gorodetsky, *Stafford Cripps' Mission to Moscow, 1940-1942* (Cambridge, 1985).
- 14 Harvey diary, Jul 28, 1941.
- 15 C R Thompson MS (Thompson papers).
- 16 Elizabeth Layton to her parents, Jul 25, 1941: Gilbert, vol. vi, 1141.
- 17 Pownall diary, Jul 25, 1941.
- 18 Vincent Massey's report to Ottawa, Jul 31, 1941 (Canadian National Archives, Ottawa, Mackenzie King papers). Massey became the first Canadian-born Governor-General of Canada.
- 19 WSC to FDR, May 29, 1941 (NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files).
- 20 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Jul 21, 1941 (CAB.69/2).
- 21 'ULTRA History of US Strategic Air Force Europe vs. German Air Force,' Jun 1945 (NA, RG.457, SRH-013).
- 22 WSC minute, Jun 28, 1941 (ADM.205/10).
- 23 There was a sequel. After former SIS officer Harford Montgomery Hyde admitted the forgery in *The Daily Telegraph* in Oct 1979, the Bolivian government rehabilitated Belmonte and promoted him to general. Hyde's papers are now housed in Churchill College – but the Intelligence items, including his history of William Stephenson's clandestine operations, have been sealed indefinitely.
- 24 Stimson diary, Aug 13, 1941.
- 25 Berle diary, Sep 5 (FDR Libr., Adolph A Berle papers, VII/2/122f). Berle minuted to Sumner Welles on Sep 27, 1941: 'Mr Elliott . . . Stephenson's assistant in the British Intelligence is running Donovan's Intelligence service. You are familiar with the fact that we recently took up with the British Government the fact that British Intelligence had given us documents which they had forged. . . I believe that the British Intelligence probably has been giving attention to creating as many "incidents" as possible to affect public opinion here' (*ibid.*).
- 26 Ankara to Tokyo, Tel. No. 150, Jul 28, reporting remarks by Papen on Jul 26; deciphered and translated by US army, Jul 29, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.13527).
- 27 WSC to Pound, minute M.710/1, Jul 7, 1941 (ADM.205/10).
- 28 Cecil King diary, Jul 9; he would die in 1987 without seeing the American troops leave Britain. *Cf.* Lee diary, Jul 11, Nov 6, 1941.

- 29 Martin MS, based on his diary.
- 30 Mason-Macfarlane to war office, Aug 1, 1941 (WO.216/124).
- 31 On Sep 4 Grand-Adm. Karl Dönitz, the U-boat commander-in-chief, expressed concern that the British were fixing his U-boat positions with exactitude. The German decode of a British admiralty signal of Sep 6 contained 'an overview of probable U-boat locations which is absolutely spot-on and can only partly have been obtained by sightings and direction-finding' Baffled, the German naval staff added, 'There can be no question of their having gained insight into our code materials.' *Kriegstagebuch der Seekriegsleitung*, Sep 19, 1941.
- 32 Pound to WSC, Jul 2, 1941 (ADM.205/10).
- 33 WSC to Pound, Jul 5, 1941 (*ibid.*).
- 34 Pound to WSC, Jul 9, 1941 (*ibid.*).
- 35 Hinsley, Edward Thomas, and Patrick Wilkinson, in FH Hinsley and Alan Stripp (eds.), *Codebreakers. The Inside Story of Bletchley Park* (London, 1993) (hereafter: Hinsley & Stripp), 3, 33, 46, 64. This cypher yielded six hundred decrypts in July 1941.
- 36 Harvey diary, Aug 4, 1941; Churchill, vol. iii, 361.
- 37 Eden diary, Aug 2, 1941.
- 38 WSC memo, Jul 31 (Beaverbrook papers, D.418). COS (41) 270th meeting, Jul 31, minute 2; and defence committee (Operations) meeting, Aug 1, 1941, minute 1 (PREM.3/286).
- 39 Martin diary, Jul 26, 1941.
- 40 Stewart Menzies MS, 1967, quoted in Cave Brown, *Menzies*, 317.
- 41 Brooke, quoted in Dalton diary, Feb 10, 1942.
- 42 See *e.g.*, Amery diary, Oct 14, 1942: '... just after Winston had discussed it with me in his bath towel . . .'; and Cadogan diary, Aug 24, 1943: when Eden and Cadogan went up to see WSC at 11:30 A.M. to get final approval of recognition for de Gaulle's committee they found him stark naked, drying himself.
- 43 This was on Aug 26, 1941. Elliott Roosevelt, in *Parade* magazine, Los Angeles, Oct 10, 1982.
- 44 Mackenzie King diary, May 21, 1943.
- 45 L C Hollis minute to WSC, Jul 28, 1941, and WSC's marginalia (PREM.3/485/6).
- 46 HM Queen Elizabeth to WSC, and reply, Aug 3, 1941 (*ibid.*). For RIVIERA, see the diary kept by Lieut-Col. E I C Jacob throughout (Churchill College archives, JACB.1/9).
- 47 FDR to WSC, Jul 15, 1941 (NA, State dept. file 740.0011 European War 1939/14007-4/5).
- 48 WSC to Bridges and Ismay, Aug 3, 1941 (Beaverbrook papers, D.122; and PREM.3/485/6; a truncated version is in Churchill, vol. iii, 383).
- 49 T L Rowan note, Aug 5, 1941, on a meeting with C and others (*ibid.*). This initially specified that the FO would be responsible for selecting which 'BJs' to send; the FO was replaced by 'Major Morton.'
- 50 Martin diary, Aug 3, 1941.
- 51 J Martin to H V Morton, author of the subsequent book *Atlantic Meeting*, Dec 28, 1942 (PREM.4/71/1).
- 52 Lee diary, Aug 3-4, 1941.
- 53 WSC to FDR, Aug 4, 1941 (FDR Libr., microfilm 6, 931; Churchill, vol. iii, 381).
- 54 Our interview of Sir John Langford-Holt, Feb 20, 1978.
- 55 Jacob diary, Aug 7, 1941.
- 56 *Ibid.*, Aug 4, 1941.
- 57 *Transocean* Radio Message, Aug 5, 8:15 P.M., and related minutes (PREM.4/71/1); Jacob diary Aug 7, 1941.

- 58 Stimson diary, Aug 6, 1941: 'There is a wild rumor going around town to-night. . .'
- 59 FDR to Hull, Aug 6, 1941 (Hull papers).
- 60 Cadogan diary, Aug 7–8, 1941.
- 61 *Ibid.*, Aug 7; Jacob diary, Aug 7, 1941: 'I thought we had touched rock bottom with the film the previous evening, but this one, called *High Sierra*, was even worse.'
- 62 *Ibid.*, Aug 8, 1941, 23.
- 63 Arnold diary, Aug 1941; and in general 'Log of the President's Cruise on Board the USS *Potomac* and USS *Augusta*, Aug 3–16, 1941' (FDR Libr., PSF, 'Atlantic Charter').
- 64 Jacob diary, Aug 9. On Aug 11, 1941 he noted with anger that the visiting US naval officers had not made a single inquiry about *Prince of Wales*, her capabilities or equipment, or her part in sinking *Bismarck*. 'They do not appear in the least interested in the progress of the naval war . . . they seem to be much more concerned in getting a few drinks and in having a good time and getting back on shore.'
- 3: The Charter that was Never Signed**
- 1 Undated postwar memo by R Sherwood in Beaverbrook papers, C.175.
- 2 As Col. Jacob noted at the time, 'No-one has any idea of what the Prime Minister has been saying to the President' (diary, Aug 10). But see WSC, typescript draft report, 'Joint Anglo-American declaration of principle,' Aug 14, 1941 (CAB.120/21).
- 3 Arnold diary, Aug 10, 1941.
- 4 *Ibid.*, Aug 7, 1941. Arnold also recorded the same FDR statement more fully as, 'If Japan goes into Thailand, the United States will not be overly concerned; but if it goes into Dutch East Indies, then we are vitally interested and must do our utmost to get them out.' The British chiefs of staff were aware of this American attitude. Pownall, Vice-CIGS, noted on Aug 8 (diary), '*Siam*: Japan is obviously going to have her next crack there. . . It would be worth calling Siam a vital interest and going to war with Japan if she intrudes, *if* we were sure that America would come in at once on the same grounds. But it is quite certain that America would *not* go to war for Siam, and the last thing in the world we want to do is to have to take on Japan without America.' In general: 'Log of the President's Cruise on Board the USS *Potomac* and USS *Augusta*, Aug 3–16, 1941' (FDR Libr., PSF, 'Atlantic Charter').
- 5 Keynes, quoted by Kingsley Wood, in Dalton diary, Aug 25. Claude Wickard, secretary for agriculture, had also found FDR fatigued (diary, Jul 19, 1941).
- 6 Longwell to WSC, Apr 1, 1949 (Columbia University, New York, Butler Library, Daniel Longwell papers).
- 7 Harriman letter, cited in A Harriman and Elie Abel, *Special Envoy to Churchill and Stalin, 1941–1946* (London, 1976), 75.
- 8 War Cabinet, WM (41) 84, Aug 19, minute 19, 1941 (CAB.65/19).
- 9 Pownall diary, Aug 19, 1941.
- 10 HM King George VI diary, Aug 19, 1941, in J Wheeler-Bennett, *King George VI: His Life and Reign* (London, 1958).
- 11 WSC to Smuts, Nov 8, 1941 (PREM.3/476/3; Churchill, vol. iii, 529).
- 12 Cabinet meeting of Roosevelt (hereafter: FDR) on Aug 21, in Wickard diary, manuscript, Aug 23, 1941 (FDR Library, Claude R Wickard papers) (hereafter: Wickard diary).
- 13 There is fleeting but seemingly unambiguous evidence that WSC and FDR had agreed on an unwritten *de facto* alliance committing the USA to war with Japan

- even if Japan did not attack US territory first; this evidence is to be found in the records of the (American) Joint Army and Navy boards and committees chaired by Adm. Stark, especially the meetings dated Sep 4, 14, and Nov 3, 13, 1941 (NA, RG.225).
- 14** Cadogan on Aug 9, 1941, quoted in a Sumner Welles memo (NA, State dept. files, 740.0011 European War, 1939/14007-2/5).
- 15** Wickard diary Nov 8. From Apr 21-27, 1941 there had been American-Dutch-British conversations in Singapore to agree contingency plans against Japan. In 1945 Washington asked permission to publish the agreement; while the British chiefs of staff agreed to the document's release, the Cabinet Office objected, advising on Nov 18, 1945 that 'hostile propagandists' might represent it as proof 'we were preparing for war against Japan and that Japan had some justification for taking the first step.' That would be a complete travesty (FO.371/44667).
- 16** Hull, quoted by Vice-President Henry Wallace in his diary, May 31, 1945; Hull had 'immediately pigeonholed' the proposal. John Morton Blum (ed.), *The Price of Vision. The Diary of Henry A Wallace, 1942-1946* (Boston, 1973).
- 17** WSC to Randolph Churchill, Aug 29, 1941, in Gilbert, vol. vi, 1176f.
- 18** Arnold diary, Aug 14, 1941.
- 19** Lieut. Col. C W Bundy, memo, Aug 15, on WSC's speech of Aug 9 (NA, RG.165, Army Operations/OPD Executive Files 1940-45, exec. 4, item 10).
- 20** Churchill, vol. iii, 385, related that FDR made the 'helpful suggestion' that they draw up such a Declaration. This seems unfounded.
- 21** Capt. J R Beardall, usn, to Cdr. C R Thompson, Aug 9 (PREM.4/71/1); Jacob diary, Aug 10, 1941, 39.
- 22** Original menu in FDR Libr.: Safe File, Atlantic Charter meeting; and see the Arnold diary.
- 23** Jacob diary, Aug 11, 1941, 49.
- 24** The draft was by Cadogan. Churchill, vol. iii, 385ff, called it 'my text' and wrote that it 'was in its first draft a British production cast in my own words.' The 'original draft' reproduced by him is, incidentally, dated Aug 12, 1941.
- 25** Declaration to Japan (PREM.3/485/1; Churchill, vol. iii, 390). See WSC's contemporary memo, 'Far East,' giving the history of his attempt to induce FDR to issue the warning to Japan (CAB.120/21). WSC informed Eden, Nov 23, 1941, 'I remember that President Roosevelt himself wrote in, "There must be no further encroachment in the North," at the Atlantic Conference' (PREM.3/156/6).
- 26** WSC to cabinet, Aug 12, 1941; COS (41) 25th meeting (O), annexe i; cf. CAB.44/54, fol. 93.
- 27** Sumner Welles note in NA, State dept. files, 740.0011 European War, 1939/14007-2/5.
- 28** L C Hollis, record of COS meeting, Aug 11, 1941, 9:30 A.M., COS (R[IVIERA]) 6 (Beaverbrook papers, D.122). WSC to Eden, Aug 11, 1941: Churchill, vol. iii, 389f.
- 29** WSC minute, Aug 11 (Beaverbrook papers, D.122); and WSC to Eden, Aug 11, 1941, Churchill, vol. iii, 38ff.
- 30** Record of Anglo-US chiefs of staff conference, Aug 11, 1941 (NA, RG.18, item No. 293, in file 337b). This shows that the British chiefs of staff accepted the loss of the B-17s so meekly that it seems a fair conclusion that this was a quid pro quo for the United States agreeing to an un-

- written alliance with Britain against Japan.
- 31 WSC, 'Far East' (CAB.120/21). Cadogan diary, Aug 11; and Cadogan to Eden, Aug 11, 1941, in Dilks, *op. cit.*, 399.
- 32 FDR, quoted *ibid.* Churchill, vol. iii, 387f.
- 33 Mackenzie King diary, Aug 24, 1941.
- 34 *Ibid.*
- 35 Sumner Welles memo, Aug 11, 1941 (NA, State dept. files, 740.0011 European War, 1939/14007-3/5).
- 36 Churchill, vol. iii, 388.
- 37 Sumner Welles memo, Aug 11, 1941 (NA, State dept. files, 740.0011 European War, 1939/14007-4/5). Welles noted, 'The President said that he was entirely in accord with the redraft of Point Four which was better than he had thought Mr Churchill would be willing to concede.'
- 38 Harold Smith diary, Sep 26, 1941.
- 39 WSC to cabinet, Aug 11; reply, Aug 12, 4 A.M. (PREM.3/485/1); Churchill, vol. iii, 391; Jacob diary, Aug 12, 1941, 51.
- 40 Arnold diary, Aug 12, 1941.
- 41 FDR speaking to his cabinet on Feb 13, as recorded in Ickes diary, Feb 15, 1942.
- 42 For versions of how Point Four came to be drafted, and the conflicting chronologies, see Churchill, vol. iii, 385ff; Sumner Welles, *Where Are We Heading?* (New York, 1946), 9-14; A J P Taylor, *Beaverbrook* (London, 1972), (hereafter: Taylor, *Beaverbrook*), 480. The Sumner Welles notes suggest that Beaverbrook did *not* play a major part in softening Point Four, since he arrived after that battle was largely over.
- 43 WSC cabled to Attlee on Aug 11, 1941, 'The President wishes to issue . . . a Joint Declaration signed by him and me. . .'
- 44 Churchill was aware of the significance of not signing it. This also explains the entry in Martin diary, Aug 14, 1942: 'This is apparently to be taken now as Atlantic Charter Day, being the anniversary of publication (not "signature").'
- 45 Amery diary, Aug 14, 1941.
- 46 Presidential press conference, Dec 19, 1944, in *FDR Press Conferences*, vol. 24, 266f (FDR Library). FDR had been finessed into signing a parchment copy of it by Truman's naval aide Lieut. Elsey, as a souvenir, and it irked him. Elsey had a printed copy of the Atlantic Charter which both men had (very reluctantly, he recalled) autographed for him. The press hinted at this, and White House files were ransacked for the offending item. Another copy was turned up with both men's names on it, both executed in FDR's handwriting! But Hitler's Battle of the Bulge had now begun, and the world had other preoccupations (Harry S Truman Library, Oral History of George M Elsey, Apr 9, 1970).
- 47 *Daily Telegraph*, Dec 20, 1944; Hansard, *House of Commons Debates*, Dec 23, 1944 (Question by Mr H L Davies).
- 48 Hurley, interview of WSC, Apr 1945 (Hoover Library, Patrick Hurley papers).
- 49 Memo for US Ambassador, Feb 13, 1942 (NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files, box 1, file 'Atlantic Charter').
- 50 WSC to FDR, Aug 9, 1942 (PREM.3/485/9).
- 51 Eden to J H Peck, Jan 16, 1943 (PREM.4/71/1).
- 52 Jacob diary, Aug 19, 1941, 89.
- 53 Arnold diary, Aug 12, 1941.
- 4: **Shall We Dance? asks Mr Churchill**
- 1 Dalton diary, Apr 7, 1943 (London School of Economics, Political Science Library: Hugh Dalton papers, I, file 28, 104-6).
- 2 Ickes diary, Mar 17, 1938. Passing through Canton in 1941, Robert Menzies had found the local British Resident, a rather solitary gentleman in a grass skirt, living

- in a hut with his native wife.
- 3 FO.371/26199. FDR signed an executive order in May 1936 annexing Canton Island. The file contains an original photo of the grass hut, with a large British flag which attracted 'caustic comment' from Pan Am passengers stopping-over on the long haul from San Francisco to Auckland.
- 4 Eisenhower handwritten note, ca Nov 5, 1942 (Butcher papers).
- 5 WSC to Ismay, Aug 30 (PREM.3/276); Menzies to WSC, Sep 29, 1940 (PREM.4/43b/1).
- 6 Mackenzie King diary, Jul 15, 1942.
- 7 HM King George VI to Queen Mary, Aug 17; and diary, Aug 18, 19, 1941.
- 8 Halifax diary, Aug 18, and secret diary, Oct 20; Colville diary, Aug 18. WSC's popularity did not extend to the USA yet: after the Atlantic conference US military Intelligence noted an increase in 'a rather promiscuous booing and hissing' by US army audiences when newsreels showed him together with FDR and Gen. Marshall. Report on conduct of enlisted men, Sep 4, 1941. 'Soldiers do not altogether realize seriousness of the act' (NA, RG.319, Records of the Army Staff, IRR file X8146666, 'Winston Churchill').
- 9 Bridges memo, Aug 18, 1941 (Beaverbrook papers, D.418).
- 10 Eden diary, Aug 19, 1941.
- 11 At the defence committee on Aug 20, WSC decided that Britain would invade Iran as soon as the Russians were ready. 'He is really much more concerned with establishing a line of communication for helping the Russians than with getting out the Germans,' wrote Amery: diary, Aug 20. Pownall admitted on Aug 8, 1941 (diary), 'We really want not only that but physical control over the Anglo-Persian Oil Company and the refinery at Abadan.'
- 12 Eden diary, Aug 19, 1941.
- 13 Harvey diary, Aug 25, 1941.
- 14 WSC to Randolph Churchill, Aug 29, 1941: Churchill, vol. iii, 428.
- 15 HM King George VI diary, Aug 19, 1941.
- 16 Molotov to Maisky, Aug 24, 1941 (*Sov.-angliiskiye*, vol. i, 104).
- 17 Smuts to WSC, Aug 23, 1941; copy in Mackenzie King diary.
- 18 Mackenzie King diary, Aug 7, 8, 1941. He was prime minister of Canada 1921–26, 1926–30, 1935–48. The diaries were published in a rigorously 'cleansed' edition by his loyal chief of staff John Whitney Pickersgill (1905–1997); we have relied on the unedited archive originals (Canadian National Archives, JG.26).
- 19 *Ibid.*, Aug 13, 1941.
- 20 *Ibid.*, Nov 9, 1941, handwritten entry on his talk with FDR on Nov 1, 1941.
- 21 So Clementine said: *ibid.*, Aug 24, 1941.
- 22 Winant to FDR, Aug 22, 23, 1941 (NA, State dept. files, 740.0011 European War, 1939/14241–2/3).
- 23 WSC to Mackenzie King, Aug 20, 1941; Eden diary, Aug 22, 1941.
- 24 *Ibid.*, Aug 22; WSC to Pound, Aug 22, 1941: Gilbert, vol. vi, 1172.
- 25 Eden diary, Aug 23, 1941.
- 26 Jacob diary, record of ARCADIA conferences, Dec 1941, 57 (Churchill College, JACB.1/12).
- 27 Cecil King diary, Aug 22, 1941.
- 28 Mackenzie King diary, Aug 22, 1941.
- 29 See *ibid.*, May 13, 1943, 'Just before waking, I had had a rather remarkable vision in which it seemed that the people of England were anxious that I should run for Parliament there. . . I . . . saw myself elected a Member, the whole thing standing out as a great achievement. The Houses of Parliament seemed suddenly to visualise themselves like a bit of stained glass on

the window with Gold as the prevailing colour. . . The moment I woke I instantly said to myself: that is an interesting vision, but I would never think of leaving Canada.'

30 *Ibid.*, Sep 17, 1944.

31 *Ibid.*, Aug 7, 1941.

32 On Aug 11 and 12, 1943 he recorded full-length dreams about the Führer.

33 *Ibid.*, May 4, 1944. On Apr 17, 1941 he dictated: 'When I had made this decision I looked at the little clock and the hands were exactly together at about 25 minutes to 8 – as happens so significantly with respect to every decision. I have felt over and over again that there was evidence of real guidance. I have thought frequently of the words, "My time is in Thy hands."'

34 *Ibid.*, Aug 22–4, 1941.

35 After FDR mentioned Japan at his cabinet meeting on Aug 29, 1941 the vice president Henry Wallace sent him a letter by courier urging him to 'take an exceedingly firm stand' in the current conversations with the Japanese, and to avoid anything smacking of appeasement. 'I do hope, Mr President, you will go to the absolute limit in your firmness in dealing with Japan' (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Far East.')

36 GC&CS, report ZIP/MSGP.27, Aug 21, 1941: 'Police Activities in Russia 3.7.–14.8.41, and Police Activities in Germany and the Occupied Countries' (HW.16/6, part 1). For WSC's support of GC&CS against the rival Radio Security Service which also monitored German police and agents, see CAB.163/11.

Some of these intercepts will be found in the set released by the National Security Agency to the US National Archives in 1996 (NA: RG.457, box 1386, 'German WW2 Police & SSTraffic. GPD Atrocities.' See Dr John P Fox, 'British Intelligence

Documents on Einsatzgruppen Operations 1941–42,' a paper read to a Berlin symposium on May 2–4, 1997. See Hinsley, vol. ii, app. 5, 671; and cf. M Gilbert, *The Holocaust: A History of the Jews of Europe during the Second World War* (New York, 1985).

37 *Ibid.* A subsequent report (ZIP/MSGP.28) dated Sep 12, 1941 pointed out, 'Whether all those executed as "Jews" are indeed such is of course doubtful; but the figures are no less conclusive as evidence of a policy of savage intimidation if not of ultimate extermination.' This analyst speculated that listing the victims as 'Jews' was 'the ground for killing most acceptable to the Higher Authorities' (*ibid.*).

This report cited intercepts – while warning that probably only half the messages were obtained – listing a total of 12,361 Jews killed in the four weeks covered by the report. See Ronald Headland, *Messages of Murder. A Study of the Reports of the Einsatzgruppen of the Security Police and the Security Service, 1941–1943* (London, 1992); Omer Batov, *The Eastern Front, 1941–45. German Troops and the Barbarisation of Warfare* (London, 1985); and Theo J Schulte, *The German Army and Nazi Policies in Occupied Russia* (Berg, 1989).

38 [Nigel] de G[rey], report, 'German Police,' initialled by WSC on Sep 2, 1941 (HW.1/40).

39 [Nigel] de G[rey], MOST SECRET report, 'German Police,' Sep 11, 1941 (HW.1/62). He appended this note: 'The fact that the Police are killing all Jews that fall into their hands should be now sufficiently well appreciated. It is not therefore proposed to continue reporting these butcheries specially, unless so requested.' Cf. Hinsley, vol. ii, 671. These British intercepts dated Jul–Sep 1941 have now been released by the

- US National Security Agency. Prof. Richard Breitman 'revealed' their existence in *The Washington Post*, Nov 10, 1996; *Jewish Chronicle*, citing Dr Tony Kushner, Nov 15, 1996. Note that the precise figures *e.g.*, '367' and '4,200,' gained from ULTRA intercepts are quoted without source ('many reports refer. . .') in the British Postal & Telegraph Censorship 'Report on Jewry,' Jan 22, 1942, 3, para ii (HO.213/953); such P&T reports had only CONFIDENTIAL classification and a wide circulation.
- 40 GC&CS summary ZIP/MSGP.29, dated Oct 22, 1941 (HW.16/6, part i).
- 41 Item decoded on Oct 9, 1941 (*ibid.*).
- 42 [Nigel] de G[rey], 'German Police,' Oct 11, 1941 (HW.1/135).
- 43 GC&CS summary ZIP/MSGP.29, dated Oct 22, 1941 (HW.16/6, part i).
- 44 GC&CS German Police Section, [Nigel] de G[rey], 'German Police,' Oct 17 (HW.1/148); WSC ticked this paragraph on Oct 18, 1941.
- 45 GC&CS summary ZIP/MSGP.30, covering period Oct 1 – Nov 14, 1941 (HW.16/6, part i).
- 46 GC&CS summary ZIP/MSGP.29, dated Oct 22, 1941 (HW.16/6, part i).
- 47 GC&CS, 'History of the German Police Section, 1939–45' (HW.3/155).
- 48 He often recalled that 'dance.' Mackenzie King diary, Dec 26, 1941.
- 49 WSC minutes in file PREM.3/••• **CHECK INDEX CARDS.**
- 50 See Amery diary, Aug 25, 1941.
- 51 Mackenzie King diary, Aug 25; war cabinet minutes, Aug 25; and WSC to Randolph Churchill, Aug 29, 1941: Churchill, vol. iii, 428.
- 52 WSC to Stalin, Aug 28, rec'd Aug 30, 1941 (PREM.3/170/1 and PREM.3/401/1); also in *Sov.-angliiskije*, vol. i, 109ff; in *Stalin—WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, No. 9; and in Churchill, vol. iii, 403.
- 53 Lindemann to WSC, Aug 27, 1941 (Cherwell papers, 'Tube Alloys'; original, with red sidelining by WSC, in CAB.121/271).
- 54 WSC to Ismay for COS Committee, COS (41) 187(O), Minute D.246/1, Aug 30, 1941 (CAB.121/271; PREM.3/139/8a; Churchill, vol. iii, 730).
- 55 Hollis to WSC, Sep 2 (PREM.3/139/8a); Ismay to Anderson, Sep 4, 1941 (CAB.121/271).
- 56 FDR to WSC and to Dr Vannevar Bush, Oct 11 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 0409ff; PREM.3/139/8a). On Nov 6, 1941 Bush briefed Henry Stimson (diary), about 'a most terrible thing' – clearly the atomic bomb project.
- 57 WSC to Hopkins, Aug 28, 1941 (NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files, file '711 War, U-Boats, Atlantic').
- 58 WSC to Chancellor, minute M.839/1, Aug 28 (Beaverbrook papers, D.122, and PREM.4/71/1).
- 59 Minute by J R C[olville], Sep 11, 1941 (PREM.4/71/1). The 'Declaration' now had a footnote, headed: 'A secret intimation,' and reading: 'For the purposes of this document the self-governing Dominions of the British Commonwealth of Nations must be regarded as Nations.'
- 60 WSC to Randolph, Aug 29, 1941: Churchill, vol. iii, 428; and PM's card.
- 61 Halifax diary, Aug 30. On Aug 31, 1941 he added, 'Talked to Anthony [Eden] and Winant in the morning, while Winston worked in bed. [Lord] Melchett [Chairman of ICI] came to luncheon to show Winston something he is producing for the Government. After luncheon Winston discoursed on the habits of the White Ant, applied to current political problems!'
- 62 Colville diary, Aug 30, 1941.

5: **'We Did It Before – and We Can Do It Again!'**

- 1 On Mar 8, 1942, after visiting Eton College, Eden privately wrote: 'Watched the boys troop in. We were not impressed. Dirty and sloppy, with an ever increasing percentage of Jews, was our conclusion!' (Avon papers, 20.3.8). See too his irritation with Henry Morgenthau and 'this German Jew's bitter hatred of his own land' (*ibid.*, Sep 15, 1944; file 20.1.22). 'These ex-Germans,' he wrote in an official minute on Nov 19, 1944, 'seem to wish to wash away their ancestry in a bath of hate' (FO.371/391228).
- 2 Bruce Lockhart, Jun 1943 and May 13, 1944 (Hoover Library, Sir R Bruce Lockhart papers). On Aug 15, 1944 he noted: 'The restaurant . . . was crowded with a revolting looking Jew with an Old Etonian tie and a still more revolting family.' And on Jan 4, 1946: 'Here the reason [for increasing anti-Semitism in Britain] is the ability of the Jewish émigré to enrich himself even in exile.' And Aug 20, 1947: 'Hamish [Erskine] said . . . people were saying "Hitler was right" about our army of foreign Jews.'
- 3 Harvey diary, Jul 14 and Aug 7, 1941.
- 4 Cecil King diary, Sep 23, 1941.
- 5 Postal Censorship Reports, Secret, Series A, Jul 25, 1941: Home Opinion No. 19, pt.ii, endorsed in handwriting: 'PM to see.' Churchill handed it to Hopkins (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 307, folder 'Hopkins Returns to London').
- 6 Home Office Weekly Report, May 18–26, 1942, sent by Bruce Lockhart to Beaverbrook (Beaverbrook papers, D.445).
- 7 Weizmann to WSC, Feb 7 (Weizmann Archives, Wix Library, Rehovot, Israel: Weizmann papers). Lord Moyne was appointed on Feb 8, 1941 and assassinated by Jewish terrorists in Nov 1944.
- 8 WSC to Lord Moyne, minute M.524/1, Mar 10, 1941 (PREM.3/348).
- 9 Letter signed 'J H Peck for J M Martin' to Weizmann, Feb 1941 (Weizmann papers).
- 10 Weizmann, memo on visit to Downing St., Mar 12, 1941, 3:15 P.M. (*ibid.*).
- 11 Harvey diary, Aug 27, 1941.
- 12 Weizmann to WSC, Sep 10, 1941 (Weizmann papers). The letter is also published in full in Barnet Litvinoff (ed.), *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, vol. xx, series A, Jul 1940–Jan 1943 (Jerusalem, 1979), Doc. 182, 197–9. Samuel Landman wrote in a pamphlet, *Great Britain, The Jews And Palestine* (New Zionist Publications, London, 1936), 'The fact that it was Jewish help that brought the USA into the War on the side of the Allies has rankled ever since in German – especially Nazi minds – and has contributed in no small measure to the prominence which anti-semitism occupies in the Nazi programme.'
- 13 Amery diary, Sep 12, 1941, 715. Despite the burdens of war, WSC did not overlook those Jews who had sustained him during his ten poverty-stricken years out of office. His appointment card shows on Oct 6 a luncheon date with 'Mr [Clark] Eichelberger,' an American Jewish leader, and on Oct 30 luncheon with Sir Henry Strakosch, who had effectively given him £20,000 in 1938, a sizeable fortune at that time. After much nagging from the usual quarters, WSC sent a grudging message to the *Jewish Chronicle* on its centenary, Nov 14, 1941, but asked for it to be kept secret: it read, 'On the occasion of the centenary of the *Jewish Chronicle*, a landmark in the history of British Jewry, I send a mes-

- sage of good cheer to Jewish people in this and other lands. None has suffered more cruelly than the Jew the unspeakable evils wrought on the bodies and spirits of men by Hitler and his vile regime. The Jew bore the brunt of the Nazis' first onslaught upon the citadels of freedom and human dignity. He has borne and continued to bear a burden that might have seemed to be beyond endurance. He has not allowed it to break his spirit; he has never lost the will to resist. Assuredly in the day of victory the Jew's sufferings and his part in the struggle will not be forgotten. Once again, at the appointed time, he will see vindicated those principles of righteousness which it was the glory of his fathers to proclaim to the world. Once again it will be shown that, though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small.'
- 14** Eden diary, Sep 12, 1941.
- 15** He said 'five hours' to Maisky. The PM's card records on Sep 3 a 6:30 P.M. 'Persian Railways Meeting' which can not have lasted beyond 10 P.M.
- 16** On the Hess affair, see Beaverbrook papers, D.443: the transcript of Beaverbrook's conversation with Hess on Sep 6, 1941; Bruce Lockhart diary, Sep 5 and 13, 1943; and in general David Irving, *Rudolf Hess. The Missing Years* (London, 1987). Hess sent Beaverbrook his memorandum, 'Germany-England from the Viewpoint of the War against the Soviet Union.'
- 17** Eden diary, Sep 4, 1941; PM's card.
- 18** Pownall diary, Sep 5; cf. Maisky to Molotov, reporting his talk with Eden on Aug 27, 1941, in *Sov.-angliiskiye*, vol. i, 103ff.
- 19** Stalin to WSC, Sep 3. Original in *Sov.-angliiskiye*, vol. i, 111ff and in *Stalin-WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, No. 10; Churchill, vol. iii, 405. A rather inscrutable translation by the Russians is in PREM.3/401/1.
- 20** Maisky to Stalin, Sep 5, (*Sov.-angliiskiye*, vol. i, 115ff. Cf. Eden to Cripps, No. 227, Sep 4, 1941, reporting the interview (PREM.3/170/1, and Eden papers, FO.954/24).
- 21** War Cabinet, Sep 5, 1941, WM (41) 90th meeting, minute 1.
- 22** Churchill, vol. iii, 406.
- 23** Eden diary, Sep 4, 1941.
- 24** *Ibid.*, Sep 5, 1941.
- 25** WSC to FDR, Sep 5: Churchill, vol. iii, 409. It is not included on the FDR Libr. microfilm of their letters. On Sep 5 Mackenzie King wrote, 'He [WSC] had the feeling that . . . a separate [German-Soviet] peace could not be altogether excluded.' Cf. Cadogan diary, Sep 5, 1941.
- 26** Mackenzie King diary, Sep 5, 1941; Eden diary, Sep 5, 1941.
- 27** For the file on Cripps' correspondence with WSC and Eden, Aug - Sep 1941, betraying his extreme reluctance to stay on in Moscow, see CAB.127/64. Eden pointed out to Cripps in Oct that it would be most undesirable for the British ambassador to seem to be fleeing from Moscow.
- 28** Colville diary, Sep 11, 1941, quoting Major Morton, who also told him that Stalin was only 'lukewarm' about continuing the fight against Hitler. On Soviet cyphers, see e.g., Halifax to Beaverbrook, May 21, 1940 (Beaverbrook papers, D.29); the reference might be to telephone tapping; and see the memo by Lieut. Cdr. W C Ladd, USNR, Oct 1, 1943 (NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files, box 12, file '711 Political Intelligence OSS').
- 29** Eden diary, Sep 5, 1941.
- 30** WSC to Stalin, No. 1202, Sep 4 (PREM.3/401/1). This is also the date given by Churchill, vol. iii, 407, but it was clearly despatched at midnight Sep 5-6. Cf. too FO.954/24, and *Sov.-angliiskiye*, vol. i, 116f.

- Cripps handed it to Stalin on Sep 6, 1941: *Stalin–WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, No. 11.
- 31 WSC to Cripps, Sep 5, 1941: Churchill, vol. iii, 409.
- 32 Eden diary, Sep 5, 1941.
- 33 Martin diary, Sep 4–5, 1941.
- 34 This was the Government Code & Cypher School (GC&CS) at Bletchley Park. Martin diary, Sep 6.
- 35 The staff were provided by all three services and the FO. A Feb 1942 document credits GC&CS with ‘some 2,000 employees’ (HW.14/28); and AD(S) wrote to C on Aug 9, ‘We here have had to interview and engage over 2,000 people since the beginning of the War and we have not found it necessary to give them any information about the work at B.P.’ (HW.14/48). For a description of Station X (Bletchley Park) and the layout of the admiralty’s operational Intelligence centre in The Citadel, see the transcript of the Apr 6 lecture by Captain H R Sandwith, RN, ‘Discussion of British W/T Intelligence Organisation’ (HW.14/46).
- 36 Cadogan diary, Sep 6, 1941. Until the recent release by GCHQ of relevant files to the PRO, evidence of wartime work done by GC&CS on foreign diplomatic cyphers was hard to come by. We interviewed Sir Leonard Hooper about this on Feb 7, 1984: Hooper joined the Air Ministry in 1938, heading first the Italian and then the Japanese Air Section at GC&CS. Security was so strict that he was ‘astounded’ to learn after 1945 that GC&CS had been reading German *diplomatic* cyphers as well as military. For Spanish cyphers, see the Dalton diary, Jan 29, 1942 (‘The Duke of A[lba] thinks he has made a discovery. . .’) For Italian cyphers, see *e.g.*, Hinsley, vol. i, 354, 363, 368, 410.
- 37 Denniston to C, Oct 28, 1941 (HW.14/45). The reading of American cyphers is confirmed in *e.g.*, HW.1/66, the decrypt of Tel. No. 527 from the US minister in Budapest to the State dept., Washington, Sep 12 (GC&CS decrypt No. 095,510); see too WSC’s letter to FDR, Feb 24, 1942 (FDR Libr., PSF, ‘Gen. Marshall’); on which see too David Kahn, *The Codebreakers* (New York, 1967, 1996), 492.
- 38 Group Capt. R Humphreys, ‘The Use of “U” in the Mediterranean and Northwest African Theatres of War,’ Oct 1945 (NA, RG.457, file SRH.037).
- 39 Hinsley, vol. ii, 58ff.
- 40 Quoted in Hinsley, vol. ii, 655ff; and Cave Brown, *Menzies*, 397ff.
- 41 Martin diary.
- 42 Cripps to FO, Sep 7 (PREM.3/401/1).
- 43 WSC to Auchinleck, Sep 6, 1941: Churchill, vol. iii, 367.
- 44 WSC speaking to Balfour, quoted in Chips Channon diary, Sep 17, 1941.
- 45 WSC to Auchinleck, Sep 17: Churchill, vol. iii, 368; and to Fadden, Sep 29, 1941, in Gilbert, vol. vi, 1191.
- 46 Nicolson diary, Sep 9, 1941.
- 47 War Cabinet, WM (41) 92, minute 4.
- 48 WSC to Smuts, Sep 14, 1941: Churchill, vol. iii, 459.
- 49 PM’s card. Maisky to Moscow, Sep 15, 1941, *Sov.-angliiskiy*, vol. i, 119ff.
- 50 Stalin to WSC, Sep 13, 1941, *ibid.*, vol. i, 118; in *Stalin–WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, No. 12; COS (41) 204(O); 954/24; Churchill, vol. iii, 411f.
- 51 On Sep 12, 1941 Gen. Brooke (diary) had visited WSC at Chequers, where the PM ‘also discussed plans for operations in Norway.’ WSC had begun to hanker for the capture of Trondheim, and it would take all Brooke’s powers to squelch this project.
- 52 Lee diary, Sep 15, 1941.
- 53 War Cabinet meeting, WM (41) 90,

- minute 3. Lord Beaverbrook's account, DO (41) 11. Cf. CAB.44/54.
- 54 Colville diary, Sep 22, 1941.
- 55 Lee diary; diary of John Martin, and PM's card, Sep 19, 1941.
- 56 Harold Balfour, in *The Times*, Sep 28, 1965.
- 6: **Carry a Big Stick**
- 1 Churchill, vol. iii, 514ff, especially 516: 'I do not pretend to have studied Japan.'
- 2 *Ibid.*, 522.
- 3 WSC to First Lord, Sep 15, 1940.
- 4 COS (40) meeting, Sep 19, 1940; extracts in CAB.44/54.
- 5 WSC to Cadogan, Feb 16 (PREM.3/252/6a); WSC to FDR, Feb 15, 1941. In Jan 2001 the PRO released a MOST SECRET letter in which Morton informed WSC on March 25, 1941 that, asked to explain his recent failure to obtain any Japanese 'conversations,' C had assessed that the Japanese had not been bluffing with the earlier 'conversations,' but that their ambassador had become aware of 'indiscretions' and had ordered his staff 'to avoid "conversations" of the type I am referring to.' C did not think the ambassador realised that the British knew of the earlier 'conversations.' WSC red-inked: 'But were there any conversations *before* the period of activity?' (PREM.7/7).
- 6 Tokyo to Moscow, Mar 19, 1941; translated by US navy, Mar 25 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.10612); and Berlin to Tokyo, No. 308, Mar 26; translated by US navy, Mar 29, 1941 (*ibid.*, SRDJ.10685); cf. Göring diary, Mar 26, 1941 (Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich).
- 7 Sir Robert Craigie, final report on Tokyo mission, 1943 (FO.371/35957); see Prof. Donald C Watt's article on this, 'Was War with Japan Necessary?' in *The Daily Telegraph*, Jul 15, 1972.
- 8 FO file on Anglo-Japanese relations, Sep–Oct 1941 (PREM.3/252/5). As Prof. Warren F Kimball pointed out, all references to MAGIC were systematically removed from both the FDR Library's Map Room series except for three 1944 items dated Jan 16, 19, 22, and from the PRO's files of WSC–FDR correspondence. Although many British files of MAGICs have been belatedly released to the PRO since the mid-1990s, scholars will note significant gaps in the sequence, and the absence of any 'Japan' file in the Avon papers in both the PRO and Birmingham University library, leaving only a handful of items in a residual 'Far East' file (FO.954/6).
- 9 See Cdr. Alastair Denniston's 21-page study on GC&CS's antecedents, dated Dec 2, 1944 (Churchill College, DENN.1/4).
- 10 According to Rear-Adm. Edwin T Layton, *And I Was There* (New York, 1985), one of the American MAGIC machines supplied to Britain in 1941 had originally been earmarked for his unit at Pearl Harbor. For the exchange agreement, see vol. i of this biography, 1987 edition, page 511. Gen. Marshall was only distantly involved, informing FDR on Jul 11, 1942, 'We find that an interchange of cryptanalytic information has been in progress for over a year' (FDR Libr., Hopkins papers). In general, see *The Magic Background to Pearl Harbor* (US dept. of Defense, Washington DC, 1977), 8 vols., hereafter: *MBPH*.
- 11 See wo.208/882.
- 12 *MBPH*, vol. ii, Nos. 491 and 110f.
- 13 *Ibid.*, No. 499.
- 14 Tokyo to Washington, No. 1256, Jun 14, translated Jun 17, 1941, in *MBPH*, vol. ii, No. 512.
- 15 Eden paper for war cabinet, Jul 7, WP (41) 154; war cabinet WM (41) 66th meet-

- ing, minute 7. Significantly, Eden's French phrase figures in the intercept of Tokyo's Jul 2, 1941 dispatch to Berlin, translated on Jul 3 and filed as sis. 19018: it instructed Gen. Oshima to notify Ribbentrop that 'the Japanese Government have decided to secure "*points d'appui*" in French Indo-China to enable Japan further to strengthen her pressure on Great Britain and the United States of America' (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.12722).
- 16** Stimson diary, Jul 5; and *cf.* Jul 7, 8, 1941.
- 17** On Apr 16, 1941 MAGIC deciphered a message from Prince Konoye, the prime minister, to Oshima in Berlin, reporting in the PURPLE cypher that foreign powers were reading Japanese cyphers including I (an auxiliary code), SO (code P-1), and OITE (code PAK2), and that 'to insure secrecy' Oshima was to use machine- or TSU-cyphers (what the Americans called the J-series). On May 6 the US navy translated an intercepted telegram from Oshima, No. 482, sent from Berlin on May 3, reporting in PURPLE-CA (what the Americans called JD-1) that Ribbentrop's liaison officer to Oshima, Heinrich Georg Stahmer, had confirmed that the US government was known to be reading Ambassador Nomura's cypher messages from Washington. On May 5 Japanese foreign minister Matsuoka asked the German ambassador for his source on this leakage; Matsuoka also notified Washington by PURPLE of these suspicions but Nomura replied the same day, in PURPLE, that he did not share them. Tokyo nevertheless instructed its embassies including those in Washington, Bangkok, and Rome (still in PURPLE) to 'use 1941 regulations for A and B code machines until further notice.' On May 20 Nomura then confirmed to Tokyo (by Tel. No. 327, again in PURPLE) that he had now confirmed that the US were 'reading some of our codes'; this message was translated the next day by the US codebreakers (NA, RG.457, file SRH.118). Perhaps after reading these exchanges Japan's opponents should have viewed with a jaundiced eye any message encyphered in PURPLE. See too Dr Ruth Harris, 'The MAGIC leaks of 1941 and the Japanese-American Relations,' in *Pacific Quarterly*, vol. lxi, Feb 1981, 77-96; and NA, RG.457, file SRH.118.
- 18** Lord Halifax wrote in his secret diary on Jul 10, 1941: 'I still think, though, myself that they [the Japanese] are cautious people, and I shall not feel sure until they have actually done it.'
- 19** Adm. William D Leahy diary, Jul 12, 1941 (Libr. of Congress, Manuscript Division, Fleet-Adm. William D Leahy papers, reel 1) (hereafter: Leahy diary).
- 20** Cadogan diary, Jul 14-15, 1941.
- 21** Pownall diary, Jul 15, 1941.
- 22** War Cabinet, Joint Planning Staff, report, 'Japanese Southward Move,' JP (41) 550, Jul 15; Pound to Eden, Jul 16; J C Sterndale Bennett, minute, Jul 16, 1941 (FO.954/6). *The Times*, Jul 15, 17 (Diplomatic Correspondent's report), 18, 1941. We shall meet Sir John Sterndale Bennett (1895-1969) again: he headed the FO Far Eastern dept. 1940-2; had an unidentified role, presumably in Intelligence, 1942-4; and was again FE head 1944-6.
- 23** WSC to Ismay for COS Committee, M.745/1, Jul 16, 1941 (PREM.3/252/6a).
- 24** Wickard diary, Jul 19, 1941. It is evident from the papers of Ickes, FDR's secretary of the interior (and 'Petroleum Coordinator'), that he was also one of the prime movers behind the subsequent oil embargo against Japan. FDR assured Ickes that his idea was only to 'slip the noose around Japan's neck and give it a jerk now and then.'

- Ickes diary, Jun 23, 30, 1941.
- 25 Cited in United States Seventy-Ninth Congress, *Hearings Before the Joint Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attacks* (Washington, 1946) (hereafter *Pearl Harbor Hearings*), part 14, 1398f.
- 26 Halifax diary, Jul 12, 1941
- 27 War Cabinet, Jul 21, 1941, conf. annexe, minute 19.
- 28 Cadogan diary, Jul 21, 1941.
- 29 Eden diary, Jul 21, 1941.
- 30 Ashley Clarke, Far Eastern dept., FO, 'From the Burma Road Crisis to Pearl Harbor,' Feb 1943, para. 67 (FO.371/35957).
- 31 *Ibid.*, para. 68.
- 32 Wickard diary, Jul 24, 1941; cf. *MBPH*, vol. ii, Nos. 514–5. FDR had also assured Ambassador Nomura that he did not want the embargo to include oil supplies to Japan.
- 33 Colville diary, Jul 24–5, 1941.
- 34 Hopkins to FDR, Jul 25 (FDR Libr., microfilm 6, 386ff); cf. Hopkins to WSC, Jul 27, 1941 (PREM.3/156/1). Churchill, vol. iii, 523, etc., repeatedly gave the impression that FDR had singlehandedly initiated the embargo, and that Britain and Holland had merely joined in. The passages in which he examines cause (389) and effect (521ff) are widely separated in his memoirs, and they make no reference to his own and Hopkins's role in egging FDR on.
- 35 Tokyo (Toyoda) to London, No. 233, Jul 26; repeated to Ottawa, No. 513, translated Aug 6. *MBPH*, vol. ii, No. 513. Nomura (Washington) to Tokyo, Jul 28, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.13573).
- 36 COS paper, Jul 27; cf. CAB.44/54.
- 37 Ashley Clarke, see note 30.
- 38 Neville Butler, head of the FO's North American dept., minuted in Jan 1942, 'This [the July 1941 imposition of sanctions] was the decisive step.' In a highly significant memorandum, he recommended that they 'record where the initiative lay.' J O Ashley Clarke suggested, 'The initiative for making the measure so rigid as to amount to an embargo came from the US' 'It wd. be of historical interest,' Butler however defined on Jan 6, 1942, 'to have on record where the initiative mainly lay for the decision in July to freeze Jap. assets and impose the embargo. My impression is that it was ourselves and the US thinking alike' (FO.371/27914).
- 39 *Pearl Harbor Hearings*, vol. xii, 9.
- 40 Wickard diary, Aug 2, 1941.
- 41 Churchill, vol. iii, 522f.
- 42 Eden to Halifax, Aug 1, 1941, cited in CAB.44/54, fol. 91.
- 43 Ismay, minute, Aug 8 (PREM.4/71/1); COS (41) 479 and COS (41) 282nd meeting, minute 2 (CAB.44/54); and Amery diary, Aug 7, 1941: '[Tom] Phillips, for Admiralty, opposed [to warning the Japanese] and suggested that even if they occupied Kra we should do nothing, as we are so helpless at sea out there, and wait till the Americans came in. . . ! I would certainly sack Pound and Phillips at once.'
- 44 Welles used the word in a memo on his talk with Cadogan, Aug 9 (NA, State dept. files, 740.0011 European War, 1939/14007–4/5); see too L C Hollis, record of conversations between WSC and FDR, Aug 11, 1941 (COS(R)8, in Beaverbrook papers, D.122).
- 45 Stimson diary, Aug 8, 9, 1941.
- 46 Record of Anglo-US chiefs of staff conference, Aug 11, 1941. This also shows the British chiefs of staff endorsing Stark's suggestion that Lend-Lease be 'rearranged' so that the B-17s earmarked for Britain should stream across the Pacific to the Philippines instead (NA, RG.18, item No. 293, file 337b).

- 47 WSC related FDR's remarks to his chiefs of staff the next day: L C Hollis, record of COS meeting, Aug 11, 9:30 A.M. (COS (R) 6, in Beaverbrook papers, D.122); *cf.* WSC to Eden, Aug 11, 1941: Churchill, vol. iii, 389f. And see US dept. of State, *FRUS*, Japan, 1941, vol. ii, 355.
- 48 Cadogan to Eden, Aug 11, 1941, in Dilks, *op. cit.*, 399.
- 49 Col. Frank Knox to his wife, Aug 17, 1941 (Library of Congress, Frank Knox papers, box 3: 'Letters Frank to Annie Knox, 1940-44').
- 50 Stimson diary, Aug 19, 1941.
- 51 A note on his talk with Hull is in Henry Wallace's diary, May 31, 1945.
- 52 FDR to WSC, Aug 18, 1941 (FDR Libr., microfilm 6, 0026).
- 53 Mackenzie King diary, Aug 23, 24, 1941
- 54 Dalton diary, Aug 25, 1941.
- 55 See Craigie's telegram from Tokyo to the FO, Aug 26; on Sep 2 he added that the Japanese foreign minister had officially protested about WSC's references to Japan, and the FO's minutes indicate that they agreed that the prime minister's remarks were 'not helpful' (FO.371/27893). On Aug 11 Craigie talked with foreign minister Adm. Tijiyo Toyoda and became convinced, as he reported to London, that Toyoda remained well disposed toward Britain, and sincerely hoped, 'insofar as the situation would permit,' to prevent any break with Britain. Craigie added that he was more than ever convinced that the policy of 'keeping Japan guessing' was a mistake under present conditions, and that Britain could gain more by a frank and open discussion of their mutual difficulties. See Grew's report to State dept., No. 1235, Tokyo, Aug 14; reprinted in *FRUS*, 1941, vol. iv, *The Far East*, 856-7. On Dec 11, 1945 the State dept. asked the US embassy in London to secure FO permission to use Grew's report for the Pearl Harbor investigations (misfiled in NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files, box 27, file '711 EAC').
- 56 Grew quoted the Japanese editorials in his Tel. to the State dept., Aug 25, 1941.
- 57 Dalton diary, Aug 26, 1941. The minutes of WSC's briefings of his non-war cabinet ministers are in CAB.65/57.
- 58 Dalton diary, Aug 28. Halifax had used the same disparaging phrase to describe the US system of government on Mar 13, 1941 (PREM.4/27/9).
- 59 *MBPH*, vol. iii, No. 201.
- 60 *Ibid.*, No. 719.
- 61 *Ibid.*, Nos. 731ff.
- 62 *Ibid.*, No. 746.
- 63 Berlin (Oshima) to Tokyo, No. 1027, Aug 15; British intercept No. 094,723, dated Aug 23, 1941 (HWI/25). WSC noted in handwriting to C, 'In view of the fact that the Americans themselves gave us the key to the Japanese messages, it seems probable the President knows this already. But anyhow it is vy desirable he shd know it. . . wsc, 24.viii.' 'The Americans,' confirmed C, 'have had this message.'
- 64 Mackenzie King diary, Aug 23, 24, 1941.
- 65 Edwards diary, Aug 24-5 (Churchill College, Cambridge: Ralph Edwards papers, REDW.2/3) (hereafter: Edwards diary); WSC to Pound, Aug 25, 1941 (ADM.199/1934); *cf.* Churchill, vol. iii, 523ff and appendix K, 768ff.
- 66 Menzies to WSC, Aug 11, in Gilbert, vol. vi, 1255. *Cf.* Edwards diary, Aug 12, 1941.
- 67 WSC to Pound, M.820/1 (CAB.120/611) and M.819, Aug 25, 1941 (ADM.10/10).
- 68 WSC to Pound, M.819/1, 'ACTION THIS DAY,' Aug 25, 1941 (ADM.10/10). Pound, alarmed, wrote the next day to his staff, 'Please let me have detailed reasons based

- on experience of *KGV & P of W* why it would not be sound for a new ship of this class to be sent abroad before she had had a thorough working up.'
- 69 Edwards diary, Aug 27; Pound to WSC, Aug 28, 1941 (ADM.199/1934).
- 70 WSC to Pound, Aug 29, 1941 (PREM.3/183/2; Pound's records, ADM.205/10); and Churchill, vol. iii, 524 and 773.
- 71 *Ibid.*
- 72 Eden diary, Sep 12, 1941 (Avon papers, 20.1.21).
- 73 Eden to WSC, Sep 12, 1941, with WSC's marginal comments (PREM.3/252/6a).
- 74 Stimson diary, Sep 12, 25, 30, 1941.
- 75 Halifax to WSC Oct 11 'secret and personal' (Hickleton papers, A4.410.4.11).
- 76 Halifax to WSC, Oct 10, 'not sent' (*ibid.*).
- 77 Stimson to FDR, Oct 21 (FDR Libr., PSF). A copy is also in NA, RG.107, Stimson Safe file, folder: 'White House Correspondence.' See too the memorandum for Gen. Marshall, 'Strategic Air Offensive Against Japan,' dated Nov 19, 1941, in NA, RG.165, Marshall's files.
- 78 FDR to Hopkins, Oct 25, 1941 (FDR Libr., PSF).
- 79 Stimson diary, Oct 28, 1941.
- 7: **The 'Nigger in the Woodpile'**
- 1 Colville diary, Sep 28, 1941.
- 2 Harvey diary, Sep 18, 23, 29, 30, Oct 1.
- 3 Operational Record Book, RAF Fighter Command, War Room log (AIR.16/698; and see files 388, 473).
- 4 WSC to Stalin, Sep 21, 1941 (PREM.3/401/7; *Sov.-angliiskiye*, vol. i, 126ff).
- 5 WSC to Beaverbrook, Sep 21 (CAB.120/689); WSC directive for Anglo-American-Russian conference, Sep 22, 1941 (CAB.69/3).
- 6 Eden diary, Sep 22, 1941.
- 7 Brazzaville interview of Aug 26, 1941: PREM.3/121/1; WSC issued it confidentially to the British press on Jun 12, 1943. For a British survey, 'Relations with Gen. de Gaulle,' Jun 1940 – Jun 1943, see WP (43) 34 of Aug 7, 1943 (PREM.3/121/5).
- 8 Colville diary, Aug 27, Sep 11, 1941.
- 9 Note by Morton for WSC, Aug 28, 1941 (FO.371/28545).
- 10 Phone call, Morton to W H B Mack, Aug 30, 3:15 P.M. (FO.371/28545).
- 11 Minute by W Strang, Aug 31, 1941 (FO.371/28545).
- 12 Eden to WSC, Aug 31, 1941 (FO.371/28545; and PREM.3/120/10b): the latter file on relations with de Gaulle, Aug 1941–May 1942 was closed until 1995.
- 13 WSC minute M.862/1, Sep 1, 1941 (FO.371/28545).
- 14 Morton to Cadogan, Sep 3, 1941 (FO.371/28545).
- 15 WSC to de Gaulle, Sep 2, 1941 (FO.371/28545).
- 16 De Gaulle to WSC, Sep 3, 1941 (FO.371/28545).
- 17 The orders were repeated in Apr 1942 (PREM.3/120/10b).
- 18 Minute by W H B Mack, Sep 6, 1941 (FO.371/28545).
- 19 WSC to Lord Gort, Sep 7; C-in-C Gibraltar to war office, Sep 9, received Sep 10, 1941 (PREM.3/120/10c, 'De Gaulle, anti-British activities'; this file was kept closed until 1995).
- 20 The editor was André Labarthe. T Cadett forwarded Labarthe's report to D Morton, Sep 10, 1941 (PREM.3/120/10c).
- 21 W H B Mack minute, Sep 10; and record of a meeting between the PM and Gen. de Gaulle at No. 10 Downing-street on Sep 12, 1941 (FO.371/28545 and PREM.3/120/4; the latter file contains de Gaulle's note too). WSC gave the cabinet a short

- account of this on Sep 15, with the proposed Council as 'the main point of interest.'
- 22 Morton to Mack, Sep 19, 1941 (FO.371/28545).
- 23 Morton to Mack, Sep 17, 1941 (*ibid.*).
- 24 At this point two lines of Morton's report have been blanked out under Section 3(4) of the Public Records Act, 1956. Morton to WSC, Sep 23 (PREM.7/6, '[Morton] minutes to PM, 1940-45'). This file was closed until 1996; several Sep and Oct 1941 items have been removed, but can now be seen in PREM.3/120/4.
- 25 Colville diary, Sep 24, and PM's card, Sep 23, 1941. On Oct 1, it records Gen. de Gaulle and Major Morton seeing WSC.
- 26 Morton to WSC, Sep 24, 1941 (FO.371/28545). See too the papers in PREM.3/120/4.
- 27 WSC to Eden, M.935/1, Sep 26, 1941 (PREM.3/120/4).
- 28 Halifax secret diary, Sep 23, 1941. He kept this record separately from the informal daily typed record which he circulated to his family (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.19) (hereafter: Halifax secret diary).
- 29 Martin diary, Sep 25, 1941, and letters.
- 30 Colville diary; and PM's card.
- 31 For the Coventry raid see: Operational Record Book, RAF Fighter Command, War Room log (AIR.16/698; and see files 388, 473); and Martin diary, Nov 14, 1940.
- 32 WSC to Portal, Sep 27, 1941 (Portal papers, 2; AIR.8/440 and CAB.120/300).
- 33 Portal to WSC, Oct 2, 1941 (Portal papers, 2; AIR.8/440).
- 34 War Cabinet, Oct 16; Portal to Sinclair, Oct 19, 1941 (AIR.8/424).
- 35 Cecil King diary, Oct 9, 1941.
- 36 WSC to Portal, M/973/1, Oct 7 (AIR.19/186, Sinclair's file on bombing policy, 1940-2; PREM.3/11/11a and CAB.120/300); Churchill, vol. iii, 451. Telegram from D Kelly (Berne) to FO, Oct 10, 1941, passed to Portal and Air Chief Marshal Pierse, C-in-C, Bomber Command, for observations.
- 37 PM's card, Oct 8.
- 38 Portal to WSC, Oct 13, 1941 (AIR.19/186). The PM's card records that Portal was due to see WSC at 6 P.M. on Oct 8.
- 39 Portal to WSC, Oct 14, 1941 (PREM.3/11/11a).
- 40 L C Hollis to J M Martin, Oct 12, 1941 (PREM.4/69/1).
- 41 Tedder to Portal, Oct 13, 1941 (Arthur Tedder papers, courtesy of Prof. the Lord Tedder).
- 42 Tedder to his wife, Oct 15, 1941 (Tedder papers).
- 43 WSC to Auchinleck, Oct 16, 1941 (*ibid.*).
- 44 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Oct 15, 1941 (CAB.44/54).
- 45 Portal to Tedder, Oct 15; WSC to Auchinleck, Oct 16 (Tedder papers); WSC notified Auchinleck of Freeman's visit by telegram on Oct 15, 1941.
- 46 *E.g.*, CX/MSS/329/T14, Oct 12, 1941 (HW.1/135).
- 47 Lord Hankey diary, Oct 15, 1941 (Churchill College, Cambridge: Lord Hankey's papers, HNKY.1/7) (hereafter: Hankey diary).
- 48 PM's card. WSC to Auchinleck, Oct 16; in Gilbert, vol. vi, 1216ff.
- 49 WSC to Auchinleck, Oct 16, 1941 (Tedder papers).
- 50 Auchinleck to WSC, Oct 21, 1941: 'I have full confidence in Tedder and earnestly request you not to consider any change at the present time' (*ibid.*).
- 51 Cadogan diary, Oct 9; Inspector G F Scott, hand-written register of weekend guests at Chequers (hereafter: Chequers regis-

- ter), Oct 10–11, 1941.
- 52 Pownall diary, Sep 30; WSC to COS, Oct 4, 1941, in Gilbert, vol. vi, 1212f.
- 53 For the Russian record on Beaverbrook's Moscow conferences see *Sov.-angliiskiye*, vol. i, 137ff; the British records are in CAB.99/7. Cf. Harriman, vol. i, 140.
- 54 WSC to FDR, Oct 4, 1941. Not on the FDR Libr., microfilm series.
- 55 WSC to Stalin, Oct 6, 1941 (PREM.3/179/1/1; *Sov.-angliiskiye*, vol. i, 150f). Churchill, vol. iii, 418.
- 56 Eden diary, Oct 10, 1941.
- 57 Bruce Lockhart diary, Oct 19, 1941.
- 58 Beaverbrook and Harriman stayed at Chequers Oct 10–11, Bridges Oct 11–12, 1941. Chequers register.
- 59 Hankey diary, Oct 15, 1941.
- 60 P J Grigg to his father, Oct 1, 1941 (Grigg papers, 2/4).
- 61 Colville diary, Sep 28, 1941.
- 62 Lyttelton to WSC, Oct 4, 1941; in Gilbert, vol. vi, 1234.
- 63 Eden diary, Oct 8, 1941.
- 64 Pownall diary, Oct 2, 1941.
- 65 Harvey diary, Oct 3, 1941.
- 66 Brooke diary, Oct 3, 1941 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6c, and MS 4/1/84). WSC's file on AJAX is PREM.3/40.
- 67 Chequers register; Martin diary, Oct 3, 1941: 'To Chequers in afternoon. Three chiefs of staff and Sir Alan Brooke there. Discussion of AJAX.'
- 68 Pownall diary, Oct 5, 1941.
- 69 Brooke diary, Oct 4, 1941.
- 70 WSC to Keyes, Oct 4, 1941; Martin diary.
- 71 Pound to Adm. Cunningham, Jan 27, 1941 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52561).
- 72 Pownall diary, Sep 20, 1941.
- 73 *The Keyes Papers* (London, 1981), vol. iii, 2112f. Keyes to Ismay, Oct 30, 1941 (King's College London, Ismay papers, IV/KEY, 8/2b).
- 74 Pound to Cunningham, Nov 25, 1941 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52561).
- 75 WSC to Mountbatten, Oct 10, 1941 (PREM.3/330/2); Churchill, vol. iii, 481. Philip Ziegler, *Mountbatten* (London, 1985), chapter 11.
- 76 Cadogan diary, Oct 6, 1941.
- 77 Harvey diary.
- 78 Elizabeth Layton to her parents, Oct 12, 1941; quoted in Gilbert, vol. vi, 1214f.
- 79 Chequers register, Oct 12, 1941.
- 80 WSC to Stalin, Oct 12, 1941 (PREM.3/170/1); *Sov.-angliiskiye*, vol. i, 151f; and in *Stalin–WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, No. 18; Churchill, vol. iii, 431.
- 81 Brooke diary, Oct 12; and notes, 3/A/iv. Pownall diary, Oct 12–13; Harvey diary, Oct 14, 1941.
- 82 Eden diary, Oct 15, 1941.
- 83 For Gen. A G L McNaughton's correspondence with Mackenzie King see McNaughton's papers in Canadian National Archives, Ottawa, MG.30, E133, vol. 267; for Ralston's, see *ibid.*, MG.27, III, B.11, vol. 61.
- 84 WSC to Auchinleck, Oct 18, 1941; Churchill, vol. iii, 481f.
- 85 WSC to FDR, initialed 'wsc 15.x.[1941]' (FDR Libr., microfilm 6, 0029). The enclosed extract from Auchinleck's letter to WSC is endorsed by FDR, 'Brought to me by A***, man from WSC, Oct 21, 41.'
- 86 Eden diary, Oct 20, 1941.
- 87 WSC to FDR, Oct 20, 1941 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 0551ff); cf. Churchill, vol. iii, 482ff.
- 88 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Oct 15, 1941 (CAB.69/4). Cf. COS history, CAB.44/54, fol. 111.
- 89 Cadogan diary, Oct 20, 1941.
- 90 Pownall diary, Oct 20; Brooke notes on Oct 20. Cf. Gen. Sir Frederick Pile, *Ack-*

- Ack* (London, 1949), 208. The PM's card shows a twice-postponed visit by WSC to the AA in Richmond Park with Gen. Pyle [sic] on Oct 17; the Chequers register records Pile staying there that night with Nye and Lieut. Gen. G M MacReady (Asst. CIGS), and again on Nov 7, 1941.
- 91 Harvey diary, Oct 29, 1941.
- 92 Taylor, *Beaverbrook*, 500: Crozier's note on the interview (Beaverbrook papers).
- 93 WSC to Auchinleck, Oct 21, 1941 (PREM.3/282).
- 94 Randolph Churchill to WSC, Oct 20, 1941; quoted in Gilbert, vol. vi, 1220.
- 95 WSC to Auchinleck, Oct 24, 1941; cited in Gilbert, vol. vi, 1222; cf. WSC to Lyttelton, Oct 25; Churchill, vol. iii, 486ff.
- 96 WSC to Lyttelton, Oct 25; Churchill, vol. iii, 486ff.
- 97 Cadogan diary, Oct 21–3; Harvey, Oct 25; Bruce Lockhart; War Cabinet meeting, Oct 23. PM's card, Oct 23, 1941.
- 98 WSC memo, Mar 30, 1942 (CAB.120/744).
- 99 WSC to FDR, Oct 20, 1941 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 0551ff); Churchill, vol. iii, 482.
- 100 Pownall diary, Oct 29, 1941.
- 101 Harvey diary, Oct 27, 1941.
- 102 WSC to Cripps, Oct 25; Churchill, vol. iii, 413. WSC to Cripps, Oct 28, 1941 (*ibid.*, 420f). Harvey diary, Nov 1, 1941.
- 103 Greenwood told Kingsley Martin, editor of the *New Statesman*, who repeated it to Cecil King: diary, Oct 23, 1941.
- 104 WSC to Randolph Churchill, Oct 30, 1941; cited by Gilbert, vol. vi, 1227. The register of guests shows Harvie-Watt at Chequers on Oct 27 10:30–10:45 A.M.; the PM's card shows at 11 A.M. a 'Demonstration' at No. 10 Downing-street.
- 105 Somerville diary, Oct 24–5, 1941 (Churchill College, SMVL.1/34).
- 106 Somerville's letters to Adm. Cunningham (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52563). He confuses the dates and omits the year, but begins the letter of 'Oct 4' (in reality perhaps Nov 4) with the words, 'That was a pretty wet project I was called home to discuss,' and he mentions the presence of 'Alex & Steve' (Alexander and Stevenson). Their presence is established by his diary, and by the hand-written register of weekend guests at Chequers, Oct 24, 1941.
- 107 Somerville to Cunningham, 'Jun 12' (?) (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52563).
- 108 See the description of Brooke in Jacob's diary, page 80 (JACB.1/20).
- 109 Ismay, interviewed by Sir Arthur Bryant (Alanbrooke papers, 12/xi/1/3).
- 110 Brooke, quoted by Lady Brookeborough in letter to MCL, Jul 1954 (Alanbrooke papers, 12/xi/2/12).
- 111 Brooke notes on Oct 26, 1941.
- 112 Churchill, vol. iii, 488; WSC to Ismay, Oct 28, 1941 (*ibid.*), 489.
- 113 Cadogan diary, Oct 27; Somerville diary, Oct 27; Somerville to Cunningham, 'Oct 4' (Nov 4?), 1941 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52563).
- 114 Cited in Leahy diary, Oct 27, 1941. FDR also spoke of another document in his possession which 'revealed' Hitler's plans to abolish all religions and impose *Mein Kampf* in place of the Bible. 'In place of the Cross of Christ will be put two symbols, the swastika and the naked sword.' When the White House required the War dept. to produce the originals of these alleged documents however, they could not be found. Adolph Berle (diary, FDR Libr.) learned to his dismay that the source was William Stephenson ('INTREPID'), head of British Intelligence operations in North America. Warning Cordell Hull about

- these British forgeries, Berle wrote, 'I believe that the British Intelligence probably has been giving attention to creating as many "incidents" as possible to affect public opinion here. . . . Consequently before we shoot off I think we should have some check.' Cf. Cave Brown, *Menzies*, 368.
- 115** The New York *Daily Mirror* had first published such a map on Aug 25, 'said to be identical with maps found in a raid on a German welfare association headquarters in Rosario, Argentina on Aug 1,' showing South America divided into only three zones; after FDR's broadcast the New York *PM* reproduced on Oct 28, 1941 a map published by the 'Munich Institute of Geopolitics' dividing South America into five numbered zones. For a file on the (unsuccessful) search for the original of the 'secret map made in Germany by Hitler's Government' see FDR Libr., PSF, box 44, folder 'Germany 1940-41.' This includes a map of 'Südamerika 1950,' divided into four zones, torn out of Otto Tannenberg's 1911 book *Großdeutschland*; Donovan was notified that Professor Karl Haushofer's *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* had been searched for such a map without luck.
- 8: Really Not Quite Normal**
- 1** Craigie to F.O., No. 2186, Nov 1, 1941 (CAB. 121/114). He added that Shigemitsu had recently told him that the British government had confirmed before he left London that they were leaving the conduct of Far East policy to Washington. 'I have received no record of such a statement,' complained Craigie.
- 2** War Cabinet Oct 27, WM (41) 106, Minute 2, conf. annexe; cf. COS (41) 398, annexe ii. On Sep 19, 1941, inviting Canada to supply two battalions of troops to strengthen the garrison at Hongkong, he expressed the belief that the Japanese were showing 'a certain weakness' in their attitude, which made it seem less forlorn to reinforce such a little 'outpost.'
- 3** Churchill, vol. iii, 531.
- 4** Stimson noted on Oct 6: 'I told him [Hull] we needed three months to secure our position and to be protected from an explosion of the Japanese army' while the USA was reinforcing the Philippines; cf. his diary for Oct 26, Nov 6, 25, 26, 1941.
- 5** Stark to Kimmel, Oct 16, 1941 (*Pearl Harbor Hearings*, vol. xiv, 1402). Rear-Adm. Edwin T Layton, *op. cit.*, 159, 169.
- 6** Tokyo to Honolulu, Sep 24; translated Oct 9, 1941 (*Pearl Harbor Hearings*, vol. xii, 261ff).
- 7** The Washington 'specialists' were Capt. Alan Kirk, Director of Naval Intelligence; Capt. Howard Bode; and Cdr. Laurance F Safford. Turner had usurped the ONI's responsibility for *disseminating* Intelligence.
- 8** On that date Safford warned Kimmel that 'PURPLE showed that' the Japanese embassies had been ordered to destroy their secret papers.
- 9** Tokyo to Honolulu, No. 113, Nov 18; translated by US army, Dec 5 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.17270). Honolulu's reply to Tokyo, No. 222, dispatched on Nov 18, 1941, was deciphered by the US army on Dec 6, 1941.
- 10** WM (41) 103rd meeting, Minute 3, conf. annexe.
- 11** Pound wrote to WSC on Mar 7, 1942, accepting responsibility (PREM.20/57; Roskill, *Admirals*, 200). WSC tried to shift the blame in 1953 onto Phillips, writing to his reluctant naval ghost writer G R G Allen that his intention had been that the task force should merely show its face at Singapore and then 'disappear into the

- immense archipelago.'
- 12 Pound to Cunningham, Oct 10; Francis Brown to Pound's secretary, Oct 12, 1941 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/10).
- 13 Hart diary, Dec 5, 1941 (Hart papers). He was C-in-C, Asiatic Fleet, based at Manila. On Phillips see also Vice-Adm. John H Godfrey's manuscript, 29 (Naval Historical Branch, London: Godfrey papers), and the entry by Adm. H G Thursfield in *Dictionary of National Biography*.
- 14 Phillips to Pound, Oct 17, 1941: in Roskill, *Admirals*, 197.
- 15 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Oct 17, 1941 (CAB.69/3).
- 16 Halifax to FO, Oct 18, 1941 (PREM.3/252/6a, fol. 82).
- 17 WSC to FDR, Oct 20, 1941 (PREM.3/486/2).
- 18 Tokyo to Nomura, Oct 18 (*Pearl Harbor Hearings*, vol. xii, 76); Layton, *op. cit.*, 169. Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Oct 17, 1941 (CAB.69/3).
- 19 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Oct 20, 1941 (CAB.69/3).
- 20 WSC to Ismay, chiefs of staff, and Dominions Secretary, D.291/1, Oct 31 (CAB.121/284). Ismay pointed out, Oct 31, that under a long-standing arrangement covering such fleet movements, Washington had already been informed of *Prince of Wales*' departure on Oct 22, 1941.
- 21 PM's card.
- 22 PM's minute in PREM.3/330/2.
- 23 FDR to WSC, Oct 15; and to Mountbatten, Oct 16, 1941 (FDR Libr., microfilm 6, 0398f). The letter concluded, 'Dicky will tell you of a possibility for your people to study – to be used only if Pétain goes and Weygand plays with us.' WSC would however minute to Ismay on Oct 28, referring to FDR's 'lively interest in Tangier,' that he himself foresaw complications with the Spaniards and the French. Churchill, vol. iii, 489.
- 24 Quoted by Philip Ziegler, *Mountbatten*, 151ff. Mountbatten to Lady M., Nov 11, 1941 (*ibid.*).
- 25 WSC to DMI (Maj. Gen. F H N Davidson), M.1014/1, and reply, Oct 24, 1941; Davidson appended a secret memo, 'Autumn–winter weather conditions in Russia' (CAB.163/11).
- 26 Cabinet meeting, Oct 27, 1941. WM (41) 106, Minute 2, conf. annexe. PM's card: '5 P.M. cabinet (First Sea Lord and First Lord staying on to talk to PM). 10 P.M. D.O. meeting.'
- 27 War office to C-in-C, Far East and C-in-C, China, Oct 30, 1941, 2:30 A.M. (Special Secret Intelligence Centre papers, CAB.121/14).
- 28 Halifax secret diary, Oct 30, 1941.
- 29 WSC to FDR, Nov 1, 1941.
- 30 WSC to Smuts, Nov 2, 1941 (ADM.199/1934).
- 31 WSC to Stalin, Nov 4, 1941 (FO.954/24; *Sov.-angliiskiye*, vol. i, 169ff; Churchill, vol. iii, 468f).
- 32 Ashley Clarke (see chap. 6, note 30).
- 33 Roskill to Cunningham, Mar 30, 1953 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52563).
- 34 Roskill to Cunningham, Sep 18, 1953 (*ibid.*).
- 35 Roskill to Cunningham, Sep 28, 1953 (*ibid.*). On Dec 30, 1953 he wrote: 'My first vol. is still firmly jammed by Churchill.' After it was published, Roskill wrote on Jun 16, 1954, 'Except for WSC (who exploded with wrath) everyone has been most kind' (*ibid.*).
- 36 Churchill, vol. iii, 524.
- 37 Pound to WSC, Mar 7, 1942 (PREM.20/57).
- 38 Dalton diary, Feb 19, 1942.
- 39 Chequers register, Nov 9, 1941.

- 40 WSC to Pound, Nov 11 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/10). On Nov 1, 1941, he had complained to Pound that *Prince of Wales* was taking 'a very long time' to reach Capetown (CAB.121/114).
- 41 Amery diary, Oct 14, 21, 24, 30, 31, Nov 3, 4, 5, 1941. On Jan 7, 1942 US naval Intelligence informed the COS that U Saw was due back in Bangkok on Jan 10. 'He plans on arrival to get into touch with Japanese and with their assistance to set up Quisling or Free Burma government.' Hollis cabled to Ismay that WSC would want India to hold U Saw's aircraft pending investigation (CAB.120/29). For U Saw's subsequent detention see PREM.4/54/1 and /2. He was hanged in 1948.
- 42 Amery diary, Oct 29, 1941.
- 43 PM's card. His afternoon appointments were all postponed or cancelled.
- 44 WSC to FDR, Nov 2, 1941 (FDR Libr., microfilm 6, 0031).
- 45 See for instance the letter of Ralph Ingersoll, editor of *PM*, to Bill Donovan, Oct 21. 'There is a smell of trouble in the air. . . I found my friends in the Tory Party smug' (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Far East'); Cecil King diary, Aug 2, 1941; John Martin letters and Raymond Lee diary, *passim*.
- 46 Raymond Lee diary, Nov 3, 1941.
- 47 WSC to Pound, Nov 2 (ADM.205/10).
- 48 Eden diary, Nov 4, 1941.
- 49 WSC to Stalin, Nov 4, 1941 (FO.954/24; *Sov.-angliiskiye*, vol. i, 169ff; Churchill, vol. iii, 468f; WM (41) 108, Minute 8, conf. annexe).
- 50 Pownall diary, Nov 5, 1941.
- 51 WSC to COS Committee, Nov 5, 1941, minute D.298/1 (PREM.3/398/3).
- 52 C to WSC, Nov 12 (CAB.120/766); *cf.* Churchill, vol. iii, 492.
- 53 Cadogan diary, Nov 11, 1941 (Churchill College).
- 54 WSC to Sinclair and Portal, M.1038/1, Nov 11, 1941 (PREM.3/11/3; also in AIR.19/186); Churchill, vol. iii, 748. Sinclair argued that despite the 'most painful' bomber losses he hoped WSC would not ban further raids on Berlin. He spoke in a draft reply, not sent, of the 'moral effect' of 'a good attack on Berlin just when their troops are bogged outside Moscow and Leningrad and of blowing in windows and smashing windows just when the winter is coming on' (*ibid.*). See also the Special Secret Intelligence Centre file on bombing policy (CAB.121/1).
- 55 WSC to Sinclair and Portal, Nov 14, 1941 (AIR.19/186, Sinclair's file, 'Bombing Policy, 1940-2').
- 56 Portal to WSC, Nov 16 (CAB.121/1).
- 57 Amery diary, Nov 8, 12, 1941.
- 58 *Ibid.*, Nov 20, 1941.
- 59 WSC to Lord Linlithgow, Nov 12, 1941: Churchill, vol. iii, 748.
- 60 Amery diary, Nov 17, 1941.
- 61 *Ibid.*, Nov 22, 1941.
- 62 *Ibid.*, Nov 24; and *cf.* Cadogan diary.
- 63 *Ibid.*, Nov 3, 5, 1941.
- 64 Elizabeth Layton diary: Gilbert, vol. vi, 1146.
- 65 Cecil King diary, Nov 18, 1941, reporting a conversation with Sinclair.
- 66 WSC to Alexander and Pound, Nov 14, 1941: Churchill, vol. iii, 749. He asked for the actual figures and planned a special meeting on the crisis.
- 67 Eden diary, Nov 13, 1941.
- 68 Stalin to WSC, Nov 8, 1941 (*Sov.-angliiskiye*, vol. i, 171f; English translation in PREM.3/170/1).
- 69 PM's card, Nov 11; Eden diary, Nov 11, 1941.
- 70 Cabinet meeting, Nov 11, 1941. WM (41) 111, Minute 8, conf. annexe (revise).

- 71 Eden diary, Nov 11, 1941.
- 72 *Ibid.*, Nov 11, 1941.
- 73 Pound to WSC, Nov 18, 1941 (CAB.121/114 and ADM.205/10).
- 74 Smuts to WSC, Nov 18, 1941 (PREM.3/163/3).
- 75 Lord Camrose to his son, Nov 14, 1941: Gilbert, vol. vi, 1238.
- 76 WSC to Dowding, Nov 5; and note by Dowding on his stay at Chequers, Nov 14–15, 1941 (RAF Museum, Hendon: Sir Hugh Dowding papers).
- 77 Harvie-Watt, *Most of My Life* (London, 1980), 63.
- 78 Amery diary, Nov 13; Eden diary, Nov 12, 1941. ‘There was talk of Nye to succeed him, and P.J. [Grigg], rather unexpectedly, favoured this.’
- 79 Ismay, interviewed by Bryant (Alanbrooke papers, 12/xi/1/3). Chequers register. Pownall diary, Nov 19, 1941: ‘It is hardly a credible tale, and really rather unworthy. . . But the PM is like that; he exercises his patronage in very peculiar directions and with little regard to the ordinary decencies.’
- 80 Brooke diary, Nov 16; Hankey diary, Nov 19, 1941, reporting a conversation with Dill (Churchill College, Cambridge: Lord Hankey’s papers). (hereafter: Hankey diary).
- 81 WM (41) 114, Minute 1, conf. annexe.
- 82 Hankey diary, Nov 19, 1941.
- 83 Eden diary, Nov 14, 1941.
- 84 Cripps to WSC, and reply, Nov 15, 1941 (PREM.3/170/1).
- 85 WSC to Stalin, Nov 21, 1941: Churchill, vol. iii, 471.
- 86 Eden diary, Nov 21, 1941.
- 87 Stalin to WSC, Nov 23 (PREM.3/170/1). WSC refers to a meeting between Maisky and Eden on Nov 20: Churchill, vol. iii, 470. For Maisky’s account, Nov 24, see *Sov.-angliiskiy*, vol. i, 179f. The PM’s card indicates a further meeting with Maisky on Nov 25, 1941, but there are no Soviet or British accounts of this.
- 88 WSC to Mannerheim, Nov 28, forwarded via the US Legation in Helsinki (PREM.3/170/1); Cadogan diary, Nov 28, 1941.
- 89 WSC to Eden, Nov 29, 1941 (*ibid.*, and Churchill, vol. iii, 473).
- 90 Eden to WSC, Nov 29, 1941 (PREM.3/170/1).
- 91 WSC to Eden, Dec 3, 1941 (*ibid.*).
- 92 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Dec 3 (CAB.69/3). Amery diary, Dec 3. The PM’s card has these entries: Dec 3: ‘5:30 [~~Cabinet~~] Defence Ctee.’ Dec 4: ‘6 P.M. Cabinet . . . 7:30 Maisky. 10 P.M. staff conference.’ Dec 5, 1941: ‘12:30 M Maisky.’ (The ‘staff conference’ was a term first used by WSC to describe ‘O’ (Operations) meetings of the COS Committee on Dec 1. It first appears on the PM’s card on Dec 4).
- 93 Amery diary, Dec 4, 1941.
- 94 Mannerheim to WSC, Dec 2, received 7:10 P.M., Dec 4 (PREM.3/170/1). Churchill, vol. iii, 474 oddly says he received it Dec 2, 1941.
- 95 Eden to WSC, Dec 5, 1941 (PREM.3/170/1).
- 96 Halifax to FO, Dec 5, received 10 P.M.; J M M[artin], minute, Dec 6, 12:25 A.M. (*ibid.*).
- 9: **Westward Look**
- 1 WSC to FDR, Oct 20; Churchill, vol. iii, 428f. WSC to FDR, Nov 18, 1941, midnight (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 0551ff; 0487); it went at triple priority (NA, RG.84, Records maintained by Ambassador Winant, 1938–48).
- 2 Rommel to OKW, Nov 9, 1941; Church-

- ill, vol. iii, 492f.
- 3 ULTRA intercept OL.2008, Nov 17, 1941; cited in Hinsley, vol. ii, 303.
- 4 Martin diary, Nov 18, 1941; PM's card.
- 5 Hankey diary, Nov 19, 1941.
- 6 WSC to Auchinleck, Nov 19, 1941; Gilbert, vol. vi, 1239.
- 7 Auchinleck and Tedder to WSC, Nov 19, 1941 (Tedder papers).
- 8 Hankey diary, Nov 20; Nicolson diary, Nov 20, 1941: 'I dread these forecasts.'
- 9 Auchinleck to WSC, Nov 21; Churchill, vol. iii, 504; Gilbert, vol. vi, 1241.
- 10 WSC to Auchinleck, Nov 25, 1941; Gilbert, vol. vi, 1242.
- 11 Intercept CX/MSS/470/T.16, Nov 23, 1941 (HW.1/267). 'Attached messages were taken over to PM direct, by CSS, 27.11.41.'
- 12 WSC to Adm. Cunningham, Nov 23, 1941; Churchill, vol. iii, 508; cf. Hinsley, vol. ii, 321f.
- 13 CX/MSS/462/T.21, Nov 24, 1941 (HW.1/267).
- 14 Auchinleck to WSC, Nov 24, 1941; Churchill, vol. iii, 505.
- 15 Lyttelton to WSC, Nov 25, 1941; Gilbert, vol. vi, 1242; Lyttelton, 265f.
- 16 WSC to Lyttelton, Nov 25; Churchill, vol. iii, 506; Eden diary, Nov 25, 1941.
- 17 WSC to Auchinleck, Nov 25, 1941; Churchill, vol. iii, 506.
- 18 Amery diary, Nov 24, 28, 1941.
- 19 *Ibid.*, Dec 1, 1941: '... A most unnecessary waste of time and generation of heat owing to Winston's refusal to accept things as they are and not as they were in 1895.'
- 20 WSC to Auchinleck, Nov 27, 1941; Gilbert, vol. vi, 1245.
- 21 WSC to Auchinleck, Nov 27, 1941, 7:27 p.m.; Churchill, vol. iii, 510. He wrote untruthfully, 'Neither I nor the CIGS was convinced, but we did not press our point.'
- 22 WSC to Auchinleck, Nov 29, 1941; Gilbert, vol. vi, 1246.
- 23 Forwarded in signal, Auchinleck to WSC, Nov 30, 1941; Churchill, vol. iii, 511.
- 24 Barrington-Ward diary, Dec 1; PM's card.

10: Gaps in the Archives

- 1 Prof. D C Watt, 'Was War with Japan Necessary?' in *The Daily Telegraph*, Jul 16, 1972.
- 2 A pencilled entry in Morgenthau diary, Nov 4, 1944 (FDR Library, Henry R Morgenthau papers, page 1458).
- 3 The British government has still (Aug 2000) withdrawn fol. 24 from the First Sea Lord's 'Report on the Loss of the *Prince of Wales*,' dated Jan 25, 1942 – the Appendix II which reproduces 'signals giving information on the movements of the Japanese fleet' around Dec 8 and 9, 1941 (PREM.3/163/2). A second copy of the same report (ADM.199/1149) refers on fol. 197 to Appendix II, but again the Appendix is missing. There is a third copy of the report in the same file, differently typed, circulated to the Board of Admiralty by HV M[arkham] with an index on fol. 209 listing: 'Appendix II. Copies of Important Signals made just prior to and after Force Z sailed.' This is a different Appendix II from the one which has been withdrawn.
- 4 Stimson diaries, *passim*. The retyping was perhaps done in November 1944 – by a secretary using a different typewriter, indenting eleven character-spaces instead of five, leaving three spaces after each period, and with other idiosyncrasies quite different from Stimson's 1941 private secretary. Historians should also note that there are two versions of Stimson's letter to FDR dated Nov 25, 1941: one in his 'Philippines' file (Yale Univ. Libr.) and in the Cordell Hull papers (Library of Congress),

and another with significant additions in his file of correspondence with FDR, dated Nov 26, 1941.

- 5 Probably in September 1944. Hopkins's memo on the events of Dec 7, 1941 is in the Hopkins papers, microfilm 19. It emphasises FDR's more angelic qualities, *e.g.*, 'The President discussed at some length his efforts to keep the country out of the war and his earnest desire to complete his administration without war. . .'

On Sep 26, 1944 Hopkins would write to FDR: 'I was sorry to learn from Bob Patterson that you had been worried by rumors as to what the Army Pearl Harbor Board might find in its report. The Congressional Joint Resolution directing the creation of such a board was passed while I was in Europe, and the Board was appointed before I returned. . . I found awaiting me a request to appear before it. I postponed my appearance until now in order that I should have time to make a careful study of the documents and thus make an appearance which would answer any possible false rumors that have arisen.'

He continued, 'This morning I was before the Board for two hours and a half. . . I felt at the end of the hearing that they were satisfied with my account of the sequence of events. I had the advantage . . . of having kept a daily account of my meetings and work during the critical period. . . For myself I can hardly imagine a picture of more close co-operation and anxious desire to warn our outposts of impending attack than was shown by this documented record.' He recalled that FDR was 'painstaking on the job throughout that period' (FDR Libr., PSF, box 44, folder 'Germany 1944-45').

- 6 PRO files, DEFE.3 series.

- 7 Ministry of Defence to the late John

Costello, quoted in *The Sunday Telegraph*, Aug 22, 1982; Foreign & Commonwealth Office to the late James Rusbridger, Sep 12, 1985. The 'weeders' removed even innocuous 'BJs,' *e.g.*, from PREM.4/68/6b, 'Movements of Jap Minister for Foreign Affairs,' Feb 1941. The special messages to which Ismay referred in this file, clearly MAGICS or 'BJs,' were sealed until the year 2019. This file has been re-sealed for 75 years since we reviewed it.

- 8 Pownall diaries, *op. cit.* A box of Pownall's diaries is in Churchill College, Cambridge – but not those for the war years.

- 9 PREM.3/252/5, also closed for 75 years. Warren F Kimball, in 'Churchill and Roosevelt: The Personal Equation,' in *Prologue*, Washington DC, Fall 1974, 171f, also finds that these 'omissions from the PREMIER 3 records are suggestive.' File PREM.3/252/6a, which is open, is catalogued as containing records from Sep 1940 to May 1945, but now includes only those from Dec 22, 1940 to Jul 22, 1944.

- 10 PRO series FO.954. The foreign office has not provided any explanation to us. The file is also missing from the Avon papers.

- 11 *The Times* reported on Nov 26, 1993 that James Rusbridger and the Far East codebreaking expert Cdr. Eric Nave had claimed in *Betrayal at Pearl Harbor* that British codebreakers had intercepted Japanese signals which alerted them to an imminent Japanese attack on Hawaii. Cdr. Denniston wrote to Taylor on Dec 12, 1941 that he knew little about the work being done by the FECB at Singapore; the bureau was still functioning under Shaw, he wrote, but not enjoying much success except with the Japanese consular codes. 'That is why we and Washington are concentrating on research into Japanese naval and military cyphers' (HW.14/45).

- 12 This was Anthony Best, lecturer in international history at the LSE, quoted in *The Daily Telegraph*, Jul 31, 1994.
- 13 WSC to FDR, Nov 26; this was transmitted as US embassy Tel. 5670 to Washington at six A.M. (NA, State dept. file 711.94/2472); despatched from the FO to Washington as No. 6462, Nov 26, 1941, 3:20 A.M. (FO.371/27913). In the State dept's index of telegrams received from its embassy in London two items are not accounted for between Tels. No. 5,670 (six A.M.) and No. 5,700 (midnight), namely telegrams No. 5,672 and No. 5,688.
- 14 Gilbert, vi, 1260. There is a tell-tale reference in the next paragraph to Nov 26, 1941 as 'the same day.'
- 15 For the record, the seven 'BJs' were Nos. 097,969, 097,973, 097,977, 097,983, 097,988, 097,989, 097,993 (HW.1/240).
- 16 For the American files see e.g., NA, RG.457, file SRH.210, papers released in 1982.
- 17 GC&CS report for 1940, Jan 31, 1941 (HW.14/11).
- 18 Unsigned memorandum to GC&CS director, Oct 1, 1940 (HW.14/7).
- 19 C to DNI and ACAS(I), C/5392, Nov 22, 1940 (HW.14/45).
- 20 Admiralty to C-in-C, Home Fleet, and others, Dec 18, 1940 (ADM.199/1156).
- 21 Admiralty to C-in-C, Mediterranean, Jan 13, 1942. 'Our sources of intelligence and most secret methods of acquiring it should not be divulged' to US representatives (ADM.199/1156).
- 22 Draft signal by C to AOC-in-C Middle East, Jun 28, 1942; Group Capt. FW Winterbotham to Hut 3, undated (HW.1/674).
- 23 Butler, Washington, Tel No. 3154 to FO, Dec 18, 1940 (HW.14/45). Signal DNI to Flag Officer Commanding, 3rd Battle Sqdn, Halifax, ca Dec 30, 1941: 'A party of US officers consisting of Lieut. Col. Freeman [*sic*. Friedman], Lieut. Col. Rosen, Lieut. Currier, USNR, and one other naval officer, together with six cases of very valuable mechanical equipment will shortly arrive from Washington for embarkation in *Royal Sovereign* or *Revenge* for UK. . .' (HW.14/9).
- 24 Denniston to Maj G Stevens, Nov 4, 1942 (HW.14/57).
- 25 Denniston, notes, Aug 4, 1941 (HW.14/45).
- 26 In HW.14/45. On July 8, Capt. Harold G Hayes, the American Signals Corps custodian of codes, turned over a bundle of technical papers to the British – mostly World War I code books and items including 'The Zimmermann Telegram of Jan 16, 1917 and its Cryptographic Background.' And see Capt. Laurance F Safford, usn ret., *A Brief History of Communications Intelligence in the United States*, Mar 1952 (NA, RG.457, SRH-149).
- 27 Denniston, notes, Aug 4 (HW.14/45).
- 28 Denniston to Hastings, Aug 5, 1941 (HW.14/45).
- 29 Denniston (see note 28).
- 30 Report by Lieut. Col. J H Tiltman on his visit to North America during March and April 1942 (HW.14/46).
- 31 Denniston's report on US trip, Oct 31, 1941 (HW.14/45). Denniston later said he found the Americans – apart from their magnificent work on PURPLE – scratching at the outside of the Italian, French, and South American problems. He subsequently sent them all he knew about these as well as the French Colonial, Brazilian, Portuguese, Swedish, and other cyphers they had penetrated. Denniston to Maj G Stevens, Nov 4, 1942 (HW.14/57). Denniston's complaint was that the US war dept. kept him in the dark as to what further progress they had made.

- 32 Notes on conference held Aug 15, 1941 (HW.14/45); for further 1942 messages between Bletchley Park and Cdr. Nave in Melbourne, relating to his work on Japanese naval codes, see also /46, /47, and 48. Nave appears to have operated on a loose rein. On May 2, 1942 he reported success with the naval code NIGORY.
- 33 Notes by Cdr. Denniston after his return from USA, Aug 1941 (HW.14/45).
- 34 *Ibid.*
- 35 Denniston to Hastings, Oct 9, 1941 (HW.14/45).
- 36 Denniston to C, Oct 28 (HW.14/45).
- 37 Adm. Sir Charles Little, British Admiralty Delegation, Washington, to Pound, 'most secret,' Dec 2, 1941 (ADM.205/9).
- 38 Hastings (Washington) to CSS, Tel. CXG No. 105-108, Nov 27 (HW.14/45). The Nov 26, 1941 meeting was also attended by Gen. Olmstead and Captain Wilkinson.
- 39 CSS to Hastings (Washington), CXG No. 105-109, Dec 1, 1941 (HW.14/45). Hastings was due to leave Washington shortly.
- 40 [Hastings] telegram Washington to CSS, CXG No. 115-117, Nov 27 (HW.14/45).
- 41 Adm. Sir Charles Little (BAD) Washington to Pound, 'most secret,' Dec 2, 1941 (ADM.205/9).
- 42 [Denniston], untitled MS (Churchill College, Denniston papers, 1/4).
- 43 *Ibid.* It is significant that on May 21, 1942 Ismay suggested to WSC that they suppress the phrase 'based on our own best sources in Melbourne' in a message about Intelligence on imminent Japanese naval operations ('those against Midway Island are certain') (PREM.3/158/6). Nave, the Australian based at Melbourne, had lived in Japan in the 1920s and helped to found the Japanese section of GC&CS in 1927, the forerunner of Bletchley Park. For references to the work and 'some success' of Nave and 'two young Australian military officers' and a math professor from Melbourne University, see Col. G E Grimsdale's report on his visit to Australia, Oct 10-23, 1941 (WO.208/2062).
- 44 GC&CS comments on PAGE 16 of draft history, 'The American Alliance,' 23.11.1949 (HW.3/93).
- 45 See NA, RG.457, file SRH.149, 14, and SRH.355, 297ff. Layton, *op. cit.*, 534, quotes the opinions of three experts on this and on 548 cites a memo by Safford dated May 17, 1945, to be found in NA, RG.80, Pearl Harbor Liaison Office files, box 49.
- 46 Rusbridger and Nave, interviewed in *The Independent*, London, Mar 9 and 11, 1989, based on the MS of their unpublished book *Codebreaker Extraordinary*.
- 47 Rusbridger, interviewed by *Daily Telegraph*, Aug 1, 1984.
- 48 Denniston to Hastings, Dec 5, 1941 (HW.14/45). At this stage the GC&CS liaison on PURPLE seems to have been with the US navy dept. only; the US war dept. was not supplied with British data for several months. On one message from Stephenson to C, Feb 14, 1942, Bletchley Park noted: 'I do not know if the American Army cryptographic party know that we are reading Japanese BJs.' On Feb 19, 1942, GC&CS minuted that their co-operation with the US war dept. on PURPLE was 'complete' (HW.14/29).
- 49 WSC's 1941 file on Japanese oil stocks was closed until 1992; access was repeatedly refused to us even then. In 1997 it was listed as 'missing,' then located in the PRO safe room, and finally released relabelled '1942 Japan' and containing only two innocuous items: Admiralty to Adm. Little, Mar 9, requesting data on Japanese oil stocks in Philippines; and the reply, Mar 13, 1942, endorsed: 'Surely you won't

- both the PM with this?' (PREM.3/252/6b). Quite so.
- 50 Tokyo to Nomura, Nov 2; SIS.24292, translated by US army, Nov 3, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.16190).
- 51 *Pearl Harbor Hearings*, vol. xii, 92 and 97. The US army had intercepted one part of a three-part message, Tokyo to Washington, No. 725, Nov 4, and translated it Nov 4 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.16214). Stimson summarised these messages in his diary on Nov 5, 1941: the Japanese, he noted, were sending an emissary with 'a proposal impossible of acceptance.' Matters seemed to be coming to a head. He discussed it on the sixth with FDR who said he would think up something to say to the emissary which would 'give us further time.'
- 52 Tokyo to Nomura, Nov 5, 1941, intercept SIS.24373, transl. by US army, in *Pearl Harbor Hearings*, vol. xii, 92, 98, 99, 100.
- 53 Churchill, vol. iii, 532. See e.g. the *British MAGIC* intercept No. 094,723, dated Aug 23, 1941 of Oshima (Berlin) to Tokyo, No. 1027, Aug 15 (HWI/25). WSC noted, 'In view of the fact that the Americans themselves gave us the key to the Japanese messages, it seems probable the President knows this already.'
- 54 Pownall diary, Nov 15, 1941.
- 55 Cf. Halifax secret diary, Oct 31, 1941: 'The Americans claim to have sure information that the Japanese are going to start an attack on Yunnan on the 2nd November. I am told that this does not cause the Chinese much anxiety. . .'
- 56 Chiang Kai-shek to WSC: Churchill, vol. iii, 526.
- 57 Cabinet meeting, Nov 5, 1941. WM (41) 109, minute (2), conf. annexe.
- 58 WSC to FDR, Nov 5, 1941 (FDR Libr., microfilm 6, 0403); Churchill, vol. iii, 526f.
- 59 FDR's cabinet of Nov 7, in Wickard diary, Nov 8, 1941. 'Several times during the discussion,' Wickard's note continues, 'the President indicated that he did not expect to declare war against Germany or Japan but intended to carry on undeclared war by shooting on the seas to protect American commerce.'
- 60 Possibly the MAGIC had been brought to WSC by William Stephenson himself; there is a 'Mr Stephenson' recorded on the PM's card at 7:15 P.M. on Nov 4, 1941. Any conversation with FDR is likely to have been on the fifth, because on the next two days WSC was away from the London end of the transatlantic radiotelephone link, touring Midlands cities.
- 61 Because WSC specifically mentioned this aspect to his War Cabinet, WM (41) 11 CONF. annexe (CAB.65/24).
- 62 Wickard diary; Stimson diary, Nov 7, 1941: cabinet feeling, he wrote, 'would have been much stronger if the cabinet had known – and they did not know except in the case of Hull and the President – what the Army is doing with the big bombers and how ready we are to pitch in.'
- 63 Brigadier Gen. Laurence S Kuter, memorandum, Nov 21, 1941 (NA, RG.165, War dept., Chief of Staff, Army 1941-3, 'Philippines project').
- 64 On Nov 5, 1941 Marshall and Stark sent to FDR a memorandum advising against issuing any further warnings to Japan that the United States could not back up with force. *Pearl Harbor Hearings*, vol. xvi, 2222.
- 65 FDR to WSC, Nov 9 1941 (FDR Libr., microfilm 6, 405ff); this reply had been drafted by Hull, Nov 6 (*ibid.*). Cf., with minor differences, Churchill, vol. iii, 527. What Lord Halifax made of this exchange of telegrams, in his secret diary of Nov 10, 1941, was: 'Chiang Kai-shek has made an

- impassioned appeal . . . for all-out help. . . Winston has asked the President what he is going to do about this, and has had rather a cautious reply. The President evidently feels that anything too drastic may push the thing over on the other side, and the Americans . . . don't think the Japanese can do anything in Indo-China for quite a long time, and therefore aren't as excited as we are.'
- 66 Marshall grasped it, recommending *e.g.*, in his memo of Nov 5 (see note 64) 'certain minor concessions which the Japanese could use in saving face.'
- 67 Brooke diary, unpublished, Apr 22, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 68 Churchill, vol. iii, 528f; he wrongly says the speech was at the Guildhall.
- 69 Japanese embassy in London to Washington and Tokyo, No. 735, Nov 11, 1941; translated by US navy Nov 14 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.16562f). See too the Japanese broadcasts of Nov 11 *e.g.*, at 10:30 P.M. to Germany and at 11 P.M. to England: 'Informed circles here think the British prime minister's utterances peculiar and incomprehensible.' BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, No. 848, Nov 13, 1941.
- 70 The codebreakers soon furnished a similar message from the Japanese Legation in Thailand, telling Tokyo that Churchill's speech amounted to a boast that he was ready to fight them. Japanese Legation in Bangkok to Tokyo, Nov 12; translated by US army, Nov 14, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.16501).
- 71 Tokyo to Washington, No. 764, Nov 11, reporting the interview with Craigie; translated by US navy, Nov 12, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.16564-6).
- 72 Nomura to Tokyo, Nov 5, 1941 (*Pearl Harbor Hearings*, vol. xii, 94, 98, 99, 100).
- 73 Letter and telegram of Lieut-Col. S A Greenwell, US Assistant Military Attaché in London, to US War dept., Nov 21: summarising the British Joint Intelligence Committee report of Nov 18, 1941. Greenwell asked Washington not to divulge to the British that he had obtained the JIC report (Hopkins papers, box 193, 'Far East docs., xv').
- 74 Cadogan's unpublished diary, Oct 14, 27, 1942 (Churchill College, ACAD, 1/11).
- 75 Craigie to Eden, Feb 4, 1943; H Ashley Clarke, minute, Sep 21, 1943 (FO.371/35957).
- 76 Sir H Ashley Clarke, 'From the Burma Road Crisis to Pearl Harbor,' May 10, 1943 (FO.371/35957). It makes no reference to MAGIC, but does refer to sensitive items including WSC's 'thin diet' telegram of Nov 26, 1941 (on which Washington blamed their own fateful actions) and the British plan to invade southern Thailand (MATADOR).
- 77 WSC to Eden, Sep 19, 1943 M.588/3 (FO.371/35957). As Richard Lamb pointed out in a letter in *The Times*, Jan 20, 1993, neither J Charmley nor M Gilbert nor Churchill's own memoirs mentions the Craigie episode. Meeting Craigie in September 1943, Lord Halifax found him 'much obsessed with the view that if he had been able to get more into the picture of the Japanese negotiations of 1940 [*sic*] and if we had been willing to lift the Economic Sanctions in return for the Japs getting out of South Indo-China, and reduce their numbers in North Indo-China, they would not have gone for war. It may be so, but I am inclined to think that it would never have been a secure world, with the point that the Japs had reached, without a showdown.' Halifax diary, Sep 3, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A7.8.13).

11: **A Sorry Pass**

- 1 FDR to WSC, Oct 24; Donovan to WSC, Oct 27; Maj W D Whitney to WSC, Nov 4, 1941; Morton to Ismay, Jan 18; Ismay to Morton, Jan 19, 1942 (CAB.120/815); Halifax to Eden, Oct 31, Nov 3, 1941 (FO.954/24, fols. 31–3). For Whitney's work with Harriman's staff earlier in 1941 see PREM.3/217/4.
- 2 Chequers guest register, Nov 7–10, 1941.
- 3 Whitney to W J Donovan, London, Nov 12, 1941 (FDR Libr., PSF, box 141, folder 'Coordinator of Information, 1941').
- 4 Whitney to W J Donovan, London, Nov 12, 1941 (*ibid.*). Two days later at his 5:30 P.M. cabinet WSC would again say that Britain had to avoid becoming embroiled in war with Japan 'without the assurance of American participation.' WM (41) 112, conf. annexe.
- 5 Ismay to WSC, Nov 19; note by WSC, Nov 22 (CAB.120/815); cf. Cave Brown, *Menzies*, 361–5. Around Nov 24, 1941 WSC directed that Morton and Ismay collaborate with Whitney on civil and military affairs respectively.
- 6 Ismay to Whitney, Nov 24; Ismay to Capel-Dunn, Nov 29 (CAB.120/815). In OSS chief Donovan's files are letters from him to Halifax, Nov 17, and 29, and reply, Nov 21, 1941 about Donovan receiving British daily operational reports (USAMHI, Carlisle, Donovan papers, vol. 34).
- 7 Amery diary, Nov 11, 1941.
- 8 JIC report, Nov 18 (see above); for similar speculation on Japan's intentions, see the Pownall diary, Nov 15, 1941.
- 9 Tokyo to Nomura, Nov 5, 1941, intercept SIS.24373, translated by US army, in *Pearl Harbor Hearings*, vol. xii, 92, 98, 99, 100.
- 10 Nomura to Tokyo, Nov 13; translated by US army Nov 17 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.16626).
- 11 Nomura to Tokyo, Nov 15; translated by US army Nov 19 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.16772).
- 12 Tokyo to Nomura, Nov 15; translated by US army Nov 15 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.16576).
- 13 Tokyo to Kurusu, Nov 15; translated by US army Nov 17 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.16617).
- 14 Nomura to Tokyo, Nov 17; translated by US army Nov 22 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.16844).
- 15 *Ibid.*
- 16 Halifax to FO, Nov 17, 1941 (FO.371/27914).
- 17 Nomura to Tokyo, Nov 18; SIS.25806, translated by US army Nov 21, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.16777).
- 18 Nomura to Tokyo, No. 1137, Nov 19; translated by US navy Nov 25, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.16901).
- 19 Togo (Tokyo) to Nomura, Nov 19. In full: 'You may point out that the empire can decide independently as to whether or not there had been an attack without being bound to the interpretation of the other countries involved in the Tripartite Pact Treaty.' This intercept was produced by the Prosecution Section as Document 1532–D(6) at the International Military Tribunal, Far East. At the Tokyo Liaison Conference of Nov 20, 1941, Togo stated that he had that morning directed Nomura once again to tell the American government, 'Although the United States says that Japan will be a tool of Germany, Japan intends to act on her own.'
- 20 Nomura to Tokyo, Nov 18 and 19; translated by US army Nov 22 and 24, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.16823 and 16875).
- 21 *Pearl Harbor Hearings*, vol. xii, 155.
- 22 *Ibid.*, vol. xii, 158.

- 23 Nomura to Tokyo, Nov 20; sis.25716, translated by US army Nov 24, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.16855). At lunch with his secretary of the interior Harold F Ickes on Nov 21, FDR said that Kurusu had still not put his cards on the table. 'I am not sure whether Japan has a gun up its sleeve.' When Ickes argued for a defensive – meaning pre-emptive – war, FDR remarked that Japan was too far away to be attacked. 'It seemed to me,' noted Ickes that day in his diary, 'that the President had not yet reached the state of mind where he is willing to be as aggressive as Japan.'
- 24 Our added emphasis. Tokyo to Nomura, No. 812, Nov 22; translated by US army Nov 22, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.16816).
- 25 Tokyo to Singapore, Nov 20, translated Nov 26; and to Bangkok, Nov 20, translated Nov 22, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.16931 and 16799).
- 26 Tokyo to Washington, No. 2398, Nov 15; translated by US army Nov 25, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.16889 and 16910).
- 27 D C Watt emphasises this (see chap. 6, note 7): 'Whatever he said later . . . Hull wanted to accept it.' In written testimony to the Pearl Harbor hearings, Hull admitted that he had, that weekend, hoped for a temporary accommodation (NA, RG.80, Pearl Harbor Liaison Office files; and *Pearl Harbor Hearings*, vol. ii, 544).
- 28 See Halifax secret diary, Nov 23, 1941, evidently referring to the previous day: 'I still remained completely sceptical about the Japs meaning to do this sort of thing, but I am quite prepared to be proved wrong at any moment.'
- 29 TV Soong, quoted in Morgenthau diary, Nov 26–27, 1941 (FDR Library, Henry R Morgenthau papers).
- 30 *FRUS*, 1941, vol. ii, 755; also in FDR to WSC, Nov 25, 1941 (see below).
- 31 Stimson diary, Nov 25, 1941.
- 32 Chequers register. The evidence that FDR sent to WSC a message, not yet released to public files, late this day, Nov 23, 1941, is strong. In Churchill, vol. iii, 531, the prime minister wrote, '[Hull] did not even mention to these [Japanese emissaries] the *modus vivendi* about which the President had telegraphed to me on the 23rd.'
- 33 WSC Minute M.1061/1 to Eden, Nov 23, 1941 (PREM.3/156/6 and CAB.121/114). The former file does not contain the Washington message on which the PM is commenting. After the war WSC would write merely, using the – here convenient – passive voice, 'We were informed of the Japanese Note [of Nov 20, 1941] and asked for our views.' Churchill, vol. iii, 529.
- 34 Harvey diary, Nov 24 (Eden's private secretary). Eden's diary records only, 'Told [Winston] of my worries about Thailand. Encouraged me to bring proposals for more help to the cabinet' (Avon papers).
- 35 Amery diary, Nov 24, 1941.
- 36 PM's card.
- 37 TV Soong, quoted in Morgenthau diary, Nov 26–27, 1941 (FDR Library, Henry R Morgenthau papers).
- 38 *Pearl Harbor Hearings*, vol. xiv, 1194.
- 39 Lee diary, Nov 25; PM's card, three p.m.
- 40 Hull to FDR, Nov 24 (on which FDR wrote, 'OK. See [my] addition. FDR'). The enclosure, a draft telegram, went to London as FDR to WSC, Nov 24–25, 1941 (FDR Libr., microfilm 6, 0409ff); a US embassy messenger delivered it with a covering letter from Jacob D Beam to John Martin at No. 10 Downing-street on the morning of Nov 25 (PREM.3/156/5). Lord Halifax forwarded a copy to the FO, which received it at 1:20 p.m. (PREM.3/469 and FO.371/27913).

- 41 Mackenzie King diary, Dec 27, 1941.
- 42 Foreign Minister, Tokyo, to Japanese chargé d'affaires, London, etc., circular Tel. No. 2363, Nov 19; British intercept No. 098,127, translated Nov 25, 1941. It is noteworthy that this crucial item is not among the *British MAGICS* released to the PRO in 1993 (HW.1). Our copy comes from *Hearings before the Joint Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack*, Seventy-Ninth Congress of the United States (Washington, 1946), part 35: Investigation [into the GC&CS files] by Lieut. Col. Henry C Clausen, US army, Exhibit 8, 686ff ('The following documents comprise intercepts obtained from British sources. They consist of 41 documents extending over the period' Nov 21–Dec 22, 1941); and see especially *ibid.*, part 36, 4335ff. Before 1993, these forty-one British *MAGICS* were the only ones known for certain to exist.
- 43 At six P.M. on Nov 28, 1941 Cdr. Laurance F Safford, head of the US navy's Communications Security Division, drafted a listening directive to the naval radio monitoring posts on Hawaii and the Philippines; this signal went out at 11:01 P.M., followed at 11:15 P.M. by directives to two other monitoring posts at Cheltenham, Maryland, and on Bainbridge Island, Washington (their station logs confirmed this). The War dept. and the Federal Communications Commission made their own listening arrangements at their San Francisco and Oregon stations respectively. Safford, testimony, Dec 4, 1945 and Jan 25, 1946 (NA, RG.457, file SRH.210, a collection of historical papers about the WINDS message released in 1982).
- 44 Layton, 206–7.
- 45 Affidavit of Col. George W Bicknell, Army G–2 at Hawaii, Feb 25 (Clausen inquiry). Appendix 'A' to affidavit of Major Gen. C A Willoughby, Douglas MacArthur's G–2, May 8, 1945 (*ibid.*). As Willoughby testily pointed out, the casual reference to 'a Col. Wilkinson' in the affidavits of Jack E Russell, president of the trading firm's head office in Hawaii, and Harry Dawson (MI6 chief in Hawaii) was misleading.
- 46 Quoted in Sir Josiah Crosby, Minister in Bangkok, to FO, No. 861, Nov 27, 1941 (CAB.121/114).
- 47 The message concluded, 'American military and Naval Intelligence informed.' Message received by Wilkinson in Manila on Nov 26 (Nov 25, 1941, UK time): *Hearings before the Joint Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack*, Seventy-Ninth Congress of the United States (Washington, 1946), part 35: Clausen investigation, 148: memorandum by JAGD for Stimson, Sep 14, 1945. Wilkinson's journals 1942–45 are now in Churchill College, heavily censored by the British security authorities. Gen. Willoughby testified in 1945 to Clausen that when he took over as G–2 in the Philippines he found that Wilkinson had his own code systems; this world-wide network of British spies was 'still in operation,' and were 'loyal to no one but themselves and the Empire.' London gave Wilkinson a military rank in case of capture; as the Japanese advanced, he attached himself to MacArthur's forces, leaving his wife and children to be interned. MacArthur sent him to Wavell as liaison officer. He made his way back to London. Despite his 'complete lack of military knowledge,' as Willoughby remarked, he enjoyed WSC's absolute support. Promoted to colonel, he attempted to return to MacArthur's headquarters. 'We declined to have him,' huffed Willoughby; the Englishman found him-

self shuffled off to Stephenson's headquarters in New York.

- 48 Clausen obtained a file of Wilkinson's reports to Theo Davies & Co in Honolulu. Affidavit of Col. George W Bicknell, assistant G-2 at Hawaii. This version was supported by the affidavit of Col. Joseph K Evans, at the time US army G-2, Philippine dept. The local MI6 office gave him the same warning as he left Manila for Washington on Nov 27, 1941, adding that the Japanese naval forces were concentrating near the Marshall Islands. Evans' ship was re-routed to avoid that area. And see the testimony of Capt. Wilfred J Holmes, USN, Apr 18, 1945 (Clausen inquiry).
- 49 Halifax secret diary, Nov 26, 1941.
- 50 *Ibid.* That Eden sent the message to Halifax is evident from the sentence in WSC's message to FDR on Nov 26 – 'on which [Eden] has sent some comments' – which has been omitted from the text in Churchill, vol. iii, 530. Cordell Hull told Lord Halifax on Nov 28 that 'contributory causes to his decision [to drop the proposal] were Chinese reaction, suggestions of [HMG] which did not appear capable of inclusion in interim agreement. . .' Halifax to FO, Nov 28, 1941 (PREM.3/156/5). Hull told FDR the reasons were 'opposition of the Chinese government and either the half-hearted support or the actual opposition of the British, the Netherlands, and the Australian governments, and in view of the wide publicity of the opposition. . .' Oral statement, Nov 26, 1941, noted in Hull papers, microfilm 42.
- 51 Eden diary, Nov 25, 1941.
- 52 WSC to FDR, Nov 26. The carbon copies in PREM.3/156/5 and in Churchill's papers, 20/45 (*cf.* Gilbert, vol. vi, 1261) say that it was dispatched at 3:20 A.M.; it was despatched from the FO to Washington as No. 6462, Nov 26, 1941, at 3:20 A.M. (FO.371/27913); the corresponding US embassy Tel. No. 5670 went off at six A.M. to Washington where it was received at (local time) 12:55 A.M. (NA, State dept. file 711.94/2472). An edited text is in Churchill, vol. iii, 530.
- 53 Bevir to Beam, Nov 26, 1941 ('I am so sorry to trouble you at this hour'); original in NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files, '701.US.'
- 54 Sterndale Bennett, minute, Jan 10, 1946 (FO.371/44667). We made a two-year search for Sterndale Bennett's private papers – it is known that he wrote manuscript memoirs – but despite assistance from his descendants, the FO Library, and Lewes Record Office, we drew a blank; perhaps a later researcher will be more fortunate.
- 55 Minute by Nevile Butler, head of the North American dept. of the FO, Jan 6, 1942 (FO.371/27913). Sterndale Bennett of the Far Eastern dept. instructed on Jan 8, 1942 that a memorandum be prepared on the negotiations with the Japanese since early 1941: 'But a good deal of the information is non-publishable,' he wrote, probably referring to the MAGICS, 'and I am arranging for paragraphs in the memorandum based on such material to be clearly marked in some manner.' A first draft of the history was submitted on Feb 18, 1942. It has not been found in the public domain files.
- 56 Morgenthau diary, Nov 26, 1941 (FDR Library, Morgenthau papers, vol. 466, 1020). He also describes the efforts of the Chinese that day to scupper the talks.
- 57 Historians are on shifting sands here, as two versions of Henry Stimson's diary exist for this passage, both doctored: the one in NA, RG.80, Pearl Harbor Liaison

- Office files and the other in Yale University Library (Henry L Stimson papers). Stimson to FDR, 'Japanese Convoy Movement towards Indo-China,' Nov 25. An original copy for Hull is in the Libr. of Congress (Cordell Hull papers, microfilm 21). Stimson diary, Nov 26, 1941: FDR 'jumped into the air, so to speak, and said that he hadn't seen it and that that changed the whole situation because it was evidence of bad faith on the part of the Japanese that while they were negotiating for an entire truce – an entire withdrawal – they should be sending this expedition down there to Indo-China.'
- 58 JIC report, Nov 21; Stimson to FDR, Nov 25, and Watson to Stimson, Nov 27, all bearing as Layton, 202, observes, 'the same fold creases.' FDR's aide, Major-Gen. Edwin M 'Pa' Watson, returned this item to Stimson on Nov 27, saying he had found it 'in the inside pocket of a very distinguished gentleman,' no doubt FDR himself. Stimson buried it in his most secret file, as it contradicted his later version to the Pearl Harbor inquiry (NA, RG.107, Formerly Top Secret Correspondence of Secretary of War Stimson Safe File, 'Philippines'). As for the memorandum from Stimson to FDR of Nov 25, 1941, there is a carbon copy 'for Secretary of State' in Hull's papers, microfilm 21 (Library of Congress).
- 59 Conference in the Office of the Chief of Staff [Marshall] 10:40 A.M., Nov 29, 1941 (NA, RG.165, file WDCSA/381).
- 60 State dept., Memorandum for the President, Nov 26, 1941, with a typed signature and the apparent endorsement: 'Delivered orally and agreed to by the President – HULL.' This stated that in view of the widely publicised Chinese, British, and other opposition 'through utter lack of an understanding of the vast importance . . . of the *modus vivendi*' Hull desired 'very earnestly' to recommend handing the Japanese emissaries the Ten Points instead (Hull papers, microfilm 42).
- 61 Halifax telegrams to FO, Nov 26, rec'd 10:30 P.M.; and Nov 26, 11:32 P.M., rec'd 6:40 A.M. next day (FO.371/27913).
- 62 H Montgomery Hyde, who worked for Sir William Stephenson at the Rockefeller Center in New York, reported in *Room 3603* (London, 1962), 293, that FDR sent his son Col. James Roosevelt round to Stephenson to hand him this message for WSC (and see our chap. 2, note 23). Stephenson confirmed it to author John Costello in 1982.
- 63 Nomura to Tokyo, No. 1189, Nov 26; translated by US army Nov 28 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.17036). We do not know whether WSC ever saw an intercept of this, but since FO officials shortly criticised the State dept. for offering such terms 'unsweetened' they appear to have learned the details. Minute by J O Ashley Clarke, Nov 27, 1941 (FO.371/27913).
- 64 Halifax secret diary, Nov 27, 1941.
- 65 Hornbeck to Hull, Nov 27, 1941; from Kimmel's papers, quoted by Layton, 200. It is not in Hornbeck's papers at the Hoover Library.
- 66 Sir William Hayter to Ashley Clarke, Sep 18, 1943 (FO.371/35957).
- 67 Halifax secret diary, Nov 29, 1941 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.19); cf. Hull desk diary, Nov 29, 9:30 A.M. (Hull papers).
- 68 Lee diary, Nov 27, 1941, quoting Desmond Morton.
- 69 Sarah to Clementine Churchill, Apr 9, 1948 (copy in our possession).
- 70 Halifax to FO, Nov 26, 10:09 P.M., rec'd 6:40 A.M. next day (FO.371/27913).
- 71 COS (41) 38th meeting (O), Nov 28,

- 1941 (CAB.121/114).
- 72 Minute by Sterndale Bennett on the above, Nov 27, 1941 (*ibid.*).
- 73 Minute by J O Ashley Clarke, Nov 27, on Tel. Halifax to FO, Nov 26, 10:09 P.M. (FO.371/27913).
- 74 Halifax to FO, Nov 27, 12:38 P.M., rec'd 7:25 P.M. (FO.371/27913).
- 75 Halifax to FO, Nov 28, 12:42 P.M., rec'd 7:45 P.M. (*ibid.*).
- 76 Minute by Ashley Clarke, Dec 1, 1941 (*ibid.*).
- 77 Adm. Thomas B Hart, US naval commander in the Philippines (as C-in-C, Asiatic Fleet), had written in his diary on Nov 26, 1941: 'Today, I learn from Washington – straight from the horse's mouth – that the tension between Japs and ourselves is very far from having eased up. . . The storm pretty much *must* break, somewhere. It's really a war warning.' On Nov 27, he continued: 'The plot grows thicker and thicker – today our communications system brought Sayre *his* war warning right straight from the very biggest horse's mouth. It was very specific and . . . made him shy like a scared filly. . . Well, *it looks like rain*' (Hart papers).
- 78 OpNav signal to C-in-Cs of Asiatic and Pacific Fleets, repeated to SpeNavO (Adm. Ghormley) in London, 1941, 2:42 P.M. (NA, RG.80, Pearl Harbor Liaison Office files, box 45); Layton, *op. cit.*, 524. The Hart diary, Nov 29 (equivalent to Nov 28, US time) 1941, confirms: 'We got our "war warning" last night. . . ' (Hart papers).
- 79 Marshall to Short, Nov 27, 1941, 5:12 P.M. (Hull papers, microfilm 21). Stimson's diary for that afternoon, Nov 27, 1941, states that Marshall was in the south on manoeuvres; Stimson phoned FDR, who approved his proposal that they send to MacArthur 'the final alert,' which the committee then drafted 'very carefully.' – For the message to MacArthur see *Pearl Harbor Hearings*, vol. iv, 1407. A copy exists in Marshall's files (NA, RG.165, Army Operations/OPD Executive 4, envelope 14).
- 80 Nomura to Tokyo, No. 1206, Nov 27; translated by US army Nov 29, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.17079f). Hull's diary indicates that FDR called him to the White House at 2:25 P.M. (Hull papers).
- 81 Halifax to FO, Nov 28, 12:05 A.M., rec'd 7:14 A.M. (FO.371/27913).
- 82 Capt. CA Lockwood, of the office of US Special Naval Observer, to Pound, Nov 28, 1941, quoting war warning from CNO to C-in-C, Asiatic and Pacific for action and to C-in-C, Atlantic for information (CAB.121/114).
- 83 Quoted in Sir J Crosby, Bangkok, to FO, No. 861, Nov 27, 1941 (*ibid.*).
- 84 COS meeting (41) 38th (O), Nov 28, 1941 (*ibid.*).
- 85 Admiralty to C-in-C, China, SO Force 'G,' C-in-C, East Indies, Nov 29, 1941, 00:06 A.M. (*ibid.*).
- 86 *Ibid.*
- 87 War office to C-in-C, Far East, Nov 29, 1941, 11 P.M. (*ibid.*).
- 88 FO to Halifax, Nov 28, 1941, 9:50 P.M. (FO.371/27913).
- 89 Halifax to FO, No. 5471, Nov 28 (PREM.3/156/5); quoted in Dominions office to Dominions prime ministers, Tel. 405, Nov 29, 1941, 10 P.M. (CAB.121/114).
- 90 COS (41) 402nd mtg., Nov 29, 1941 (*ibid.*).
- 91 Draft telegram, in report COS (41) 265(O), 'Situation in Siam,' Nov 29, 1941 (*ibid.*).
- 92 Ismay to WSC, Nov 29, 1941 (*ibid.*).
- 93 See his remarks at Staff conference, Dec 1, 1941, 12:15 P.M. (*ibid.*).

- 94 FO to Washington, No. 6584, Nov 29, 1941, 10:05 P.M. (*ibid.*).
- 95 The FO notified Bangkok, Nov 30, 1941, 1:35 A.M., in a summary repeated to COIS Singapore for C-in-C, Far East, that a Japanese attack against Thailand was possible (FO.371/27913).
- 96 Halifax to FO, No. 5474, Nov 29, 1941, 2:11 P.M., received 9:40 P.M. (CAB.121/114).
- 97 Eden diary, Nov 29, 1941.
- 98 Halifax to FO, No. 5491, Nov 29, 1941, 9:55 P.M., received Nov 30, 5:15 A.M. (CAB.121/114).
- 99 Minute by Cadogan, Dec 1, 1941 (FO.371/27913).
- 100 Halifax to FO, No. 5520, Dec 2, 00:05 A.M. (FO.371/27914; CAB.121/114).
- 101 Halifax to FO, No. 5539, Dec 2, 1941, 7:36 P.M. (CAB.121/114).
- 102 *Ibid.*; No. 5540, 11:47 P.M., rec'd 8:15 A.M. Dec 3 (FO.371/27914). A lengthy hand-written comment, no doubt expressing little affection for the USA, has been blanked out on the PRO copy of this telegram. As H Ashley Clarke, head of the FE dept. remarked in his Feb 1943 survey, 'From the Burma Road Crisis to Pearl Harbor,' para. 50: 'This latter [the general statement of Nov 26] was not communicated to HM ambassador until six days after it was given to the Japanese.' Apart from this the *only* documents on their negotiations with the Japanese which the US Govt. communicated textually to the British were the Japanese proposal of Aug 6 and the Kurusu compromise of Nov 20, 1941 (FO.371/35957).
- 12: **Day of Perfidy**
- 1 Cf. Lee diary, Nov 28, 1941, ten A.M.: Ghormley, in conference with the naval attachés, reads out the warning, in the American embassy in London. It is quoted by Churchill, vol. iii, 532.
- 2 Tokyo to Washington, circular telegram No. 2353, Nov 19; translated by US navy Nov 28, JD.1, No. 6875 (NA, RG.457, file SRH.118; and SRDJ.17025; and *Pearl Harbor Hearings*, vol. xii, 154). It was also intercepted by the Dutch at Bandoeng, Java; on Dec 3 at 10:30 A.M. Col. Thorpe, the senior US army intelligence officer on Java, forwarded the 'code intercept' to Washington. On Dec 4, 1941 at 9:19 A.M. the State dept. received a similar intercept from Mr Foote, their consul general in Bandoeng. The Dutch East Indies War dept. had provided it to him. Foote however commented, 'I attach little or no importance to it and view it with suspicion. Such have been common since 1936' (NA, RG.457, file SRH.118).
- 3 The version which Hart received had some variations. It read: 'If diplomatic relations are on verge of being severed following words repeated five [*sic*] times at beginning and end of ordinary Tokyo news broadcasts [in Morse code] will have significance as follows: - *Higashi* if the target is USA; *Kita* if the target is British empire including occupation of Thailand or invasion of Malaya and Dutch East Indies. Hart to OpNav, Nov 28, 2:30 P.M. (NA, RG.457, file SRH.210, 44). His signal added, 'British and ComSixteen [US Naval District 16, Philippines] monitoring above broadcasts.'
- 4 Tokyo to Washington, No. 843, Nov 27: JD.1, No. 6899 (NA, RG.457, SIS.25466). There was also a circular telegram relating to code phrases in Morse broadcasts: Tokyo to Washington, No. 2354, Nov 19, JD.1, No. 6850, translated by US navy Nov 26, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRH.118).

- 5 Tokyo to Washington, No. 844, Nov 28; translated by US army Nov 28, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.17048).
- 6 Takushiro Hattori, *Dai-toa senso zenshi* (A Complete History of the Greater East Asia War), vol. i (Tokyo, 1953), 229; Nobutake Ike (ed.), *Japan's Decision for War. Records of the 1941 Policy Conferences* (Stanford, 1967), 260ff; and testimony of Tojo in *International Military Tribunal in the Far East*, 36,077ff.
- 7 Chequers register, Nov 29, 1941.
- 8 Halifax to FO, Nov 29, 1941; Churchill, vol. iii, 532.
- 9 Chiefs of staff meeting, Nov 29, 1941 (CAB.79/16).
- 10 Harvey diary, Nov 29.
- 11 FO to Halifax, Nov 29, 1941, 10:05 P.M.; WM (41) 122, minute 3, conf. annexe (PREM.3/156/5).
- 12 Dominions Office to Dominions, Nov 30, 1941, 2:30 A.M. (PREM.3/156/5). The replies here quoted are in the same file; they are also summarised in WM (41) 122, minute 3, conf. annexe (PREM.3/156/5).
- 13 As the chiefs of staff's own history observed, 'It is not clear whether this periphrasis meant that we should actually go to war!' (CAB.44/54, fol. 128).
- 14 Cf. Mackenzie-Cecil King diary, Nov 30, Dec 1, 1941.
- 15 *Ibid.*, Dec 1, 1941, ten P.M.
- 16 Eden diary, Nov 30, 1941.
- 17 WSC to FDR, T.902, Nov 30, 1941, three P.M. (FO.371/27913). T L Rowan made a hand-written annotation on the file copy: 'On PM's instruction I read this over to Mr Eden who thought it excellent. No. 10 informed and asked to despatch 2:00 P.M. TLR 30.xi.41' (PREM.3/256/6). It went off as No. 5770 from the US embassy in London at four P.M. to Washington, received there at 1:18 P.M. (FDR Libr., microfilm 6, 38f). The FO copied it on Nov 30, 4:30 P.M. to Halifax; on Dec 1 to Curtin, Australia, and the other Dominion leaders.
- 18 Before going away to Warm Springs, Georgia, FDR had independently weighed the idea of sending a warning to Hirohito. Stimson had chided him, 'One does not send warnings to an Emperor,' and the idea was dropped. Stimson diary, Nov 28, 1941.
- 19 Amery diary, Nov 30, 1941.
- 20 Report by Major B A Tormey, US military observer, Singapore, to US War dept., Dec 2, 1941 (Hopkins papers, box 193).
- 21 FO to Washington, No. 6600, Nov 30, 1941, 9:20 P.M. (CAB.121/114).
- 22 Halifax No. 5494 to FO, Nov 30, 5:40 P.M., received Dec 1, 1:55 A.M.; Eden to Halifax, No. 6610, Dec 1, 1941 (CAB.121/114).
- 23 WSC to Eden, Dec 3, 1941 (PREM.3/156/6).
- 24 Chiefs of staff 39th meeting, conf. annexe, Dec 1, 1941 (CAB.121/114); PM's card. The minutes termed it a 'staff conference,' an expression not previously used to describe an operations meeting of the chiefs of staff.
- 25 Ed Murrow was shocked by the anti-British feeling he found in the USA even after Pearl Harbor, particularly the wealthier middle classes who disliked the dislocation to their lives. Halifax diary, Mar 19, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.10).
- 26 Staff conference, Dec 1, 1941, 12:15 P.M. (CAB.121/114).
- 27 Admiralty to S O Force G, Dec 1, 1941, 18:43A (CAB.121/114).
- 28 WM (41) 122, minute 3, War Cabinet, Dec 1, six P.M.; Cadogan diary, Dec 1, 1941. On the document's publication see the diaries of Bruce Lockhart and Oliver Harvey.

- 29 Halifax diary, Nov 30, 1941 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.9).
- 30 PM's card.
- 31 Admiralty to COIS Singapore, Summary FE.49, Dec 1. For Chiang Kai-shek's version of events, see A Clark Kerr (Chungking) to FO, Dec 1, 1941 (CAB.121/114).
- 32 Signal from OpNav to C-in-C, Asiatic Fleet (Adm. Hart), Dec 2, 1941, 11:56 P.M. (NA, RG.80, Pearl Harbor Liaison Office files, box 45). This macabre order to form a 'defensive information patrol' specified: 'Minimum requirements to establish identity as US men-of-war are command by a naval officer and to mount a small gun.' See Rear-Adm. Kemp Tolley, 'Pearl Harbor Revisited,' in *Shipmate*, the journal of the US Naval Academy Alumni Association, vol. 44, No. 10, Dec 1981. Tolley was the officer selected to command one such schooner, *Lanikai*.
- 33 Halifax to FO, No. 5519, 1941, 11:29 P.M.; received in London Dec 2, 7:20 A.M. (PREM.3/156/6; and see CAB.121/114). Halifax diary, Dec 1, 1941, reports that FDR had phoned him to come round; Hopkins was also present (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.9). Afterwards, on Dec 2, the ambassador noted in his other, secret, diary: 'I feel pretty clear that if we get into war with Japan we can count on the United States.' (*Ibid.*, file A.7.8.19).
- 34 Annexe II to COS (41) 41st meeting (O), Dec 2, 1941 (CAB.121/114). Cadogan noted earlier this day, '11:30 talk with A [Eden] about Far East,' and after the 5:30 P.M. chiefs of staff meeting, '6:30 to No. 10 to discuss with PM Russian visit & Far East. (Quite a good message from Pres).'
- 35 Cecil King diary, Dec 2, 1941.
- 36 One of the journalists reported this to Casey. Halifax to FO, Dec 1, 11:29 P.M.; received in London 7:10 A.M. Dec 2, 1941 (CAB.121/114).
- 37 Tokyo circular, No. 926, Nov 30; SIS.25554f, translated by US army Dec 1, 1941 (NA, RG.457); Layton, *op. cit.*, 529.
- 38 Tokyo to Berlin, No. 986, Nov 30; SIS.25554ff, translated by US army Dec 1 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.17114ff), and (paras. 2 and 3 only, which did not contain the phrase 'insulting clause') by GC&CS on Dec 7, 1941 as No. 098,633 (HW.1/310).
- 39 Tokyo to Washington, Dec 1; translated by US army Dec 1, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.17159).
- 40 Adm. Sir Charles Little, Washington to Pound, 'most secret,' Dec 2, 1941 (ADM.205/9).
- 41 C to Wilkinson, Dec 2; Wilkinson to Theo H Davies & Co, Honolulu, Dec 3, 1941; cited in US Congress Pearl Harbor Investigation, part 36, Clausen investigation, 4335f. After the war Lieut. Col. H C Clausen of the US Judge-Advocate General's dept. investigated this in London; C responded to his man in the USA on Aug 31, 1945, that the data was 'based on BJ [intercepts]. Wilkinson was unaware of source and passed information to Honolulu as he appreciated that I possessed no direct communication.' *Ibid.*, 4337f; cf. Cave Brown, *Menzies*, 378ff (evidently not appreciating that the 'BJs' were essentially British decrypts of *Japanese* messages).
- 42 John E Russell to Lieut. Col. H C Clausen, Apr 10, 1945 (Exhibit to Clausen inquiry).
- 43 Testimony of Robert L Shivers, FBI chief at Honolulu, Apr 10, 1945 (Clausen inquiry). On Dec 5, 1941 he cabled to J Edgar Hoover: 'Japanese consul-general Honolulu is burning and destroying all important papers. SHIVERS.'
- 44 No. 2387 circular, Togo to Oshima and ambassador in Rome, Nov 24, translated

Dec 1, 1941 (HW.1/310). “The Japanese – American negotiations [? are ? seem to be] [approaching their final stage]. In the event of the breakdown of the negotiations we shall be face to face with a rupture of relations with Britain and America, and the necessity is likely to arise for the sudden tightening up of the relations which had hitherto prevailed for co-operation between Japan, Germany, and Italy.’

- 45 Tokyo to Berlin, No. 985, Nov 30. The British translation, ‘BJ’ No. 098,452, is dated Dec 2 and initialled ‘WSC, 2.xii’ (HW.1/288(*ibid.*)). But the admiralty had an advance copy of this decode already by Dec 1 and immediately tipped off Washington by signal: ‘Tokyo to Berlin No. 985 of immediate interest.’

The different American text, also translated on Dec 1, has greater colour and urgency: Oshima was to say ‘that there is extreme danger that war may suddenly break out between the Anglo-Saxon nations and Japan through some clash of arms and add that the time of the breaking out of this war may come quicker than anyone dreams.’ SIS.25552f, translated by US army Dec 1, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.17112; Nuremberg document 3598–PS, in *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, vol. vi, 308ff).

No doubt for security reasons Churchill, vol. iii, 533, quotes verbatim the *American* translation of this, but wrongly suggests that it was ‘already before’ Hull and FDR on Nov 30. ‘I received the decode of the telegrams [*sic*] on December 2,’ he correctly added. The Sep 1944 ‘Streamlined Index of Translations. . .’ by Lieut. Cdr. Joseph J Rochefort of Op-20–G confirms that the British admiralty sent it to Washington at ‘011530,’ *i.e.*, on Dec 1 at 3:30 P.M. GMT. Cf. Layton, *op. cit.*, 529, and ND: 3598–PS, in *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*,

vol. vi, 308ff.

- 46 Bangkok to Tokyo No. 872, Nov 29, referred to in Denniston to Hastings, Dec 2, and war office to C-in-C, Far East and C-in-C, India, Dec 2 (CAB.121/114). There is a hint at the withholding of these intercepts implicit in Denniston to Taylor, Dec 12: ‘The Foreign Office occasionally wish that the Ambassador should see certain “BJs,” and to avoid the danger and delay of telegraphing them across, we are trying to establish a routine by which we ask Hastings to get copies from our friends of such telegrams as the Foreign Office indicate and he passes them to the Ambassador. This has as yet only occurred once. . .’ On Dec 17, 1941 this system was devised: C or his secretary Kathleen Pettigrew would phone Mr E E Smith at GC&CS to notify the British six-digit serial number of the telegram the FO wished to be shown to Ld Halifax. ‘You will send to Gen. Hill (Codes) the original Japanese number of the telegram and ask him to telegraph this number to Hastings’ (HW.14/45).
- 47 C-in-C, Japanese Combined Fleet, to Combined Fleet, Dec 2, 5:30 P.M. (Tokyo time); intercepted by American Signals Intelligence on Dec 2 at nine P.M. but decrypted only in 1945 (NA, RG.457, file SRN.115376). For evidence that the British and Dutch had made progress on JN.25 see Hinsley, vol. ii, 27f. Mt Niitaka (13,113 ft, also known as Mt Morrison) is now Yü Shan in Taiwan.
- 48 They passed this information to the British naval mission in Moscow. Admiralty to C-in-C, Eastern Fleet and COIS Singapore, Jan 3, 1942 (HW.14/26).
- 49 Signal in JN.25, dated Dec 4, 1941; not translated by the US navy until Dec 1945 (NA, RG.457, file SRN.129616).
- 50 Cecil King diary, Dec 17, 1941: ‘Hugh

- [Cudlipp]'s most sensational item was that we had given the Americans five days' warning on Pearl Harbor, but he did not know whether the message was ignored in Washington or further along the line.' Cudlipp, formerly editor of the *Sunday Pictorial*, was chairman of Daily Mirror Newspapers Ltd. On occasion, Fleetstreet newspapers did obtain access to, and even publish, the Intelligence gained by codebreaking. After *The Daily Telegraph* on Oct 14, 1940 reported that local police in Stuttgart had placed an urgent order for hundreds of steel helmets after air raids, GC&CS complained, 'This information would appear to have been taken directly from our MSGP.14 [summary of German police cypher signals] of Sep 12, 1940' (HW.16/6).
- 51 Tokyo to London, Dec 1, translated by GC&CS as No. 098,509 on Dec 3 (HW.1/290). The American translation, dated Dec 5, has: 'Please discontinue the use of your code machine and dispose of it immediately.' SIS.25787 (NA, RG.457). *MBPH*, vol. iv, page A321. On Dec 3, 1941 Adm. 'Betty' Stark made this signal to admirals Hart, Kimmel, and the naval commanders in the Philippines and Hawaii: 'Categoric and urgent instructions were sent yesterday to Japanese diplomatic and consul posts at Hongkong, Singapore, Batavia, Manila, Washington, and London to destroy most of their codes and cyphers at once and to burn all other important confidential and secret documents' (MIS, 'Study of Pearl Harbor Hearings,' Jan 24, 1947. NA, RG.457, file SRH.128, 2131). The preceding 'BJ,' No. 098,509, was sent to the director of Naval Intelligence on Dec 3 and is not in open PRO files. On Dec 6, 1941 Hawaii notified Stark, 'Believe local Consul has destroyed codes' (*ibid.*, 839ff). And Lord Halifax wrote in his secret diary, Dec 4, 1941: 'Everything looks exactly like the Japanese balloon going up in the course of a day or two – cyphers being burnt, secret messages in that sense, etc.'
- 52 Note on 'BJ' No. 098,509 (HW.1/290).
- 53 WSC to Eden, M.1079/1, Dec 2, 1941 (PREM.3/156/6, PREM.3/395/3; CAB.121/114; and Beaverbrook papers, D.89).
- 54 Harvey diary, Dec 2, 1941.
- 55 Pownall diary, Dec 9, 13, 1941; PM's card.
- 56 WSC to Evatt, Nov 27, 1941 (ADM.205/10). WSC originally drafted '900 lives,' but Pound corrected the error.
- 57 Cunningham to Pound, Alexandria, Dec 4, 1941 (British Library, Add. MS 52561).
- 58 Harvey diary, Dec 3, 1941.
- 59 WSC to Ismay for COS committee, D.307/1, Dec 2, 1941 (PREM.3/395/3).
- 60 Chiefs of staff meeting, Dec 3, 1941 (CAB.79/16).
- 61 Brooke diary, Dec 3, 1941.
- 62 Cabinet, Dec 3, 12:30 P.M. (CAB.65/24); cf. Hollis, quoted by Bruce Lockhart diary, Dec 4, 1941.
- 63 PM's card.
- 64 Defence committee (Operations) 71st meeting, Dec 3, 1941 (CAB.121/114; PREM.3/156/6; and Beaverbrook papers, D.89).
- 65 Amery diary, Dec 3, 1941.
- 66 Eden diary, Dec 3, 1941.
- 67 *Ibid.*, Dec 4, 1941.
- 68 Amery diary, Dec 4, 1941.
- 69 Brooke unpublished diary, Dec 4, 1941 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5).
- 70 Eden diary, Dec 4, 1941.
- 71 C to WSC, C/8244, Dec 4; Oshima (Berlin) to Tokyo, No. 1393, Nov 29; translated by Bletchley Park as intercept No. 098,541 on Dec 4, and initialled 'WSC,

- 4.xii' (HW.1/297). GC&CS furnished a copy to the Clausen inquiry in 1945 (*op. cit.*, 675f). The Americans' own MAGIC intercept is in NA, RG.457, files SRDJ.17117ff and SRH.118.
- 72** Togo (Tokyo) to Japanese ambassador, Hanoi, etc., No. 2444 circular, Dec 1. Translated by Bletchley Park on Dec 4, and sent as an advance telex as 'BJ/88' by ACAS(I) [Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Intelligence, Air Vice Marshal F F Inglis], and shown to WSC, Dec 4; the telex, which is timed Dec 4, 1941, 4:52 P.M., ends, 'Typed copy of this message will leave B.P. 0730/5th December for Foreign Office, Admiralty, War Office and Air Ministry' (HW.1/298). This and other files indicate that WSC often received advance texts of intercepts by telex a day previously.
- 73** Tokyo to Nomura (Washington), No. 867, Dec 2; sis.25640, translated by US army and US navy, Dec 3 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.17184). British intercept No. 098,540 (also 'BJ/87'), translated on Dec 4, and initialled 'WSC, 4.xii' (HW.1/297). The British translators noted that the Japanese word used for 'discard,' *haiki*, could mean 'cease to use,' 'abolish,' or 'discard'; it was not the normal word for 'destroy' (HWI/297). Cf. the similar Tokyo to Washington circular No. 2436, Dec 1, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.17106).
- 74** ACAS(I), advance telex with 'BJ/88': Togo (Tokyo) to Japanese ambassador, Rome, No. 2447 circular, Dec 2, translated on Dec 4, and shown to WSC, Dec 4, 1941 (HW.1/298).
- 75** Capt. Laurence F Safford, testimony, Jan 25, 1946 (NA, RG.457, file SRG.210). Much has been written about the 'WINDS-EXECUTE' message. Safford also testified before the Pearl Harbor Investigating Committee on Dec 4, 1945 and Jan 25, 1946 to the effect that on Dec 4, 1941, the naval radio monitoring station at Cheltenham, Maryland, heard the message broadcast on Dec 4 at 1:30 P.M. GMT (*i.e.*, 8:30 A.M. local time); his chief at the US navy dept. had telephoned the gist to the War dept., to every person on the MAGIC distribution list, and to John R Beardall, FDR's naval aide. Several secret signals went out between 5:54 P.M. and 8:19 P.M. local time in direct consequence; these survived, and confirm the date beyond doubt, although every other trace of the 'winds-execute' message would vanish from American files (NA, RG.457, file SRH.210; Army Pearl Harbor Board, report of Oct 20, 1944; and review of transcripts by Major-Gen. Myron C Cramer, Judge Advocate General, in Yale University Libr., Henry L Stimson papers). One of the points Col. Clausen was directed to investigate was what Mr Justice Roberts and his Commission had done with the original of the Navy dept. message and translation. Clausen surfaced one telegram from Gen. Miles to the Army G-2 at Honolulu, No. 519, dated Dec 5: 'Contact Commander Rochefort [the naval cryptanalyst at Honolulu] immediately thru Commander Fourteen Naval District regarding broadcasts from Tokyo reference weather.' Not surprisingly, Hawaii did not know what to make of this text (Clausen inquiry exhibits).
- 76** FO to Sir J Crosby, Bangkok, No. 574, Dec 5, 3:30 A.M.; a pencil endorsement suggests it was drafted Dec 4, 1941, 7:30 P.M. (CAB.121/114).
- 77** PM's card.
- 78** Brooke diary, unpublished, Dec 4 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5); Eden diary, Dec 4, 1941. Eden too wrote: 'Eventually, after a long pause he closed the meeting without tackling the rest of the agenda.'

- 79 Japanese consul-general, Capetown, to Togo (Tokyo), No. 81, Nov 29. Intercept 098529, translated on Dec 4, 1941, and initialled 'WSC, 4.xii' (HW.1/296).
- 80 ACAS(I), advance telex with 'BJ/89': Togo (Tokyo) to Japanese consul in Mombasa, etc., No. 2446 circular, Dec 2, translated on Dec 4, and shown to WSC, Dec 4 (HW.1/298). The telex from ACAS(I)'s office, which is timed Dec 4, 11:50 P.M., ends, 'Typed copy of this message will leave B.P. 5th December, 1315 for FO, Admiralty, War Office, and Air Ministry.'
- 81 PM's card; Martin diary, Dec 5, 1941; Chequers register.
- 82 WSC to Eden, Dec 5, 1941: Churchill, vol. iii, 475.
- 83 Maisky to Stalin, in Russian, Dec 5, (*Sov.-angliiskiy*, i, 181ff); PM's card.
- 84 Morgenthau diary, Dec 3, 1941 (FDR Library, Morgenthau papers, vol. 467).
- 85 FO to Halifax, No. 6672, Dec 3, 1941 (CAB.121/114).
- 86 Halifax diary, Dec 3, 1941 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.9); and Halifax to FO, Dec 4, 1941, 2:45 A.M., received 11 A.M. (FO.371/27914 and CAB.121/114).
- 87 Chiefs of Staff to C-in-C, Far East, No. FE 50, Dec 5, 03:35 A.M. (a handwritten note on the draft reads 'agreed: PM, FS, 1SL, CAS, VCIGS'); phoned for immediate despatch 01:50, Dec 5, 1941 (CAB.121/114).
- 88 US Naval Attaché, Capt. John M Creighton, to Adm. Hart, Dec 6, 1941, 3:26 P.M. GMT: Joint Committee Transcript, 13,520f (Hull papers, microfilm 42); here it is paraphrased as, 'We have now received assurance of American armed support in cases as follows: (a) [if] we are obliged to execute our plans forestall Japs landing Isthmus of Kra or take action in reply to Nips invasion any other part of Siam; (b) if Dutch Indies are attacked and we go to their defence; (c) if Japs attack us the British. Therefore without reference to London put plan into action if, first, you have good info. Jap expedition advancing with the apparent intention of landing in Kra; second, if the Nips violate any part of Thailand. If N.E.I. are attacked put into operation plans agreed upon between British and Dutch.'
- 89 Hart wrote in his private diary, Dec 7, 1941: 'What is worse is that my Government has assured the British of armed support in any one of four contingencies . . . and not a word to me about it.' Normally, he continued, he would have resigned on the spot (US navy, Classified Operational Archives, Washington DC, Adm. Thomas B Hart papers).
- 90 *Pearl Harbor Hearings*, vol. x, 4802.
- 91 Halifax diary, Dec 4, 1941 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.9). 'Anyhow,' he entered in the other, secret, diary, that day, 'if [war] does come it looks pretty clear now that the United States, the Dutch, and ourselves shall all be immediately together' (*ibid.*, A.7.8.19).
- 92 Halifax to FO, No. 5603, Dec 5, 1941, rec'd 3:04 P.M. (CAB.121/114).
- 93 Halifax to FO, Dec 4, 1941, received Dec 5, 3:04 P.M. (FO.371/27914).
- 94 Cadogan diary, Dec 6, 1941. WSC informed the Dominions of FDR's promise of armed support. 'Please treat President's attitude with utmost secrecy,' he telegraphed to Curtin on Dec 5, 1941.
- 95 Eden diary, Dec 6, 1941.
- 96 Berlin (Oshima) to Tokyo, No. 1407, Dec 3; translated by US navy Dec 6, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.17323).
- 97 Tokyo to Washington, No. 896, Dec 5; translated by US navy Dec 6 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.17331).

- 98 Tokyo to Washington, No. 901, Dec 6; sis. 25838, translated by US army Dec 6 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.17330).
- 99 Tokyo to Washington, No. 904, Dec 6; sis. 25844, translated by US army Dec 6 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.17350).
- 100 Chequers register; and 'Mr Winant's visitors to Chequers,' extracts from the Chequers Visitors Book (FDR Libr., Winant papers, box 189, 'Chequers').
- 101 Postal censorship report on Home Opinion, No. 21, Dec 1 (PREM.4/100/1). Directing Bridges to circulate it on Dec 6, 1941 under MOST SECRET cover to the ministries, WSC remarked only on references to public feeling about the manpower position and hostility to the labour-conscription of women.
- 102 Togo (Tokyo) to London, No. 2409 circular, Nov 27, intercept No. 098,602, translated on Dec 6, 1941, and initialled 'WSC, 6.xii' (HW.1/303); printed in Clausen, 678. For the American version of No. 2409 ('are not in accordance with expectation') see Pearl Harbor Committee exhibit No. 1, 186–8.
- 103 Togo (Tokyo) to consul-general in Singapore etc., No. 2461 circular, Dec 3, intercept No. 098,602, translated on Dec 6, and initialled 'WSC, 6.xii' (HW.1/303). 'Dept. Note: These [code words] are presumably those given in our No. 098,127' – which was Tokyo to London, No. 2363 circular, Nov 19, translated Nov 25, 1941; printed in Clausen, 669.
- 104 Togo (Tokyo) to London, No. 2421 circular, Nov 29, intercept No. 098,603, translated on Dec 6, 1941, and initialled 'WSC, 6.xii' (HW.1/303); printed in Clausen, 679.
- 105 Togo (Tokyo) to London, No. 2445 circular, Dec 2, intercept No. 098,603, 'BJ/90', translated on Dec 6, 1941, and initialled 'WSC, 6.xii' (HW.1/303).
- 106 Japanese chargé in London to Togo (Tokyo), No. 790 circular, Dec 2, intercept 098,603, 'BJ/90', translated Dec 6, 1941, and initialled 'WSC, 6.xii' (HW.1/303).
- 107 C-in-C, China to war office, MOST IMMEDIATE, Dec 6, 1941, 07:45 GMT, rec'd 1:12 P.M. (CAB.121/114). The RAAF Hudson making the sighting was piloted by Flight-Lieut. J C Ramshaw.
- 108 Col. Brink (Singapore) to the US War dept., Dec 5, 5:13 P.M.; received there on Dec 6, 4:29 P.M. Washington time (Hopkins papers, box 193, 'Far East docs., xv'). The War Diary of Adm. Sir Geoffrey Layton, C-in-C, Eastern Fleet, Singapore, reported on Dec 6, 1941: '14.40. Reports were received at Singapore from reconnaissance aircraft of three separate forces of Japanese warships and auxiliaries off the South coast of Indo-China.' He transmitted these sightings immediately to the admiralty, to Hart, C-in-C, Netherlands naval forces and others. At 2:31 P.M. GMT he signalled to the admiralty that air reconnaissance had lost sight of these forces (ADM.199/1185).
- 109 Hart diary, Dec 7, 1941 (Hart papers).
- 110 Cadogan diary, Dec 6, 1941.
- 111 Winant, draft typescript memoirs, chapter 13, 'Pearl Harbor' (NA, RG.54, Winant papers, box 1).
- 112 Winant's telegram reached the State dept. at 10:40 A.M. on Dec 6, 1941; a second telegram from him about the convoys came at 3:05 P.M.
- 113 Edwards diary, Dec 6, 1941.
- 114 Cadogan diary, Dec 6, 1941.
- 115 COS meeting, (41) 44th meeting, Dec 6, 3:45 P.M.; with Cadogan present (CAB.121/114). Chiefs of staff to WSC, Dec 6, 1941 (*ibid.*; and PREM.3/158/6).
- 116 Harriman and Abel, *op. cit.*, 111; and

- Sherwood, *op. cit.*, 427.
- 117** On Dec 7, 1941 the admiralty received at 1:15 P.M. a message from COIS, Singapore, about the wireless traffic of the convoys' escorts. 'During last 24 hours majority of signals originated by [Japanese] C-in-C, Combined Fleet, whereabouts unknown.' Ismay commented to WSC, 'It looks as though the strength of the Japanese expedition is nearer to two divisions than one' (PREM.3/158/6).
- 118** C-in-C, China to admiralty etc., MOST IMMEDIATE, Dec 6, 1941, rec'd 5:16 P.M. (CAB.121/114).
- 119** Togo (Tokyo) to Bangkok, Nov 27, intercept 098,583, translated on Dec 6, 1941, and initialled 'wsc, 6.XII' (HW.1/303). The message added that Consul-General Asada was bringing encyphered instructions to Bangkok.
- 120** Bangkok to Togo (Tokyo), Nov 28, No. 871, intercept 098,606, translated Dec 6, 1941, initialled 'wsc, 6.XII' (HW.1/303).
- 121** In his diary Mackenzie King noted on Dec 7, 1941 that to describe the independence of Thailand as a British interest was unfortunate wording; but he agreed that the Canadian Legation in Tokyo might 'associate itself' with the warning.
- 122** British embassy in Washington, memo, Dec 7, 1941, and enclosure (FDR Libr., microfilm 6, 415ff).
- 123** WSC to prime minister of Thailand, Dec 7, 1941, 1:40 A.M. (PREM.3/158/6). The suggested text originally telephoned to Eden at 6:30 P.M. and notified to Washington and Bangkok at 8:45 P.M. on Dec 6 read: 'There is imminent danger of Japanese move against your country. If you are attacked, defend yourselves. We shall come to your aid to the utmost of our power & will safeguard the independence of your country whatever happens.'
- 124** Halifax to FO, No. 5651, Dec 6, 1941, 7:50 P.M., received Dec 7, 2:45 A.M. (CAB.121/114).
- 125** Halifax to FO, No. 5653, Dec 6, received 4:45 A.M. (PREM.3/158/6). At his cabinet on Dec 5, 1941, FDR had read out the Japanese reply, 'that they were staying within their agreement with the French and . . . merely seeking to have enough troops there to defend themselves from a threat from the Chinese. The President of course ridiculed the idea.' So the US secretary of agriculture recorded the meeting in his diary on the sixth, even adding: 'It seemed to be the consensus that the Japs were a little less warlike than a few days ago'.
- 126** Adm. Little, British delegation Washington, to admiralty, Dec 6, 1941, 7:51 P.M., rec'd Dec 7, 2:40 A.M. (CAB.121/114).
- 127** This was by 9:15 A.M. on Dec 7, 1941. Note by John Martin (PREM.3/158/6).
- 128** WSC to Ismay for chiefs of staff (and Eden), Dec 7, 1941 (CAB.121/114; original in PREM.3/158/6). WSC was equally optimistic when he passed the news from Washington on to Gen. Auchinleck in Cairo, Dec 6, 6:25 P.M. 'This is an immense relief,' he said, 'as I had long dreaded being at war with Japan without or before the United States. Now I think it is all right.' Gilbert, *op. cit.*, vol. vi, 1266.
- 129** Winant, typescript memoirs, chapter 13, 'Pearl Harbor' (NA, RG.54, Winant papers, box 1); and *cf.* Winant, *A Letter from Grosvenor Square. An Account of a Stewardship* (London, 1947), 196ff.
- 130** Chiefs of staff minute to WSC, Dec 7, 1941; annexe to report of Jan 27, 1942 (PREM.3/163/2). Brooke says (diary) that they sent off this minute 'after their morning meeting,' 11:30 A.M. to 2:15 P.M.; the evening meeting was from five to seven

- E.M. (CAB.79/16).
- 131** WSC to Halifax, draft, Dec 7, 1941 (PREM.3/156/6).
- 132** This is not among the British intercepts released to the PRO in 1993. Evidently, Clausen did not obtain a copy from Bletchley Park either. James Rusbridger argues that the British would have translated it much faster than the Americans, and that WSC would therefore have had the first thirteen parts late on Saturday Dec 6, 1941, before midnight GMT.
- 133** Tokyo to Washington, No. 902, Dec 6; sis.25843, translated by US army Dec 6 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.17336). For the full text, see *Dept. of State Bulletin*, vol. v, No. 129, Dec 13, 1941.
- 134** Berle diary, Dec 6, 1941. The US army's G-2 had reported the Navy's intercept of this fourteen-part message, sis No. 25843, to Berle by 7:30 P.M. (FDR Libr., Adolph A Berle papers). Col. Carlisle Clyde Dusenbury testified (by affidavit to the Clausen inquiry) that 'the fourteenth part, being the final part of the message, was received about 12 that night,' Washington time; failing to appreciate the significance, Dusenbury went home to bed, held the long message overnight and began distributing it only at nine A.M. on Sunday morning, delivering the State dept. copy last – just as Kurusu and Nomura were arriving at one P.M.
- 135** Tokyo to Washington, No. 907, Dec 7 (Tokyo time), 1941; intercepted by Maryland, at 4:37 A.M. When did the British translate it? It was not translated by the US army (as intercept sis.25850) until a day later, Dec 7, USA time (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.17357).
- 136** Tokyo to Washington, No. 908, Dec 7 (Tokyo time), translated by US army, Dec 7, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.17360).
- 137** Tokyo to Washington, No. 910, Dec 7 (Tokyo time), translated by US army, Dec 7, 1941 (NA, RG.457, file SRDJ.17361).
- 138** Togo (Tokyo) to London, No. 2363 circular, Nov 19, translated Nov 25, 1941 as No. 098,127; printed in Clausen, 669.
- 139** Togo (Tokyo), No. 2494 circular to London and elsewhere, Dec 7, 11:50 A.M. GMT, 8:50 P.M. Japanese time. Translated as 'BJ/91,' intercept No. 098,694, Dec 8, initialled 'WSC, 8.xii' (HW.1/307). Col. Clausen also procured a copy of this British intercept from Bletchley Park in 1945 (Clausen report, 686); he did so although the US navy had also deciphered it on Dec 7, 1941, perhaps because they interpreted it only as 'Relations between [Japan] and [England] are not in accordance with expectation' – no mention of the United States. sis.25856 (*ibid.*, SRDJ.17363; Pearl Harbor Committee exhibit No. 142-B). The US army in Mar 1944 translated the same message as: 'Relations between Japan and [] are approaching a crisis (on the verge of danger): England, United States' (*ibid.*, Committee exhibit No. 142-B).
- 140** Sir M Young, Governor of Hongkong, cabled the purport of the telegram to the Secretary of State for the Colonies as a MOST IMMEDIATE telegram on Dec 8, 1941 (Hongkong time) and it was received in London at eight A.M. (FO.371/27893) and in Singapore at 1:25 P.M. (ADM.199/1472a).
- 141** GC&CS secret history, typescript, chap. ix, 'The Japanese War,' 4 (HW.3/102).
- 142** The operative phrase is no doubt '*in this country.*' The US embassy in London inquired of the FO on Nov 8, 1945, on behalf of the Joint Congressional Committee inquiring into Pearl Harbor, whether the 'winds' message – the so-called 'winds-execute' message – had been

- monitored, particularly between Nov 27 and Dec 7, 1941 inclusive, by US, Australian, Dutch, or British agencies and if so when? J C Sterndale Bennett, head of the Far Eastern dept., replied for the FO on Dec 4, 1945: 'None of the code messages were [sic] heard in this country until the morning of December 8th 1941. . . It appears that a broadcast made by the Japanese containing code messages was relayed by Hongkong to Singapore, where it arrived about six hours after the Pearl Harbor attack.' – This inquiry and the FO's response have survived 'weeding' because they were misfiled in NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files, box 29, file 711.4, 'Imperial PoW Committee,' now held at Suitland, Maryland. No trace of them survives in *British* archives; Sterndale Bennett's file (FO.371/44667) on a parallel State dept. request to allow the production of British documents to the Congressional inquiry contains a slew of other letters dated Nov 9, 1945 – Jan 10, 1946. The file contains a dozen important 1941 items, with 1945 marginal notes of some of the main FO players. The FO asked WSC, by then retired as prime minister, on Nov 21, 1945 if he objected to the publication of his telegrams to Halifax dated Nov 26 and 30, 1941; he did not. The FO was concerned that publication of certain other documents would reveal that WSC had been planning to invade Siam in violation of their non-aggression pact (*e.g.*, Tel No. 7506 to Washington). Adm. William D Leahy would note in his diary on Dec 4, 1945, that Congressman Keefe of the Pearl Harbor Investigating Committee had requested to be given messages that passed between the two leaders between Nov 24 and Dec 7, 1941, regardless of subject matter. Leahy advised President Truman to refuse to permit access to any FDR messages *not* bearing on Pearl Harbor.
- 143** Information from the late James Rusbridger, Mar 29, 1989.
- 144** A hand-written note on the top of the draft reads, 'PM approved of desp. of this telegram 8:30 P.M. 7.12.41. Subsequently in view of news of Japanese commencement of hostilities instructions were given to cancel it. JMM, 7.12.41.'
- 145** Halifax diary, Dec 7, 1941: FDR phoned him at 2:15 P.M. (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.9). By 4:30 P.M. Halifax had notified Ottawa of FDR's phone call. Mackenzie King diary, Dec 7, 1941.
- 146** FO to Washington, No. 6600, Nov 30, 1941, 9:20 P.M. (CAB.121/114).
- 147** How he recalled those infuriating seconds, years later! 'I turned on my small wireless set shortly after the nine o'clock news had started.' – Churchill, vol. iii, 537. The dinner party was described by Harriman and Winant in their autobiographies, as no doubt WSC had intended. For a reference to these American wireless sets see WSC's cable to Halifax dated Oct 17, 1941: 'Could you please send three complete sets of valves for the small wireless sets' (PREM.4/69/1).
- 148** Those first fifteen seconds of the news bulletin included these words: 'Here is the News, and this is Alvar Lidell reading it. President Roosevelt has just announced Japanese air attacks on American bases in the Hawaiian Islands: the Japanese envoys in Washington are now at the State dept. In Libya . . .' (BBC Written Archives, Caversham). Had WSC left the set on a few seconds after the announcement about Bartlett he would have heard the report of the attack on Hawaii repeated. 'No further details are yet available.'
- 149** Martin, typed memo, Dec 7, 1941

(PREM.3/158/1). Perhaps for reasons of vanity, Churchill, vol. iii, 537f, has himself speaking first, then Winant; this passage bears the stamp of WSC's personal authorship. WSC summarised this telephone conversation briefly to the War Cabinet next day, conclusions 125 (41) (FO.371/27893); cf. Sir Llewellyn Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War*, (London, 1971), vol. ii, 177.

- 150 C-in-C, Far East to war office, Dec 8, 1941, 5 A.M., rec'd 00:15 A.M. (FO.371/28057). At 2:20 A.M. on Dec 8 (Dec 7 London time), two hours after the invasion of Malaya began, the defenders of Kota Bahru shelled and sank a Japanese troop transport, *Awagisan Maru*.
- 151 The last news from C-in-C, Far East rec'd by the war office at 8:45 P.M. read: 'Malaya is at first degree of readiness and MATADOR force standing by. Some road blocks are reported in construction by the Thais on the road between Kedah frontier and Singgora [Songkhla] and on Kroh road near Betong' (CAB.121/115).
- 152 News of this, a signal timed 2054Z (i.e., GMT) reached the admiralty at 10:23 P.M. from C-in-C, China, 'Most Immediate. Air attack by 18 aircraft carried out in Singapore island at 2030Z/7' (CAB.121/115).
- 153 Eden diary, Dec 7, 1941.
- 154 *Ibid.*, Dec 8; Cadogan diary, written up three weeks later; and Harvey diary, Dec 8, 1941.
- 155 Churchill, vol. iii, 540.
- 156 Brooke diary (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5).

Part II

13: At the White House

- 1 Summary of Home Intelligence, Weekly Report, Dec 8–15, 1941 (Beaverbrook papers, D.445). On Dec 9, WSC initialled intercepts of several German army messages from the Moscow front: one to OKH, Ia, (operations officer, German Army High Command) reporting on Dec 5 at 8:30 P.M. the suspension of the attack on Tula and preparation of the Don–Shat–Upa line. 'The severe cold (up to minus 35° C) has rendered useless many weapons, tanks and motor vehicles, and this together with the strained position as regards supplies renders any further prosecution of the offensive *without prospect*. To continue the attack in these conditions would imperil the . . . and thereby endanger our defence during the winter.' Churchill ringed in red ink 'without prospect,' and 'breaks through' on the next sheet – a report by *Heeresgruppe Mitte* (Army Group Centre) on Dec 5 that the Russians had broken through *en masse*. In another intercept *Panzergruppe 3* was seen reporting to higher echelons that everything was 'frozen up' in the cold and they intended 'to break off the attack and pass to the defence.' GC&CS intercepts CX/MSS/509/T.15, T.19, T.20, T.32 (HW.1/309).
- 2 On Dec 8 Ribbentrop radioed to Ott in Tokyo and to Mackensen in Rome the draft of a 'Nichtsonderfriedensvertrag' (Ausw. Amt. St. Sekr., file 'Krieg Amerika'). On Dec 10, Ribbentrop instructed Thomsen, in Washington, to hand the German declaration of war to Cordell Hull at 3:30 P.M. on Dec 11 (*ADAP [D]*, vol. xiii, No. 572). Cf. the postscript of WSC's letter to the king, Dec 8, 1941 in Churchill, vol. iii, 541).
- 3 ACAS(I), advance telex with Diplomatic BJ/92: Oshima (Berlin) to Tokyo, No. 1432 'MOST IMMEDIATE,' Dec 8. The telex from ACAS(I)'s office, which is timed Dec 8, 5:15 P.M., ends, 'Typed copy of this message will leave B.P. 0730/9th Decem-

- ber for Foreign Office, Admiralty, War Office and Air Ministry' (HW.1/307). This shows that WSC received by telex rushes of intercepts a day ahead of the typed hard copy: the typed copy of the same Oshima telegram No. 1432, now stamped MOST IMMEDIATE and serial-numbered No. 098,722, Dec 9, 1941, and endorsed 'Shown PM 9/12/41' is in HW.1/310.
- 4 Churchill, vol. iii, 539.
- 5 Chequers register, Dec 8, 1941.
- 6 Winant to Hull for FDR, Tel. 5929, Dec 8, 4 P.M. (*sic.* A.M. ?), received Dec 7, 10:27 P.M. (FDR Libr., microfilm 6, 0418).
- 7 FDR to Winant, Dec 8, 7:30 A.M. (FDR Libr., microfilm 6, 0420).
- 8 Churchill, vol. iii, 540.
- 9 Signal, BAD Washington to admiralty, London, Dec 7, 8:29 P.M. (PREM.3/158/6; several pages have been blanked out).
- 10 Eden, *Reckoning*, 285; Cadogan and Harvey diaries, Dec 8, 1941.
- 11 Cabinet meeting, Dec 8, 12:30 P.M. WM (125) 41 (CAB.65/20).
- 12 WSC to the king, Dec 8, 1941. Churchill, vol. iii, 540f. It is not clear why Gilbert in vol. vii, 2 cites his source as 'Royal Archives.'
- 13 Nicolson diary, Dec 8; Cecil King diary, Dec 9, 1941. *Cf.* Churchill, vol. iii, 543.
- 14 Cadogan diary, written up three weeks later; and Harvey diary, Dec 8, 1941.
- 15 FDR to WSC, Dec 8, 1941 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 0439).
- 16 Summary of Home Intelligence, Weekly Report, Dec 8–15 (Beaverbrook papers, D.445). Cecil King diary, Dec 9, 1941.
- 17 British admiralty Delegation, Washington (Adm. Little) to Pound, Dec 8, 1941, 22:41 (ADM.205/10).
- 18 Vice-Adm. R L Ghormley, US Special Naval observer in London, to Pound, Dec 8, 1941 (ADM.205/9).
- 19 Note by H R M[oore] to Pound, Dec 9, 1941 (ADM.205/10).
- 20 Halifax secret diary, Dec 9, 1941 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.13). Not until Jan 8, 1942 could Adm. Pound notify WSC of his unofficial information on the damage, 'which is considerably more than [released] by Colonel Knox' (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/13).
- 21 HM King George VI diary, Dec 9. PM's card. On Dec 17, Lord Halifax was still uncertain of the true losses. That day Knox reassured a press conference that they had lost only one battleship. Halifax believed the true situation was 'one . . . blown up and sunk; two . . . resting on the bottom; two pretty badly damaged; two slightly damaged; one undamaged' (secret diary). The British consul-general in Honolulu reported on Dec 10, that after the 'inexplicable lapse of vigilance' on Dec 7, 1941 'according to reliable but unofficial reports' four capital ships were total losses or seriously damaged, and one hundred aircraft destroyed, including every B-17 Flying Fortress (FO.371/28060).
- 22 Eden to WSC, Dec 9, 1941, 7:31 P.M. Gilbert, vol. vii, 1.
- 23 WSC to FDR, Dec 9, 1941. Not found in US files, but sent as FO Tel. 6812 (PREM.3/458/5; Churchill, vol. iii, 541).
- 24 Lord Halifax to FO, No. 5695, Dec 9. Gilbert, vol. vii, 2. Brooke diary, Dec 10, 1941 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6c).
- 25 COS (41) 45th meeting, Dec 9, 1941 (CAB.121/115). Beside the chiefs of staff, those present included A V Alexander, Moore, Harwood, and Ismay.
- 26 There is some uncertainty about this telegram from WSC to Eden. Churchill, vol. iii, at 553f, dates it Dec 10; but it makes no mention of the loss of *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*. Auchinleck's 'tide turned' message

- to WSC was early on Dec 9, 1941.
- 27 Hastings to Denniston, Dec 10 (HW.14/45). Adm. John H Godfrey (DNI) stated to the VCNS on Dec 19 that Adm. Stark was being given all codebreaking Intelligence of use or interest to him. Godfrey added: 'The American Officers when they were over here [Feb 1941] were informed of all our methods and shown our machines [the *bombes*]. Our methods are not adaptable to them, as they have not got the machines. The American cryptographers consider, however, that they can achieve the same results by different methods and in order to try this out, they were supplied in October with information by GC&CS [Bletchley Park]. . . A message has been received by Denniston from his opposite number [Noyes] indicating that the Bureau in Washington are quite content with what they have received' (ADM.205/9). At a discussion of Anglo-US intelligence exchanges at the COS meeting on Dec 30, 1941 'C' continued to oppose any further codebreaking revelations to the Americans, but added that this did not apply to the Far East, where GC&CS was working closely with them (CAB.121/284).
- 28 FO to Halifax, Jan 4, 1942 (ADM.205/10).
- 29 WSC to Pound, Jan 6; and reply, Jan 8, 1942 (ADM.205/10).
- 30 HM King George VI diary, Dec 6–8, 1941.
- 31 C-in-C, Eastern Fleet, to admiralty, Dec 10, 1941, 6:15 GMT; in the First Sea Lord's report on the warships' loss (PREM.3/163/2); Churchill, vol. iii, 551.
- 32 HM King George VI to WSC, Dec 10: *ibid.*, 533.
- 33 Churchill, vol. iii, 551. The Japanese news agency Domei had announced the successful action by 'Japanese aircraft' against the British Far Eastern Fleet at 8:23 A.M., Dec 10, 1941 (PREM.3/163/2).
- 34 WSC to FDR, Dec 10, 1941 (PREM.3/458/5); US embassy Tel. 5976, 6 P.M. (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 0492).
- 35 FDR to WSC, Dec 10, 1941, 6:30 P.M. Sent as OpNav's Dec 11, 00:30 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 0441f). FDR's first draft is very reluctant indeed: *ibid.*, 0448f. In general see also *The Conferences at Washington 1941–1942 and Casablanca 1943* (US Government Printing Office, Washington, 1968) (hereafter: *FRUS Washington* and *FRUS Casablanca*).
- 36 Brooke diary, unpublished, Dec 10, 1941 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5).
- 37 Amery diary, Dec 10, 1941.
- 38 Brooke to WSC, Dec 9, commenting on ULTRA MK.508 (CAB.163/11); initialled by wsc, Dec 10, 1941.
- 39 Brooke to Auchinleck, Dec 10, 1941 (Alanbrooke papers, 4(c); and MS, 3/A/V, 328). Cf. Winston S Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. iv: *The Hinge of Fate* (hereafter Churchill, vol. iv), 18–30, 260–79.
- 40 Auchinleck to WSC, Dec 8–10; and to CIGS, Dec 11, 1941 (PREM.3/290/1).
- 41 Duff Cooper to cabinet, Tel. 89, Dec 20, 1941 (PREM.3/158/6).
- 42 Ismay at COS meeting, Dec 11, 1941, quoted by Brooke, diary. COS(417)41 Meeting, Dec 11, 1941. WSC informed Auchinleck in a telegram on Dec 12, of the diversion of the 18th Division and the change in theatre boundaries (PREM.3/290/1).
- 43 Hansard, *House of Commons Debates*, columns 1686–97; Churchill, vol. iii, 552.
- 44 Cecil King diary, Dec 11, 1941.
- 45 J Peck to Eric Seal, Dec 11; Gilbert, vol. vi, 1273. Martin diary, Dec 11, 1941.
- 46 Summary of Home Intelligence, Weekly Report, Dec 8–15, 1941 (Beaverbrook pa-

- pers, D.445).
- 47 Report by Harvie Watt, Dec 12, 1941; Gilbert, vol. vii, 5.
- 48 Brooke diary, unpublished, Dec 11, 1941 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5).
- 49 *Ibid.*, Dec 12, 1941: 'I hope to God that there is nothing wrong with him' (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5).
- 50 Churchill, vol. iii, 555.
- 51 Cecil King diary, Dec 16, 1941.
- 52 WSC to Attlee and Lord Woolton, Dec 12, 1941; Churchill, vol. iii, 755.
- 53 WSC to FDR, Dec 12, 1941, 11 A.M. (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 0497).
- 54 WSC to Curtin, Dec 12, 1941; Gilbert, vol. vii, 4.
- 55 WSC to Smuts, Dec 12, 1941 (PREM.3/158/6).
- 56 WSC to Wavell, Dec 12, 1941 (PREM.3/290/1).
- 57 WSC to Eden, Dec 12, 1941; Churchill, vol. iii, 554 and 557.
- 58 WSC to Governor and Defenders of Hongkong, Dec 12, 1941; Churchill, vol. iii, 562.
- 59 Note in Princeton University, Seeley Mudd Libr., Arthur Krock papers.
- 60 In Churchill, vol. iii, 556 he wrote, 'We passed within four hundred miles of Brest.' His letter to Clementine, Dec 21, 1941, is more specific: '5 or 600' (Gilbert, vol. vii, 18).
- 61 *Ibid.*, 558ff. Smuts to WSC, Dec 15 (PREM.3/158/6); Duff Cooper to WSC, Dec 17 (Gilbert, vol. vii, 8); Auchinleck to WSC, Dec 17, 18, 19, 1941 (PREM.3/290/1). Seeing the fate of Malaya sealed, on Jan 6, 1942, WSC humanely extricated his friend; he cabled to Duff Cooper that the Washington decisions 'necessarily bring your Mission to an end,' and he should return home 'by whatever is safest and most suitable route.' The Government were 'entirely satisfied' with Duff's work (CAB.120/29).
- 62 WSC to Clementine, Dec 21, 1941; Gilbert, vol. vii, 19.
- 63 In Churchill, vol. iii, 574 he wrote that FDR had made no 'formal reply' to his letter of Oct 20, 1941. But the copy in FDR's files, in an envelope marked 'Lord Privy Seal' (Attlee), is endorsed: 'Handed to the President by Winston Churchill Jan 2 or 3, 1942' (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 0551ff).
- 64 Cecil King diary; and Dalton diary, Dec 19, 1941.
- 65 Nicolson diary, Dec 17, 1941.
- 66 Clementine to WSC, Dec 19, 1941; Mary Soames, *Clementine Churchill* (London, 1979), 311.
- 67 Attlee to WSC, Dec 20, 1941.
- 68 WSC to Clementine, Dec 21; *op. cit.*
- 69 WSC to Smuts, Dec 20, 1941; Churchill, vol. iii, 562.
- 70 PM's card, Dec 10, 1941: lunch with Lord Derby, Lord and Lady Crewe, Gen. and Madame de Gaulle.
- 71 WSC minute to Hollis for COS Committee, Part I, 'The Atlantic Front,' Dec 16, 1941: text in Churchill, vol. iii, 547ff, and FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 0503ff.
- 72 Ditto, Part II, 'The Pacific Front,' Dec 17, 1941; not in Churchill, vol. iii, but on FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 0516ff.
- 73 WSC to Ismay, Dec 15, 1941. The text in Churchill, vol. iii, 565 stated '1st,' while Gilbert, vol. vii, 7, has '9th Australian Division.'
- 74 WSC to Ismay, Dec 19, 1941; Churchill, vol. iii, 565f.
- 75 WSC minute to Hollis for COS Committee, Part III, 'The Campaign of 1943,' Dec 18, 1941; Churchill, vol. iii, 582ff; FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 0524ff.
- 76 On Dec 18, 1941 WSC radioed ahead to Washington on the points to which he

- hoped to reach agreement, primarily the raising and redistribution of Anglo-American forces for victory and setting up joint control machinery (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Churchill visit, Dec 1941.')
- 77 COS meeting, Dec 18, 1941, 11 A.M. (PREM.3/458/2); Churchill, vol. iii, 585.
- 78 For the liaison through Rougier see PREM.3/185/5. In March 1941 there were further contacts. See FO.371/32077.
- 79 Morton to WSC, Mar 25, 1941 (PREM.4/69/1).
- 80 Abetz informed Ribbentrop of this in Tel No. 2975, Oct 1, 1941.
- 81 PM's card. The message is in PREM.3/186a/7. The intermediary was probably André Poniatowski, who would have come to London with Pétain's agreement (information from Darlan biographer Captain Claude Huan, Mar 13, Apr 13, 1991).
- 82 FO to WSC, TAUT No. 73, Dec 19, 1941, 16:41A (PREM.3/186a/7).
- 83 While this message was shortly forwarded via C to France, the further sentence, in the original message ('You may add, if you think fit, . . . The above come from Churchill himself') was left out. Memo by John Martin, Oct 18, 1942. See too WSC to Attlee, Dec 24, 1941 (CAB.120/28).
- 84 WSC minute, Dec 20, 1941; in full on (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 0532ff; the version (entitled 'The Pacific Front') in Churchill, vol. iii, 578ff, omits (581) the sentences recommending fire raids on Japan.
- 85 Unsigned notes [by Pound, Portal, and Dill], Dec 20, 1941 (PREM.3/399/2).
- 86 Eden to WSC, Dec 21 (PREM.3/290/1); see too his diary, Dec 17, 18, 1941.
- 87 Conversations between Stalin, Molotov, and Eden, Dec 18, 1941 in *Sov.-angliiskiy*, 196ff.
- 88 WSC to Attlee, Dec 20, 1941 (PREM.3/399; Churchill, vol. iii, 559).
- 89 WSC to Eden, Dec 20, 1041; Churchill, vol. iii, 560. On the telephone with WSC a few days later Lord Halifax mentioned that he had been 'interested to see his very sharp reply to Anthony [Eden] about Stalin's desires to have the 1941 boundaries of Russia recognised.' WSC replied that 'he had been greatly surprised with Anthony.' He was equally surprised that the ambassador did not agree with Eden. Halifax secret diary, Jan 8, 1942.
- 90 WSC to Eden, Jan 7, 1942 (PREM.3/399/6).
- 91 Cf. Tel. WSC to Governor of Hongkong, Dec 21, 1941, in Churchill, vol. iii, 563, calling for prolonged resistance.
- 92 WSC to Clementine, Dec 21, 1941; *op. cit.*
- 93 WSC to COS Committee, Dec 21, 1941 (PREM.3/399/2).
- 94 See the schedule in PREM.10/1.
- 95 Martin diary, Dec 22, and letter home, Dec 27; Halifax diary, Dec 22, 1941 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.13); Churchill, vol. iii, 587f.

14: **Some Chicken**

- 1 Brooke unpublished diary, Dec 24, 1941 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6c; and notes, 3/A/V). Gilbert, vol. vii, 23ff, devotes a chapter to WSC's sojourn in the United States without referring to American sources once.
- 2 Churchill, vol. iii, 587f, and other sources.
- 3 Jacob diary, record of ARCADIA conferences, Dec 1941, 46 (Churchill College, JACB.1/12).
- 4 Sir Walter Raleigh: so WSC himself wrote in Churchill, vol. iii, 588.
- 5 Halifax diary, Dec 22 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.13); British record of conversation,

- Dec 22 (PREM.3/458/7); WSC Tel. to War Cabinet, and COS Committee, Dec 23, 1941: Churchill, vol. iii, 588ff. He states that FDR 'had evidently thought much about my letter of October 20.' In fact FDR did not receive it until Jan 2, 1942.
- 6 Jacob diary, record of ARCADIA conferences, Dec 1941, 22, 25 (Churchill College, JACB.1/12).
- 7 FDR and WSC evidently told Ambassador Litvinov in Jan 1942 that their forces would land in strength in Europe if there was danger of a collapse. See Forrest Davis, 'The January Promise,' in *Saturday Evening Post*, Feb 20, 1943; he claimed in 1958 that FDR had told him this himself.
- 8 *FRUS*, 1942, vol. i, 608. According to Hull's memoirs, vol. ii, 1485, 'no conclusions were arrived at.'
- 9 WSC to FDR, Feb 25, 1942. The letter in the FDR Library PSF files is not even signed, let alone 'burnt.'
- 10 GC&CS draft history, chap. viii: 'The Russian liaison' (HW.3/101).
- 11 Tel. WSC to War Cabinet, Dec 24 [sic], 1941: Gilbert, vol. vii, 24. Churchill, vol. iii, 588ff, omits this passage. The Dominion representatives present were South Africa's R W Close, Australia's Richard Casey, Canada's Leighton McCarthy, and New Zealand's F Langstone.
- 12 Washington war conference, 12 noon, Dec 23 (PREM.3/458/4). Cf. Halifax diary, Dec 23, 1941 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.13): 'I think he got them [the Dominion representatives] into quite a good temper. He was very cheerful and optimistic about Libya and Russia.'
- 13 Press conference, Dec 23, 1941, four P.M. (PREM.4/71/2); and Halifax diary.
- 14 Frank McNaughton manuscript, Dec 26, 1941 (Harry S Truman Libr., Frank McNaughton papers).
- 15 Hansard, *House of Commons Debates*, Nov 29, 1951.
- 16 Author's interview of George Odey, MP (Cons.), Apr 11, 1978.
- 17 Moran, quoted by Randolph Churchill, in Bruce Lockhart diary, Jun 11, 1947.
- 18 Daniel Longwell to *f.y.i.* [*Life* in-house magazine], Oct 16, 1953 (Columbia University, New York: Butler Library, Daniel Longwell papers).
- 19 Butcher diary, Aug 26, 1942.
- 20 WSC to Eden, Feb 5, 1944; in Dilks, *op. cit.*, 602n.
- 21 Clementine to Mary Churchill, Dec 23, 1941; in Mary Soames, *op. cit.*, 311.
- 22 Memo, 'Dates Mr Hopkins lunched and dined with President and Prime Minister [Dec 24–Jan 14]' (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Churchill visit, Dec 1941').
- 23 So FDR told Molotov, on May 29, 1942 (*ibid.*).
- 24 FDR related this at a JCS meeting on Feb 20, 1944, adding that WSC had explained that the UK looked on France as a bulwark ('against the Russians,' FDR surmised).
- 25 Stimson diary, Dec 23, 1941.
- 26 WSC to Clementine, Dec 21, 1941.
- 27 G C Marshall, Notes of meeting at White House with the President and the British PM presiding, Dec 23, 1941 (NA, RG.165, Army Operations/OPD Executive Files 1940–45, box 22, file 4, item 13).
- 28 Arnold diary, Dec 23, 1941.
- 29 Washington War Conference, Second Meeting, Dec 23, 1941 (CAB.99/17).
- 30 Halifax diary, Dec 24, quoting Lord Beaverbrook (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.13). For typical criticisms, see Amery diary, Dec 17: Clement Davies out to attack WSC; Dec 18, Crowder, secretary of 1922 Committee, on Tory restlessness; Dec 23,

- Stuart memo.
- 31 Cunningham to Pound, Dec 28, 1941 (British Library, Add. MS 52561).
- 32 Attlee to WSC, Jan 9 (CAB.120/32); reply, Jan 11 (CAB.120/28). See Churchill, vol. iii, 512. Briefed by Adm. Pound, Lord Halifax noted in his secret diary, Jan 11, 1942, 'We are keeping all this very dark, in order that the Italians may not know to what extent they have got command of the Mediterranean if they would only take it.'
- 33 Stimson diary, Dec 24, 1941.
- 34 Halifax diary, Dec 24, 1941 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.13).
- 35 Smuts to WSC, through British High Commissioner in Pretoria and Lord Halifax, Dec 24, received in Washington at 9:28 A.M. (PREM.3/158/6).
- 36 Auchinleck to WSC, Cairo, Dec 24, 8 A.M. and 4 P.M. (PREM.3/290/1).
- 37 Text in Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Churchill visit, Dec 1941'; cf. Churchill, vol. iii, 593f.
- 38 Moran, 'diary,' 12.
- 39 Martin diary, Dec 25, 1941; Lieut.-Col. E I C Jacob, diary of Washington conference, quoted by Gilbert, vol. vii, 28.
- 40 Halifax secret diary, Dec 26, 1941: 'He [Casey] was not comforted by my telling him that I didn't know either' about the talks.
- 41 Cf. Taylor, *Beaverbrook*; and Beaverbrook memo, Sep 11, 1946 (Beaverbrook papers, D.480).
- 42 'Harry Hopkins looked like a mere wraith – so thin, but quite joyous in appearance, like a living flame.' Mackenzie King diary, Dec 28, 1941.
- 43 Ickes diary, Feb 1, 1942.
- 44 Stimson wrote on Jan 25, 1942, '[Hull] has been very gloomy of late because he feels that the President has rather sidetracked him in the recent negotiations with the British.' *Ibid.*, Dec 23, 1941. And memo, 'Churchill speaking,' Apr 14–17, 1955 (DDE Library, C D Jackson papers, box 32, 'Churchill'); and see Churchill, vol. iii, 590f ('Hull . . . did not seem to me to have full access at the moment to the President').
- 45 WSC to de Gaulle, Dec 30 (CAB.120/28). The State dept. file on this, 851.00/34111/2, was opened in the NA in Mar 1981. Muselier decided to resign as Commissaire Nationale à la Marine on his return to London 'so as to have no longer a political position in a movement where the will of a single man could prevail against wiser counsels.' Cf. Churchill, vol. iii, 590f ('Strongly urged by our foreign office, I supported General de Gaulle. . .'). Halifax diary, Dec 25, 1941 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.13).
- 46 Hopkins, memo, Dec 29 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Churchill visit, Dec 1941').
- 47 WSC to Auchinleck, T.1071, Dec 25 quoted in Gilbert, vol. vii, 28f. And WSC to Curtin, T.1072, Dec 27, 1941 (PREM.3/158/6 and file CAB.121/115). These 'direct messages from Winston to Auchinleck and to Australia' vexed his cabinet colleagues in London: Amery diary, Dec 27, 1941.
- 48 Jacob diary, record of ARCADIA conferences, Dec 1941, page 39 (Churchill College, JACB.1/12).
- 49 Note by Brigadier Hollis, Dec 24, 1941 (PREM.3/458/7).
- 50 Stimson diary, Dec 25, 1941.
- 51 Moran, 'diary,' 14.
- 52 Martin diary, Dec 25, 1941.
- 53 Beaverbrook related this to Lord Halifax: diary, Dec 25, 1941 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.13).
- 54 Morgenthau diary, Dec 26, 1941 (FDR

- Library, Henry R Morgenthau papers). (Hickleton papers, A4.410.4.15).
- 55 Gilbert, vol. vii, 29, states that the movie was *Oliver Twist*. Lord Moran, *op. cit.*, 14, and the Morgenthau diary agree that it was a war documentary.
- 56 Halifax diary, Dec 25, 1941 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.13).
- 57 Based on the McNaughton manuscript cited above.
- 58 Moran, 'diary,' 15.
- 59 For the British government's authentic text of WSC's speech, see FO.371/30655. Gilbert, vol. vii, 30, while citing 'Churchill papers, 9/153' as his source, does not quote a line more than does WSC himself in Churchill, vol. iii, 595f.
- 60 Ickes diary, Dec 26, 1941.
- 61 Randolph Churchill to WSC, Jan 6, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vii, 30. Clementine to WSC, Dec 27, 1941 (CAB.120/29). Lord Halifax was less impressed. 'Personally I did not think it so very good, but naturally I kept the opinion within a narrow circle' (diary, Dec 26); and see his letter to the king, Jan 15, 1942: 'Personally, I thought his [WSC's] speech at Ottawa was the better of the two, but this was not the general opinion' (Hickleton papers, A4.410.4.8).
- 62 Ickes diary, Dec 27; and see *The Daily Telegraph*, Dec 27, 1941.
- 63 Harold Smith diary, Dec 26, 1941 (FDR Library, Harold Smith papers).
- 64 Wickard diary, Dec 26, 1941.
- 65 Mackenzie King diary, Dec 27, 1941.
- 66 On Dec 28, 1941, Hull bluntly asked WSC 'to induce [de Gaulle] to withdraw his troops.' WSC pointed to the damage this would inflict on his relations with the 'Free French': Hull memoirs, vol. ii, 1132f. 'I thought,' wrote Lord Halifax to Eden on Jan 5, 1942, 'he was a little light-hearted about de Gaulle and St. Pierre!' (Hickleton papers, A4.410.4.15).
- 67 Mackenzie King diary, Dec 27, 1941.
- 68 *Ibid.*, Dec 26, 1941. Pierre Dupuy (b. 1896) had been first secretary at the Paris legation; after the fall of France he became Canadian chargé d'affaires in London to the governments of France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. On Nov 2, 1940 Lord Halifax invited Mackenzie King to send Dupuy to Vichy to establish contact with Pétain; Dupuy returned on Dec 16 with word that Pétain was still hoping for Germany's defeat. He returned twice more to Vichy in Feb and Aug 1941, and remained optimistic. In Jul 1942 WSC turned down his proposal for a further trip to Vichy. See documents released on the Canadian govt website www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/hist/Dupuy.asp.
- 69 Mackenzie King diary, Dec 26, 1941.
- 70 Moran, 'diary,' 16f. In Churchill, vol. iii, 612, WSC wrongly places this incident on Jan 3, 1942.
- 71 Conference at the White House, Dec 26, 4:30 P.M. (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Churchill visit, Dec 1941'). These texts are also in the Library of Congress, H H Arnold papers, box 180. For the British record, see Washington conference, Fourth Meeting, Dec 26, 1941, 4:30 P.M. (CAB.99/17).
- 72 Curtin to FDR, Dec 26, 1941: Churchill, vol. iv, 5f.
- 73 Melbourne *Herald*, Dec 27, 1941; Churchill, vol. iv, 7. Amery (diary, Dec 28, 1941) called the article a 'low down utterance,' and described the Australians as 'in a howl of unreasoning panic.'
- 74 Curtin to WSC, No. 8276, Dec 30; WSC had to lecture him in his reply, Jan 4, 1942, that 'the whole naval situation has been upset by the losses of the United States Fleet at Pearl Harbor and our own naval

- losses' (CAB.121/115). WSC to Attlee, Dec 29, and to Hughes, Dec 30, 1941 (CAB.120/28).
- 75 COS Committee, 7 P.M., Dec 26, 1941 (PREM.3/458/2).
- 76 Churchill, vol. iii, 597. Lord Moran records in his 'diary' (*Winston Churchill. The Struggle for Survival, 1940-65* [London, 1966], 17), that on Dec 26 WSC was sure the plan was 'neither workable nor desirable,' a remarkable coincidence with the wording in Churchill, vol. iii, 597, first published in 1950.
- 77 The formal British record (CAB.99/17) shows that Pound, Dill, and Portal all opposed Marshall's proposal for a British Supreme Commander, since American public opinion would blame the inevitable coming reverses on the British; and that the PM felt that it would be 'sunder' if they allowed an American Adm. command of 'all the Naval forces.'
- 78 Mackenzie King listed McCarthy, Ralston, Power, and Macdonald for Canada, along with the representatives of India and South Africa and Casey. Diary, Dec 26, 1941.
- 79 Mackenzie King diary, Dec 27, 1941.
- 80 This telegram to Attlee, published in Churchill, vol. iii, 597f, is the probable source of the meeting between WSC and Marshall on 'Dec 28' described by Lord Moran, *Winston Churchill. The Struggle for Survival, 1940-65* (London, 1966); in fact the telegram was written on Dec 27 ('I leave to-morrow afternoon for Ottawa. . .') although dated Dec 28, 1941. Gilbert, vol. vii, 32, consequently falls into the same error.
- 81 Ickes diary, Feb 1, 1942, quoting Baruch.
- 82 Stimson diary, Dec 28, 1941; and *FRUS Washington*.
- 83 Halifax diary, Dec 28, 1941 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.13); COS Committee, Dec 28, 1941, 12:30 P.M. (CAB.99/17). If WSC had really spent 'five hours' receiving diplomatic representatives (Gilbert, vol. vii, 32) this would have involved a 7:30 A.M. start – in WSC both commendable and unusual.
- 84 PM's movements (PREM.10/1). Jackie Martin of the *Chicago Sun* wrote that the train comprised locomotive, baggage car, club car, four Pullmans, a diner, three more Pullmans, and the observation car in the rear.
- 85 Mackenzie King diary, Dec 28, 1941.
- 86 Schedule in PREM.10/1.
- 87 Lord Moran, *Winston Churchill. The Struggle for Survival, 1940-65* (London, 1966).
- 88 John Martin letter home, Jan 11, 1942.
- 89 Mackenzie King diary, Dec 29, 1941.
- 90 *Ibid.*
- 91 Canadian Government print of WSC's speech, Dec 30, 1941, in Mackenzie King's papers. It is also printed in full in the Canadian Hansard, *House of Commons Debates*, Wednesday, Jan 21, 1942, vol. lxxix, No. 105, 4839-43; copy in FO.371/30655.
- 92 Mackenzie King to WSC, Jan 9, and reply, Jan 28, 1942 (Mackenzie King papers, MG.26, J1, vol. 322).
- 93 Mackenzie King diary, Dec 30, 1941.
- 94 WSC to Attlee, Dec 30, 1941; in Churchill, vol. iv, 8.
- 95 Summary of press conference, Dec 31, 1941 (PREM.4/71/2).
- 96 Schedule in PREM.10/1. Gilbert errs in writing that WSC left Ottawa the previous night.
- 97 Jackie Martin, letter to a friend, Jan 1942; printed in 'A Night to Remember,' *Evening Star*, Washington, Jan 26, 1965. Cf. Churchill, vol. iii, 603. Halifax diary, Jan 1, 1942: WSC told him he 'had gone in in his romper suit, and drunk toasts and sung Auld Lang Syne, and enjoyed it immensely'

(Hickleton papers, A.7.8.13).

15: **The Completest Intimacy**

- 1 Brooke diary, unpublished, Dec 29–30, 1941 (King's College London, Alanbrooke papers; and MS, 3/A/v, 336f). War Cabinet, Dec 29; COS meetings, Dec 29, 30, 1941.
- 2 Amery diary, Dec 29, 1941.
- 3 PREM.10/1.
- 4 Berle diary, Jan 3, 1942 (FDR Libr., Adolph A Berle papers).
- 5 Halifax to Eden, Jan 5 (Hickleton papers, A4.410.4.15, and FO.954/29); and diary. FDR repeated this account later in the year to Ld Halifax: diary, Dec 26, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.11). Desmond Morton also related it, *e.g.*, to Gen. Everett S Hughes: 'Winnie took a bath and was parading about naked when comes a knock on the door. In comes FDR in chair. W held up hands and said – "As we said last night, we have nothing to conceal." Morton says W naked looks like kewpie,' a cheap plaster Cupid doll often won at fairground side-shows. Hughes diary, Nov 18, 1943 (Library of Congress, Everett S Hughes papers; transcribed by us).
- 6 Arthur Krock, quoting 'Mr Jones, a clerk with the British mission.' This was W R Jones, secretary to Lieut.-Colonel J C Hollis. 'There was the Prime Minister, fresh from the bath, without a stitch. I started to back out; there was squeak behind me and in wheeled the President' (Princeton University, Seeley Mudd Manuscript Libr., Arthur Krock papers). Jones also relates this in James Leasor, *War at the Top* (London, 1959), 29. Ian Jacob has it that Jones had wangled his way into the White House on a pretext, carrying a secret document for WSC. 'What should he see coming towards him but the President in his wheeled chair, unaccompanied by anyone. Jones stood rooted to the spot, and the President addressed him saying, "Good morning. Is your Prime Minister up yet?" "Well Sir," said Jones, who had a stilted way of speaking, "it is within my knowledge that the Prime Minister is at the present moment in his bath." "Good," said the President, "then open the door." Jacob diary, record of ARCADIA conferences, Dec 1941, 67–8 (Churchill College, JACB.1/12).
- 7 Churchill, vol. iii, 605: 'The President was wheeled in to me on the morning [sic] of January 1. I got out of my bath, and agreed to the draft [U.N. Declaration].'
- 8 Berle diary, Jan 3. Berle added: 'The President did not call to Churchill's attention the analogy to the "United States" – a name worked out by a somewhat similar process of mind in 1776' (FDR Libr., Adolph A Berle papers, VIII/1/54ff). WSC invited Eden in M.34/2 of Feb 11, 1942: 'Will you kindly meanwhile draw me up a list of the candidates for election [to the UN] and mark those you want blackballed?' (CAB.120/26).
- 9 Halifax diary, Jan 1, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.19); and *cf.* Leasor, *op. cit.*, 30.
- 10 Martin diary, Jan 1, 1942 (in the author's possession).
- 11 Hopkins memorandum, Jan 6, 1942 (in *FRUS Washington*).
- 12 Reporting by telegram to Attlee on Dec 31, WSC had remarked: 'Litvinov is a mere automaton, evidently frightened out of his wits after what he has gone through.' WSC made much of the declaration later (Churchill, vol. iii, 605f); Cecil King (diary, Jan 3) called it 'the usual verbiage' and found that even *The Times* gave it only 'a single column top.'

- 13 Eden to WSC, Jan 4 (CAB.120/31). WSC to Hull, Jan 3, 1942 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308).
- 14 WSC to Attlee, Jan 4, 1942 (CAB.120/29); cf. Taylor, *Beaverbrook*.
- 15 WSC to Attlee, Jan 3, 1942, Churchill, vol. iii, 608. He also praised FDR's breadth of view, resolution, and loyalty. 'There is not the slightest sign here of excitement or worry about the opening misfortunes, which are taken as a matter of course and to be retrieved by the marshalling of overwhelming forces of every kind. There will, of course, be a row in public presently.'
- 16 Stimson diary, Jan 4; and Conference at the White House, 5:30 P.M., Jan 4, 1942 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308); FDR had held a meeting with his Joint Chiefs on Jan 2 without inviting the British (*ibid.*).
- 17 Stimson diary, Jan 5, 1942. Marshall had to take the overnight train back to Washington. 'It was only due to the President's urging that he did not decline Churchill's invitation.'
- 18 Martin diary, Jan 5, 1942; Moran, *op. cit.*, 21; Churchill, vol. iii, 612; and PREM.10/1. Gilbert, vol. vii, 36, is wrong in writing that WSC was accompanied 'only by his doctor.' According to Colonel Jacob (*ibid.*), WSC himself was worried about arousing jealousies from FDR's staff if he outstayed his welcome.
- 19 Cdr. C R Thompson MS. In Churchill, vol. iii, 613 WSC wrote that he cabled to Attlee on Jan 7: 'Please make sure no notice is issued in England.' The original is clear - 'D-notice' (CAB.120/29).
- 20 Halifax diary, Feb 18, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.10).
- 21 In violation of ancient treaties, Mr Churchill had in March 1941 ordered the important RAF airstrip at North Front extended into the neutral zone between Gibraltar and the Spanish frontier. Gen. Franco's government was assured that it would be used only in an 'emergency,' a word of which Mr Churchill however had his own definition. 'In one sense, the war itself constitutes an emergency,' he told his ambassador in Madrid. 'In a narrower sense, an emergency is created by the fact that aeroplanes cannot safely fly direct to the Middle East.' He ordered the planes to arrive 'singly and unostentatiously,' and told his ambassador in Madrid not to inform the Spaniards of the airfield construction. There were 52,418 aircraft movements during 1943, and 34,231 in 1944. Air Headquarters, Gibraltar, Intelligence Section, 'Flying from the Rock: The Story of Aviation at Gibraltar' (RAF Gibraltar files). The quotations are from a letter from WSC to Sir Samuel Hoare, ambassador in Madrid, Mar 1941. For papers on the airfield and storing munitions for a war with Spain, see AIR.8/554.
- 22 WSC to FDR, Jan 5, 1942 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308).
- 23 WSC to Attlee, Jan 7, 1942 (CAB.120/29; Churchill, vol. iii, 64f).
- 24 WSC to Ismay and Sinclair, Jan 7, 1942: Churchill, vol. iii, 614.
- 25 WSC to Pound, Jan 9, 1942 (*ibid.*). Pound described the human torpedo attack to Lord Halifax (diary), Jan 11, 1942: 'They hope to have the *Valiant* out again by 1st May, but until they get her out of Alexandria dock they can't find out how much the *Queen Elizabeth* is damaged. . . We are keeping this very dark, in order that the Italians may not know to what extent they have got command of the Mediterranean if they would only take it.'
- 26 Mackenzie King diary, Jan 6, 1942.
- 27 Diary of Gen. Joseph W Stilwell, Jan 6, 8,

- 1942 (Hoover Libr., Stilwell papers). On Jan 11, 1942 Stilwell added: 'To Betty's [Adm. Stark's] office at 3 – Holcomb, Turner, Stark, King, etc. Self satisfied gnats, preening themselves on their pretty Gold lace. . . All sore over England's hogging everything.'
- 28 War Cabinet, Jan 1; Amery diary, Jan 1, 1942; Dalton diary, Jan 5 and 13. Dalton recorded on Jan 13, 1942 that Eden had found Stalin 'very straight, direct, and reasonable.' Stalin never harangued like Hitler and Mussolini – altogether 'quite a nice gentlemanly fellow!'
- 29 Moran, 'diary,' 32.
- 30 WSC to Eden, Jan 8 (CAB.120/29; cf. Churchill, vol. iii, 615f, and Cadogan diary, Jan 8, 1942, Churchill College, Cambridge: Cadogan papers). Eden's secretary noted on Jan 8: 'I'm afraid we're going to have great difficulty over this. Winston is au fond a die-hard imperialist – bad about India (much trouble coming to us here over his refusal to countenance Dominion status) and bad about Russia.'
- 31 Halifax diary, Jan 8, 1942.
- 32 WSC to Ismay and the defence committee, Jan 10; FDR Libr., microfilm 1; (PREM.3/499/1); cf. Churchill, vol. iii, 619.
- 33 Hankey to WSC, Dec 6; minute by WSC, Dec 9; chief of staff committee, (41) 419th meeting, Dec 12, 1941 (CAB.121/103).
- 34 Ismay to Col. C R Price, Dec 13, 1941 (CAB.121/103).
- 35 DO (42) 1st Meeting, Jan 2; and conf. annexe, VEGETARIAN, Jan 2; Ismay to WSC, Jan 3, 1942 (CAB.121/103). Hankey, informed of a subsequent change of codename to ALADDIN, grumbled: 'I always forget the code word and have to go back to the real thing. It is all rather a fad.'
- 36 Sir John Martin, notes on his diary; Churchill, vol. iii, 617.
- 37 PREM.10/1.
- 38 WSC to Auchinleck, Jan 11, Churchill, vol. iv, 20. Brooke Notes on diary, Jan 9, 1942 (King's College London, Alanbrooke papers; and MS, 3/A/v). On Jan 21 Brooke wrote to Auchinleck that his Intelligence staff's 'highly coloured optimistic reports' had of late frequently been confounded by events. 'These reports are apt to create a spirit of unwarranted optimism amongst politicians, which is followed by one of doubt as to the veracity of our statements.' (*Ibid.*, 4[d]).
- 39 Halifax to WSC, Jan 11, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A4.410.4.11).
- 40 WSC to Stalin, Jan 11, 1942. *Sovyetsko-angliiskiy otnosheniya* does not include this.
- 41 Taylor, *Beaverbrook*.
- 42 Curtin to WSC, Jan 11, 1942, rec'd 3:50 P.M. (PREM.3/158/6); cf. Churchill, vol. iv, 9.
- 43 WSC to Curtin, Jan 13, 1942 (*ibid.*); Churchill, vol. iv, 10 dates it Jan 14.
- 44 WSC to Eden, Jan 12, 1942, 3:50 A.M. (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308). This remarkable exchange is missing from Gilbert's volumes.
- 45 Attlee to WSC, Jan 12, 11:54 P.M.; and Eden to WSC, Jan 12, 1942 (*ibid.*).
- 46 On Jan 20, 1942, Donovan informed FDR that his agents in London predicted an imminent showdown between WSC and de Gaulle who was flirting with Moscow and stating he would 'never deal with the Americans again' (FDR Libr., PSF, boxes 163–4, folder 'OSS–Donovan Reports').
- 47 Stimson diary, Jan 8–11, 1942.
- 48 Churchill, vol. iii, 624.
- 49 'Conference at the White House, Jan 12, 1942, 5:30 P.M.' (Hopkins papers, box 308). There was also some discussion of MAGNET, and of the consequential reduc-

- tion in PQ convoys to North Russia. Washington War Conference, Jan 12, 1942, 5:45 P.M. (CAB.99/17); Gilbert, vol. vii, 39 has 5:45 A.M., an obvious misprint.
- 50 Stimson diary, Jan 12, 1942: present were WSC, Beaverbrook, Stimson, Hull, Morgenthau, Knox, Jesse Jones, Hopkins, and Donovan.
- 51 Churchill, vol. iii, 624.
- 52 Warren F Kimball, 'Lend-Lease and the Open Door: The Temptation of British Opulence, 1937-1942,' in *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 86, No. 2. Article VII of the American draft read: 'The terms and conditions upon which the United Kingdom receives defense aid . . . shall provide against discrimination in either the United States or the United Kingdom against the importation of any product originating in the other country.'
- 53 Smith diary, Jan 13, 1942 (FDR Library, Harold Smith papers, box 13).
- 54 WSC to Attlee, Jan 13 (CAB.120/29).
- 55 Wavell to chiefs of staff, Jan 14, 1942. Churchill, vol. iv, 41f; Gilbert, vol. vii, 41, says it was addressed to WSC.
- 56 WSC to Curtin, Jan 14, 1942 (PREM.3/158/6); Churchill, vol. iv, 11.
- 57 WSC to Wavell, Jan 15, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 42; Gilbert, vol. vii, 41, dates it 'Jan 14.'
- 58 WSC rebuked Attlee, Dec 30, 1941: 'It would be most unfair to make him [Brooke-Popham] a scapegoat. If Malay Peninsula has been starved for sake of Libya and Russia no one is more responsible than I, and I would do exactly the same again.' When Canberra applauded the 'belated' removal of the officer, Churchill on Dec 30 reminded Mr Hughes: 'You will see that the [Australian] Government of which you are a member . . . sent most fervently eulogistic letter to him assuring him of their utmost confidence' (CAB.120/28). Attlee, Sinclair and Bracken insisted it was 'inadvisable to include Brooke-Popham in the New Year's Honours' (CAB.120/31). Robert Menzies diary, Jan 29, 1941 (National Library of Australia, Canberra, Robert Menzies papers, MS.4936).
- 59 WSC to FDR, Jan 14, 1942 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308; and FDR microfilm 6, 0040).
- 60 FDR, quoted in Stettinius Mission diary, Mar 17, 1944 (NA, RG.59, Edward R Stettinius papers).
- 61 Meeting at the White House, Jan 14, 1942, 5:30 P.M. (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308).
- 62 Stimson diary, Jan 14, 1942.
- 63 *Ibid.*, Jan 16, 1942.
- 64 *Ibid.*, Jan 14, 1942.
- 65 Churchill, vol. iii, 625.
- 66 Note by Hopkins, Jan 15, 1942, cited in *FRUS, Washington*.
- 67 Halifax diary, Jan 27, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.10).
- 68 Halifax diary, Feb 18, 1942 (*ibid.*).
- 69 Martin diary, Jan 15, 1942; Churchill, vol. iii, 625ff; Moran, 'diary,' 22f.
- 70 Kelly-Rogers, bulletin, Jan 16, 1942 10 P.M. (Sir John Martin papers, copy in our possession).
- 71 Winston S Churchill, *My Early Life* (London, 1930); the river, at Pretoria, South Africa, is in fact a rivulet, only inches deep.
- 72 James Leasor, *War at the Top* (London, 1959), 24ff; Gilbert, vol. vii, 42 and 56. Kelly-Rogers was an experienced navigator and never came within ninety miles of the flak at Brest; see his letter in *The Daily Telegraph*, Apr 13, 1950, and E B Haslam's account of the discrepancies in *RAF Quarterly*, vol. xii, nos. 2 and 3.
- 73 Reported in War Cabinet, Jan 17, 1942 (CAB.65/25).

- 74 *Daily Express*, Jan 17, 1942. Moran, 'diary,' 24.
- 75 Brooke diary, unpublished, Jan 17, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5).
- 76 Martin diary, Jan 17, 1942; cf. Bruce Lockhart diary, Jan 17, 1942.
- 77 Cecil King diary, Jan 18, 1942. On Jan 23, he added: 'He returned home in very complacent mood, ready to receive the plaudits of the politicians. . . [On Jan 17] there was a cabinet meeting . . . the atmosphere was very different from . . . expected.' Beaverbrook accused Attlee later of having failed to warn WSC of the storm brewing while he was away in Washington. The PM had 'at first thought he could ride the storm' by firmness and refusing to budge (Halifax secret diary, Mar 25, 1942, Hickleton papers, A.7.8.19).
- 78 War Cabinet, Jan 17, 1942 (CAB.65/25).
- 79 Amery diary, Jan 17, 1942.
- 80 *Ibid.*, Jan 3, 1942.
- 81 *Ibid.*, Dec 31, 1941.
- 82 *Ibid.*, Jan 17, 1942.
- 83 *Ibid.*, Jan 18, 1942.
- 84 Press Association, quoted in Cecil King diary, Jan 19, 1942.
- 85 WSC to Attlee, Jan 11, 1942 (CAB.120/29); Amery diary, Jan 12, 1942.
- 86 War Cabinet, Jan 12, 19 (CAB.65/25); Amery diary, Jan 19. Eden opposed recording the House speech as setting an undesirable precedent: Harvey diary, Jan 20, 22, 1942.
- 87 Wavell to WSC, Jan 16, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 42. Gilbert, vol. vii, 46 has WSC receiving Wavell's telegram of Jan 19 (Churchill, vol. iv, 44f) on the morning of the 16th.
- 88 Sir Hastings Ismay, *The Memoirs of Lord Ismay* (London, 1960) (hereafter: Ismay), 247.
- 89 WSC to chiefs of staff, Jan 19, 1942. Churchill, vol. iv, 44f. Gilbert suppresses WSC's introductory reference to 'Wavell's telegram of the 16th.'
- 90 HM King George VI diary, Jan 19, 1942.
- 91 Amery diary, Jan 19, 1942.
- 92 Cadogan diary, Jan 19, 1942; and Harvey diary, Jan 19, 1942, quoting Eden: 'PM . . . is in the highest spirits and the most truculent mood.'
- 93 WSC to Curtin, Jan 19, 1942 (PREM.3/158/6); Churchill, vol. iv, 13f; circulated to defence committee (CAB.69/4).
- 94 WSC to Wavell, despatched Jan 20, 1942, 4:30 A.M. Churchill, vol. iv, 46f.
- 95 Cecil King diary, Jan 20, 1942; Nicolson diary, Jan 20, 21, 1942: Randolph Churchill observed that the reception was nothing like that for Chamberlain upon his return from Munich.
- 96 Home Intelligence secret report for week ending Jan 26, quoted in Donovan to FDR, Jan 31, 1942: 'Unfair for Churchill to try to reduce criticism by injection [of] personal popularity into the picture' (FDR Libr., PSF, box 163-4, folder 'OSS-Donovan Reports').
- 97 Amery diary, Jan 21, 1942.
- 98 Wavell to WSC, Jan 19 and 20, 1942 in Churchill, vol. iv, 47ff.
- 99 WSC to chiefs of staff, COS (42) 22(O), Jan 21, 1942 (CAB.121/115); and Churchill, vol. iv, 49f.
- 100 Chiefs of staff meeting, Jan 21, 1942 (CAB.79/56 and CAB.121/115).
- 101 Defence committee meeting, Jan 21 (CAB.69/4 and CAB.121/115); Amery diary, Jan 21. Brooke wrote that the meeting climaxed in 'arrival of wire from Australia disagreeing with all the arrangements PM had made with USA concerning higher direction of the war!' (Brooke diary, unpublished, Jan 21; and MS, 3/A/v. Curtin to WSC, Jan 22, 1942,

- 2:20 A.M., CAB.121/115). WSC was surely wrong in writing that Page was not invited to this defence committee meeting. Churchill, vol. iv, 50.
- 102** Amery diary, Jan 22, 1942.
- 103** Eden diary, Jan 21. Eden, *Reckoning*.
- 104** Charles Peake, report on the meeting, Jan 22 (NA, State dept. file 851.00/3114'5); PM's card. WSC reported his 'severe conversation' with de Gaulle to FDR on Jan 24 (FDR Libr., microfilm 6, 44). Hopkins recorded on Jan 24, 1942 that FDR had shown him a dispatch from WSC who had told de Gaulle 'to get the hell out of those islands'; if consultation with Vichy was required, WSC desired the State dept. to handle it (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308).
- 105** Donovan to FDR, Feb 4, 1942 (FDR Libr., PSF, box 16, folder 'Donovan Reports').
- 106** WSC to Pound, Jan 22, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/13; and Churchill, vol. iv, 40).
- 107** Brooke diary, unpublished, Jan 22, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6).
- 108** Cecil King diary, Jan 23, 1942.
- 109** Martin diary, and Chequers register, Jan 23–27 (copies in the author's possession).
- 110** See Churchill, vol. iv, 50; Gilbert, vol. vii, 49, parrots WSC's version. Amery's diary, Jan 21, 1942, confirms that Page was present, as do the minutes in CAB.69/4.
- 111** Curtin to WSC, Jan 23, received Jan 24, 1942. Churchill, vol. iv, 50f. At his next cabinet, on Jan 26, WSC 'ungraciously' accepted that Australia should be represented on the cabinet, until a new telegram arrived from Curtin demanding even closer involvement in the War Cabinet's decisions. 'Winston,' wrote Amery, 'at once took this as meaning interference with our domestic affairs and exploded.'
- 112** Hankey diary, Jan 4, 1942.
- 113** Brooke diary, unpublished, Jan 28, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6).
- 114** Chequers register, Jan 23–27, 1942.
- 115** Clementine to WSC, 'Thursday' perhaps Jan 29, 1942: cited in Mary Soames, *op. cit.*, 313f.
- 116** Beaverbrook memo, Feb 28; and Cripps to WSC, Jan 29, 1942, quoted therein. Beaverbrook met Cripps that day and tried to persuade him, but Cripps insisted on a seat in the cabinet (Beaverbrook papers, D.448).
- 117** WSC to Auchinleck, T.129/2, Jan 28, 1942 (CAB.163/10). Churchill, vol. iv: *The Hinge of Fate* (London, 1951), 24ff.
- 118** Martin diary, Jan 26, 1942. Hollis noted that day, 'I am casting around for something to relieve the gloom and am unable to do so' (CAB.120/26). In the National Archives, Washington, is a 43 page 'Log of Messages' between PRIME and POTUS (the prime minister and the president of the US); the first item, on Jan 27, is timed: 'In 550P, our 554P, clear WU57P, with the remark: 'PM ready for test. Not answered.'
- 119** Brooke diary, unpublished, Jan 27, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/7; and MS, 3/A/v, 348).
- 120** Oshima (Berlin) to Togo (Tokyo), No. 69, Jan 15, intercept No. 100,577, translated Jan 27 (HW.1/374). Ribbentrop had seen him for an hour on Jan 14, 1942.
- 121** WSC to Duff Cooper, Jun 12, 1940 (PREM.4/83/1a).
- 122** Hansard, *House of Commons Debates*, Jan 27, 1942, columns 591ff. Diaries of King and Nicolson.
- 123** *Ibid.*, Jan 29, columns 1017f. Diaries as above, and Chips Channon, Jan 29, 1942.
- 124** Beaverbrook to Hopkins, Feb 2, 1942, cited by Taylor, *Beaverbrook*, 506f.

16: **Poor Winston**

- 1 Home Intelligence Summary, week ending Feb 2, 1942, cited by Donovan to FDR, Feb 8 (FDR Libr., PSF, box 163, folder 'Donovan Reports').
- 2 Harvey diary, Feb 9, 1942.
- 3 Attlee chaired the defence committee (Operations) meeting, Jan 30, 1942 (CAB.69/4); cf. Brooke diary.
- 4 Clementine to Hopkins, Feb 2 (Hopkins papers, microfilm 11). Readers of Gilbert, vol. vii, 51ff will search in vain for the events between Jan 30 and Feb 7, 1942.
- 5 British MAUD Technical Committee, draft report, Jun 23, 1941. According to Conant to Bush, Mar 25, 1943, a member of this committee 'unofficially' gave a copy of this to his American colleagues.
- 6 Cherwell to WSC, Aug 27, 1941 (Cherwell papers, 'TUBE ALLOYS').
- 7 WSC to Ismay for chiefs of staff, Aug 30, 1941: Churchill, vol. iv, 340.
- 8 FDR to WSC, Oct 11, 1941. See WSC's memo, Feb 27, 1943 on the history of the atomic project, in *FRUS, Conferences at Washington and Quebec, 1943* (US Government Printing Office, Washington, 1970).
- 9 Cadogan diary, Feb 2, 1942; and Harvey diary, Feb 3, 1942.
- 10 Brooke diary, Feb 2, 1942.
- 11 Amery diary, Feb 2, 1942. On Feb 6, Eden was again 'impassioned in his demand for complete surrender,' although WSC, Beaverbrook, and Amery all concurred that FDR was insisting on Article VII only to 'oblige' Hull.
- 12 FDR to WSC, Feb 4, 1942, in *FRUS, 1942, I*, 529. In a memo that day, Dean Acheson had alerted FDR to a confidential cable from Winant to Hull (*ibid.*, 527ff) reporting the British cabinet's rejection of Article VII; Winant and Hull believed that this personal message from FDR to WSC was 'the only hope' for getting the draft accepted (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 584).
- 13 Winant to Hull, Feb 9, 1942 in 534f. R N Gardner, *Sterling-Dollar Diplomacy* (London, 1956) 60–61. Chequers register, 6–9, 1942; and 'Mr Winant's Visits to Chequers,' Extracts from Chequers Visitors' Book (FDR Library, Winant papers, box 189, 'Chequers').
- 14 FDR to WSC, Feb 11 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 590f, 632ff; and *FRUS, 1942, I*, 535ff).
- 15 Hansard, *House of Commons Debates*, Apr 21, 1944.
- 16 Oshima (Berlin) to Togo (Tokyo), No. 80 urgent, Jan 18, translation No. 101022, Feb 8, 1942. On WSC's instructions, GC&CS wired Capt. E Hastings to ensure that FDR saw it (HW.1/378).
- 17 Admiralty to Tovey and others, Jan 24, 1942 (CAB.121/1).
- 18 COS (42) 37th meeting, Feb 3, 1942 (CAB.121/1).
- 19 Capt. G E Colpoys RN, 'Admiralty Use of Special Intelligence in Naval Operations,' MOST SECRET–ULTRA, chapter vii, 84ff (ADM.223/88).
- 20 J Eccles, report, Jun 10, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/14).
- 21 Amery diary, Sep 4, 8, 1941.
- 22 Moran, 'diary,' 31.
- 23 Frankfurter memo to Richard Casey, Jan 8, 1943; Frankfurter diary, May 26, 1943 (Library of Congress, Felix Frankfurter papers, box 126).
- 24 Halifax to Eden, Sep 14, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A4.410.4.15).
- 25 War Cabinet, Feb 5. Amery diary, Feb 5, 1942; Cadogan diary, Feb 5, 1942. Amery to Lord Linlithgow, Feb 9, 1942: Mansergh, vol. i: 'With an occasional eye-wink at me, Winston suddenly pro-

- pounded [his] great scheme.'
- 26 Halifax diary, Nov 22, 1942, quoting Walter Layton and Beaverbrook (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.11).
- 27 Chequers register, Feb 7; Amery diary, Feb 7. Martin diary, Feb 7, 1942, records 'talk with Mrs Churchill about [WSC's] proposed flight' to India.
- 28 Eden diary, Feb 9; Harvey diary, Feb 9, 1942; PM's card.
- 29 War Cabinet, Feb 9, 1942. Cadogan diary, Feb 9, 1942; Brooke diary, Feb 9, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5; and MS, 3/A/V, 352, 355).
- 30 WSC to Wavell, Feb 10, one-thirty A.M.: Churchill, vol. iv, 87f. WSC had on Jan 19, 1942 already demanded in a minute to the chiefs of staff that the Commander, Staffs and principal Officers 'are expected to perish at their posts.'
- 31 Moran, 'diary,' 26.
- 32 Beaverbrook memo, Feb 28 (Beaverbrook papers, D.448); Chequers register, Feb 6, 1942.
- 33 WSC to Beaverbrook, Feb 10, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 64f.
- 34 For Beaverbrook's critique of bombing policy, see the draft paper for the defence committee, Feb 14, 1942, in Beaverbrook papers, D.425: the results had not justified Bomber Command's losses of 2,075 airmen and 376 bombers in the last half of 1941 alone, he said; the squadrons would be better used in the Middle and Far East. 'The policy of bombing Germany, which in any event can yield no decisive results within any measurable period of time, should no longer be regarded as of primary importance.'
- 35 Beaverbrook memo, Feb 28 (*op. cit.*); and Beaverbrook to WSC, Mar 3, 1942, 'Controversy over Russia' (Beaverbrook papers, D.94).
- 36 Eden diary, Feb 6, 1942.
- 37 Pacific War Council meeting, Feb 10 (CAB.99/26); Amery diary, Feb 10, 1942.
- 38 Hopkins memo, Feb 11, 1942 (Hopkins papers, box 136).
- 39 PM's card; Amery diary, Feb 11, 1942.
- 40 Churchill, vol. iv, 63ff.
- 41 Nicolson diary, Feb 12, 1942.
- 42 WSC to Hopkins, Feb 6, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv: *The Hinge of Fate*, 102.
- 43 Amery diary, Feb 11, 1942. Donovan to FDR, Feb 15, 1942 (FDR Libr., PSF, box 164, folder 'OSS-Donovan Reports').
- 44 Wavell to WSC, Feb 11, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 88.
- 45 Hinsley & Stripp, 43.
- 46 Colpoys (see note 19).
- 47 B Ramsay, 'Passage of German Battle-cruisers through the Dover Strait,' Feb 16, 1942 (ADM.199/620).
- 48 Elizabeth Layton to her mother, Feb 16, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vii, 56.
- 49 Beaverbrook memo, Feb 27, *op. cit.*; PM's card, Feb 12. Garfield Weston quoted in Cecil King (diary, Mar 26, 1942).
- 50 Cadogan diary, Feb 13, 1942.
- 51 Harvey diary, Feb 14, 1942.
- 52 Bruce Lockhart diary, Feb 14, 1942.
- 53 Halifax diary, Feb 17, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.10).
- 54 James R Wilkinson, US Consul in Birmingham, report, Mar 24, 1942 (NA, State dept. papers, 841.00/1583).
- 55 Wavell to WSC, Feb 14, 1942; received 10:40 A.M.: Churchill, vol. iv, 91f.
- 56 WSC to Wavell, Feb 14 (*ibid.*, 92). Brooke diary, unpublished, Feb 14, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5). The naval liaison officer (to III Corps) was the later Vice-Adm. Sir John Hayes; see his obituary, *Daily Telegraph*, Sep 23, 1998.
- 57 Colville diary; *cf.* Cadogan diary, Feb 15, and Harvey diary, Feb 15, 1942.

- 58 Nicolson diary, Feb 16. For the FO's agonising over WSC's phrase, 'that is what I have dreamed of, aimed at and worked for,' see Eden's files, FO.954/29, fols. 422ff. It attracted much criticism. When Eden sent to WSC on Apr 30, 1942 a draft text designed to spike their critics' guns, Churchill replied: 'I don't think there's much in this. *Qui s'excuse s'accuse. Qui s'explique se complique*' (*ibid.*, fols. 432f).
- 59 Beaverbrook expressed the same view to Lord Halifax (secret diary, Mar 25, 1942): the Channel episode was 'nearer home and more suggestive of uncomfortable thoughts about Invasion.' 'Where had we been so deficient in leadership that thousands of men could surrender and seem quite happy in marching to a Japanese concentration camp while they still had ammunition and water?' (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.19).
- 60 Home Intelligence Summary, week ending Feb 16, 1942, cited by Donovan to FDR, Feb 22 (FDR Libr., PSF, box 164, folder 'Donovan Reports'). Cecil King diary, Feb 16, 1942; on Feb 19 King added, 'Sinclair told [. . .] yesterday that Churchill was in a towering passion on Monday [Feb 16] over the criticism of his administration, and said he "hated the newspapers worse than the Nazis"!'
- 61 Eden diary, Feb 16; Harvey diary, Feb 17.
- 62 Hinsley, vol. ii, 179ff.
- 63 WSC to FDR, Feb 16, 1942 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 757ff).
- 64 Brooke diary, unpublished, Feb 16, 1942 (King's College London, Alanbrooke papers 5/5).
- 65 Attlee to WSC, Feb 16 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/13). Amery diary, Feb 16; defence committee (Operations) meeting, Feb 16, 1942 (CAB.69/4).
- 66 WSC to Dorman Smith, Feb 16, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 135.
- 67 Winant to FDR, Feb 17, 1942 (NA, State dept. papers).
- 68 Hansard, *House of Commons Debates*, Feb 17, columns 1671ff; *cf.* Nicolson diary, Feb 17, Harvey diary; Brooke diary, unpublished, Feb 17 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5).
- 69 HM King George VI diary, Feb 17, 1942.
- 70 Beaverbrook to WSC, Feb 17, 1942 (Beaverbrook papers); Taylor, *Beaverbrook*, 514, and Churchill, vol. iv, 73f.
- 71 Weizmann to WSC, Feb 12, 1942 (Weizmann papers).
- 72 Eden to Winant, May 1, 1942 (NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, confidential files, box 10, file '820.03 Jewish Army').
- 73 Note on a brief talk between WSC and Weizmann who was about to leave for the USA in 1942 (Princeton University, Seeley Mudd Manuscript Libr., Bernard Baruch papers).
- 74 Pacific War Council, Feb 17 (CAB.99/26); Amery diary, Feb 17, 1942.
- 75 Pim manuscript, quoted by Gilbert, vol. vii, 62.
- 76 Winant, quoted in a report by William L Langer, 'British cabinet changes,' Feb 22, 1942: OSS R&A report No. 246 (NA, RG.226, Records of the Office of Strategic Services).
- 77 Eden diary, Feb 18; and Harvey diary, Feb 18, 1942.
- 78 Eden diary, Feb 18, 1942.
- 79 Lord Reith diary, Feb 18, 1942, in *Sunday Express*, Sep 4, 1949.
- 80 Beaverbrook memo, Feb 28 (Beaverbrook papers, D.448); *cf.* Taylor, *Beaverbrook*, 514. Beaverbrook told Halifax he believed that Eden had been willing to give up the foreign office to Sir John Anderson and had persuaded WSC to make him Leader of the House instead; but that Cripps had 'got round Winston at a private luncheon' and

- persuaded him to give him the Leadership. Beaverbrook taxed the prime minister with this 'but could not get him to admit it.' Halifax secret diary, Mar 25, 1942.
- 81 Eden diary, Feb 19, 1942.
- 82 W P Crozier, cited in Taylor, *Beaverbrook*, 517; cf. PM's card, Feb 20, 1942.
- 83 Beaverbrook memo, Feb 28 (Beaverbrook papers, D.448); PM's card, Feb 24, 1942.
- 84 Beaverbrook to WSC, Feb 26, 1942. Gilbert, vol. vii, 64, with WSC's reply.
- 85 Frank Bellenger MP told Cecil King on Feb 19, 1942 (diary) of a heated Labour Party meeting that morning where even Attlee had been greeted by catcalls. 'Unless something pretty drastic is done with the Government, the Labour Members will be instructed to withdraw.' Garro-Jones told King the meeting had sent WSC an ultimatum to this effect.
- 86 Brooke diary, unpublished, Feb 19, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5).
- 87 Halifax secret diary, Feb 21, 1942.
- 88 Harvey diary, Feb 20, 1942; Amery diary, Feb 19–20, 1942. Cf. Cecil King diary, Feb 19: 'We were promised a statement about cabinet changes for 6 P.M. . . . At last Greig rang up from the MOI [with the details].'
- 89 Winant to FDR, Feb 19, 1942: 'I am using your special wire to transmit this information'; received 5:53 P.M. (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 76of).
- 90 FDR to WSC, No. 106, Feb 18, 1942; received in London, Feb 19 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 63of).
- 91 WSC to FDR, Feb 20, 1942, rec'd Feb 19, 9:01 P.M. (*ibid.*, 764).
- 92 Colpoys (see note 19).
- 93 GC&CS Naval Section report, Feb 20, 'Mining of *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*,' read by WSC, Feb 21; Godfrey (DNI) to CNO Washington, Feb 22. Pound minuted to WSC on Feb 22, 1942: 'I think the above information will have been given to the President' (HW.1/382).
- 94 FDR to WSC, Feb 11, 1942 (FDR Libr., microfilm 6, 53ff). The letter is not referred to by Churchill or by his latest biographer, Martin Gilbert; the carbon copy is in FDR's confidential files.
- 95 WSC's painting of Lavery vanished for seventy years, and was found in the possession of Geraldine Fairfax-Cholmondeley, of Hindon, Wiltshire, in 1988; it is now on loan to Chartwell. *SundayTimes*, Jan 17, 1988.
- 96 Professor Thomas Bodkin, 'Churchill the Artist,' in Charles Eade (ed.), *Churchill by his Contemporaries* (New York, 1953), 361. WSC is known to have exhibited five landscapes in Paris in 1921, selling four for £30 each. Bodkin says his 'Maurin' period was just before World War Two.
- 97 Roger Gounot, *Charles Maurin, 1856–1914: essai sur le peintre at catalogue de l'exposition de 1978*, Le Puy, Musée Crozetier de Puy, 1978. The present author's first publisher William Kimber, who put him on this trail, owned a genuine Maurin (but wished it were a Churchill).
- 98 Edward Bruce to FDR, Dec 23, 1941, enclosing a letter to WSC as Charles Marin (FDR Libr., microfilm 6, 53ff).
- 99 FDR note to Ed Watson, Jan 20, 1942 (*ibid.*, 57).
- 100 Angus McDonnell, British embassy, to Ed Watson, Feb 4, 1942 (*ibid.*, 59). 'Morin' might be an English phonetic rendering of 'Maurin.'
- 101 FDR to WSC, Feb 11, 1942 (*ibid.*, 53ff).
- 102 Bracken to Eisenhower, Oct 4, 1948 (Dwight D Eisenhower Library, file 13).
- 17: **Churchill Up and Churchill Down**

- 1 Martin diary, Mar 8; Cecil King diary, Feb 19, 25; Channon diary, Feb 20 (Robert Rhodes James [ed.], 322–3); Harriman to Hopkins, Mar 7, 1942 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder ‘Hopkins in London, Apr 1942’).
- 2 Harvey diary, Feb 27, 1942; and Dalton diary, Mar 5, 1942 (London School of Economics, Political Science Library, Hugh Dalton papers).
- 3 Oshima (Berlin) to Tojo (Tokyo), No. 309, Feb 28; intercept No. 102096, translated Mar 8, 1942 (HW.1/396).
- 4 Oshima (Berlin) to Tojo (Tokyo), No. 304, Feb 28; intercept No. 102109, translated Mar 8, on his talks with Ribbentrop on Feb 18, 22, and 23, 1942 (HW.1/396).
- 5 So Cripps said. Cecil King diary, Apr 30.
- 6 Margesson, quoted in Cecil King diary, Feb 25; Garfield Weston, citing Beaverbrook, in Cecil King diary, Mar 26. A V Alexander’s former principal private secretary Lord Winstler (formerly Commander Fletcher MP) told King (*ibid.*, Mar 26, 1942) that Pound braced himself to a ‘sort of swagger’ before seeing WSC, who still thought of the Adm. as he was twenty years earlier; after leaving WSC, Pound deflated again.
- 7 Halifax secret diary, Jul 15, 1942.
- 8 Eden diary, Feb 4, 16; Amery diary, Feb 23, 1942.
- 9 Quoted by Beaverbrook in Halifax (secret diary, Apr 4). Hankey diary, May 1: ‘I have no intention of coming back merely to be muzzled and in a subordinate position.’
- 10 Halifax diary, Sep 8, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.11).
- 11 Brooke diary, unpublished, Feb 3, 18; and *cf.* Mar 24: ‘COS till lunch, Dudley Pound fast asleep most of the time’ (Alanbrooke papers, 5/7; and MS, 3/A/vii).
- 12 Hankey diary, May 1, 1942 (Churchill College, Cambridge); Hankey claimed the credit, with his contributions to recent Lords debates.
- 13 Cecil King diary, Mar 23, 1942.
- 14 Philip Ziegler, *Mountbatten* (London, 1985), 168; PM’s card.
- 15 Brooke diary, unpublished, Mar 5 and 7, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5). He spelt the name ‘Mount Batten.’
- 16 WSC to Pound, Mar 5, 1942 (PREM.3/330/2).
- 17 WSC to Ismay, Mar 6, 1942 (PREM.3/330/2).
- 18 Pound to WSC, Mar 7, 1942 (PREM.20/57; Roskill, *Admirals*, 200; in Roskill papers, quoted by Ziegler, *op. cit.*, 168f).
- 19 WSC to chiefs of staff and Ismay, Mar 8, 1942 (PREM.3/330/2).
- 20 Menzies to WSC, Feb 18, 1942 (National Library of Australia, Canberra, Robert Menzies papers, MS.4936/1/57).
- 21 WSC to Menzies, Feb 23, 1942 (National Library of Australia, Canberra, Robert Menzies papers, MS.4936/1/57).
- 22 Cross to WSC, received Feb 26, 1942 (PREM.4/50/15).
- 23 Attlee to WSC, Feb 26, with WSC’s note, Feb 28, 1942 (PREM.4/50/15).
- 24 WSC to Curtin, Mar 13, *Documents on Australian Foreign Policy*, vol. v, No. 412. Casey did not inspire much confidence in those who met him. On Mar 22, 1942 FDR cabled to WSC about ‘the Casey business’ which was getting all out of proportion (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 828f).
- 25 WSC paper, ‘Notes 1942,’ Jul 12, 1949, written preparing his history (King’s College London, Sir Hastings Ismay papers, II/3/165).
- 26 Home Intelligence report for the week ending Feb 23, summarised in Donovan to FDR, Mar 2, 1942 (FDR Libr., PSF, box

- 164–5, folder ‘OSS–Donovan Reports’). The latest item is dated Jan 27, 1942.
- 27 Lyttelton’s mother told Judith Listowel he had drunk three quarters of a bottle of Green Chartreuse to prepare himself for the press conference on clothes rationing: Cecil King diary, Apr 3. On Eden, see *ibid.*, Apr 18, 1942, among many other sources including his own diaries.
- 28 Amery diary, Mar 1, 1942.
- 29 HM King George VI diary, Feb 24, 1942.
- 30 Bruce Lockhart diary, Feb 25 and 27.
- 31 Brooke diary, unpublished, Feb 25, 27, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5).
- 32 Eden diary, Feb 20, 23, 25, 1942.
- 33 Harvey diary, Feb 25, 1942. Six police-constables were held in reserve at Chequers, but no guests arrived. Chequers register, Feb 25–6, 1942.
- 34 No defence committee (Operations) meetings took place between Feb 16 and Mar 2, 1942 (CAB.69/4).
- 35 Harvey diary, Mar 2, 1942. Cadogan diary, Mar 2, 1942.
- 36 Amery diary, Feb 26, 1942.
- 37 P J Grigg to his father, Oct 1, 1941 (Churchill College Cambridge, P J Grigg papers, 2/4).
- 38 Harvey diary, Feb 27, 1942.
- 39 Mary Churchill’s diary, Feb 27, 1942: Soames, *op. cit.*, 314.
- 40 The PM’s card shows just ‘DP.’
- 41 Clementine Churchill to her sister Nellie Romilly, Feb 28: Soames, *op. cit.*, 314.
- 42 WSC to Auchinleck, Feb 26, and reply, Feb 27, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 261ff.
- 43 Moran, ‘diary,’ 46.
- 44 Harvey diary, Feb 28, 1942.
- 45 *Ibid.*, Mar 3, 1942.
- 46 Garfield Weston, quoting Beaverbrook, in Cecil King diary, Mar 26, 1942.
- 47 Beaverbrook, ‘Winston Churchill’s False Prophecies and Some Economic Consequences’ (Beaverbrook papers, D.480).
- 48 Dalton diary, Mar 5, 1942, quoting Bevin.
- 49 Harvey diary, Feb 22, 1942.
- 50 Brooke diary, unpublished, Feb 18, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5).
- 51 PM’s card, Mar 3; Cecil King diary, Mar 23, 1942.
- 52 See the discussion by historian Robert O’Neill on ‘Churchill, Japan, and British Security in the Pacific,’ in *Churchill* (Oxford, 1993). At the Austin, Texas conference on which O’Neill’s book is based, D CWatt said ironically that for WSC the Pacific was ‘a far away country of which he knew nothing.’
- 53 Butcher diary, May 31, 1943, unsealed. (In May 1977 we obtained the release of 209 pages of the diary which had formerly been sealed; identified hereafter in these notes as ‘sealed’).
- 54 As the Chief of the Australian General Staff pointed out to Curtin. Curtin to WSC, Feb 23, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 144.
- 55 WSC to Ismay, Feb 17, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 125.
- 56 WSC to FDR, Feb 20, 1942 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 765).
- 57 WSC to Curtin, Feb 20: Churchill, vol. iv, 138. Replying to this on Feb 22, Curtin pointed out that his message about ‘an inexcusable betrayal’ had been dated Jan 23, after WSC’s telegram dated Jan 14 informing him that the 18th Division would arrive in Malaya Jan 13–17, 1942.
- 58 Chiefs of staff meeting, Feb 20 1942 (CAB.79/56).
- 59 WSC to FDR, Feb 20, 1942 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 765).
- 60 FDR to WSC, Feb 21, enclosing his message to Curtin: Churchill, vol. iv, 141. Brooke wrote, in an unpublished passage of his diary: ‘The night continued to be as damnable as the day! Barely was I asleep

- when the First Sea Lord called me up at 1:45 A.M. about the destination of the convoy with the 7th Australian Division on board. It is at present between Colombo and Rangoon, marking time pending approval from Australians to use it in Burma. An approval which we are unlikely to obtain in spite of appeals from PM and from President of USA. As a result we shall probably lose Burma!' Brooke diary, unpublished, Feb 22, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5).
- 61 Curtin to WSC, Feb 22, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 141.
- 62 WSC to Curtin, Feb 22: Churchill, vol. iv, 143; Amery diary, Feb 22–3, 1942.
- 63 Curtin to WSC, Feb 23, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 144.
- 64 WSC to Curtin, Feb 23, 1942, *ibid.*, 145.
- 65 WSC to Dorman-Smith, Feb 25, 1942, *ibid.*, 146.
- 66 WSC to Ismay, Feb 23, replying to the chiefs of staffs' new appreciation 'in the light of recent events,' dated Feb 21, 1942 (PREM.3/158/6).
- 67 Lend–Lease Agreement, Washington, Feb 23, 1942 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 772ff).
- 68 R J Moore, *Churchill, Cripps, and India, 1939–1945* (Oxford, 1979) (hereafter: Moore). The underlying tone can be judged from FDR's message drafted on Feb 25 but evidently not sent: he spoke of Britain's 'mistaken policy of master and servant' in her colonies and Dominions in the Far East. 'The people of India feel that delay follows delay,' he wrote. Britain must recognise world change. He suggested recognising a 'small group' in India at once as a temporary Dominion Government. 'For the love of Heaven,' this draft ended, as did his message sent on Mar 10, 'don't bring me into this. It is, strictly speaking, none of my business except insofar as it is part and parcel of the successful fight you and I are making' (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 651ff).
- 69 Churchill, vol. iv, 185.
- 70 The United States were experiencing a series of race riots. Halifax secret diary, Mar 8 and 12, 1942.
- 71 Linlithgow to Amery, Feb 16; Amery diary, Feb 17, 1942.
- 72 Amery diary, Feb 18, 22, 1942.
- 73 *Ibid.*, Feb 26, 1942.
- 74 Beaverbrook, quoted by Margesson: Cecil King diary, Feb 25, 1942.
- 75 Amery diary, Feb 27–28, 1942.
- 76 *Ibid.*, Mar 1, 1942.
- 77 *Ibid.*, Mar 2, 1942.
- 78 WSC to Bridges, Feb 28, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 185.
- 79 WSC to Eden, Feb 28, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vii, 68.
- 80 Brooke diary, unpublished, Mar 2, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5).
- 81 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Mar 2 (CAB.69/4); Harvey diary, Mar 3, 1942.
- 82 Eden diary, Feb 27, 1942.
- 83 Cadogan diary, Feb 24 and 25, 1942.
- 84 Cadogan diary, Feb 28, 1942.
- 85 There is no message in Soviet archives from WSC between those dated Feb 11 and Mar 12, 1942 in *Stalin–WSC Correspondence*, vol. i.
- 86 Harvey diary, Mar 6, 1942.
- 87 Harriman to Hopkins, Mar 7, 1942 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942').
- 88 Wavell to WSC, Feb 21; and reply, Feb 22, 1942 (CAB.121/115).
- 89 WSC to Ismay, Feb 28, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 129ff.
- 90 PM's card. As Gilbert has hardly troubled to use the Royal archives reserved to

- him exclusively for his Churchill biography, we do not know what passed between monarch and his first minister this day. But see Amery diary, Mar 4, 1942.
- 91** Cadogan diary, Mar 4, 1942.
- 92** Halifax to Eden, Mar 3, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A4.410.4.15).
- 93** Memo by Adolph Berle, Mar 10, 1942, State dept. file 841.20211/36. There are twelve files of records on the operation of the 'PRIME-POTUS' [prime minister – president of the US] special-circuit channel in NA, RG.165, Records of the War dept. General and Special Staffs.
- 94** Memo by Adolph Berle, Mar 10, 1942, State dept. file 841.20211/36.
- 95** These were WSC telegrams Nos. 34, 35, 36, 37, to FDR, Mar 4, 1942.
- 96** WSC to FDR, Mar 4, 1942 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1,903ff).
- 97** WSC to FDR, Mar 7, 1942 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1,926ff).
- 98** Amery diary, Mar 4, 1942.
- 99** *Ibid.*, Mar 3, 1942.
- 100** *Ibid.*, Mar 4, 1942.
- 101** WSC to FDR, Mar 4, 1942 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1,882ff); Churchill, vol. iv, 185f.
- 102** Dalton diary, Mar 5, 1942; Cadogan diary, Mar 5, 1942.
- 103** War Cabinet, Mar 5, 1942, midday (CAB.65/25).
- 104** Amery to WSC, Mar 5, 1942, in Mansergh, vol. i: *The Cripps Mission* (London, 1970), 240.
- 105** Butler to Hoare, Mar 6, 1942 (Cambridge University Libr., Templewood papers, xiii, 19).
- 106** PM's card.
- 107** War Cabinet, Mar 5, six P.M. (CAB.65/25).
- 108** Cadogan diary, Mar 5, 1942.
- 109** Brooke diary, unpublished, Mar 6, 1942; he noted later that although WSC made no reference to this crisis in his memoirs, he himself had a vivid recollection of that dinner. 'After dinner,' the diary continued, 'discussion of offensive in France to relieve pressure on Russians' (Alanbrooke papers, 5/7; and MS, 3/A/v).
- 110** *Ibid.*, Mar 5, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5); in his MS Notes, 366, he expressed bafflement at finding no hint of this crisis in Churchill, vol. iv, chapter xii.
- 111** Harvey diary, Mar 6, 1942.
- 112** Halifax secret diary, Mar 8, 1942.
- 113** WSC to FDR, Mar 7, 1942 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 782ff and 788ff).
- 114** WSC to Stalin, Mar 9: Churchill, vol. iv, 293; it reached Stalin at Kuibyshev on Mar 12, 1942: in *Stalin–WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, No. 35.
- 115** Harriman to FDR, Tel. 2112, Mar 6 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 0922). In Washington, Winant was complaining to Hopkins that WSC saw more of Harriman than of him. Halifax secret diary, Mar 7, 1942.
- 116** Harriman to FDR, Mar 7 (FDR Libr., PSF, 'Harriman'). Gilbert, vol. vii, 72, citing Harriman and Elie Abel, *Special Envoy to Churchill and Stalin, 1941–1946* (London, 1976), dates the letter Mar 6, 1942.
- 117** Harriman to Hopkins, Mar 7, 1942 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308).
- 118** Mary Churchill diary, quoted by Gilbert, vol. vii, 69.
- 119** Later Sir John Parkinson (1885–1976); his only son, a Fleet Air Arm officer, had just been killed in the aerial dogfights as *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* broke through the Channel.
- 120** War Cabinet, Mar 7, 1942, 10:30 A.M. (CAB.65/25); Amery diary, Mar 7, 1942.
- 121** WSC to FDR, Mar 7; enclosing copies of the telegrams from Linlithgow and Wavell (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 928ff).

- 122 Eden diary, Mar 7, 1942.
- 123 Chequers register, Mar 6–9, 1942.
- 124 Note by Sir Stafford Cripps, Mar 8, 1942, in Mansergh, vol. i, 281. For the Churchill–Cripps correspondence on India, see PREM.4/48/4.
- 125 Harrison to Heath, Apr 2, 1942: India Conciliation Group papers at Friends House, London: Cripps file; R J Moore, 81.
- 126 Amery diary, Mar 8, 1942.
- 127 Eden diary, Mar 9, 1942.
- 128 Amery diary, Mar 10; and see WSC to Linlithgow, Mar 10 (PREM.4/48/4).
- 129 Chequers register, Mar 8, 1942. See Martin Middlebrook, *The Nuremberg Raid* (London, 1973), and Dudley Seward, *Bomber Harris. The Authorised Biography* (London, 1984). *Life* magazine, Apr 10, 1944 called Harris ‘this ice-cold, blue-eyed fighting man whom Britain’s Bloomsbury intellectuals call “The Butcher” behind his back.’ One of the 20th century’s most prolific ‘serial killers,’ Harris would die in his bed on Apr 5, 1984.
- 130 Jacob diary, record of ARCADIA conferences, Dec 1941, 55 (Churchill College, JACB.1/12).
- 131 Sinclair, memo, ‘Bombing Policy,’ DO (42) 14, Feb 9, 1942 (CAB.69/4 and CAB.121/1). The War Cabinet had decided on a policy to conserve bombers at its 64th, 84th, and 111th meetings in 1941.
- 132 Halifax secret diary, Mar 25. Beaverbrook, Draft paper for defence committee, Feb 14, 1942, evidently not circulated (Beaverbrook papers, D.425).
- 133 Sir A Harris, *Bomber Offensive* (London, 1947) 152.
- 134 WSC to Sinclair, Feb 14, 1942, in Dr Noble Frankland & Sir Charles Webster, *The Strategic Air Offensive against Germany* (HMSO, London, 1961) vol. iv, 322.
- 135 Sinclair to Portal, Feb 14, 1942 (AIR.19/187).
- 136 Air Staff directive, signed by Sir N Bottomley, to Bomber Command, Feb 14, 1942, *ibid.*, vol. i, 322f.
- 137 Portal to Bottomley, Feb 15, 1942, *ibid.*, vol. i, 324.
- 138 Sir A Harris, *Bomber Offensive* (London, 1947) 151; and author’s interview in 1961.
- 139 Harris to Sir Arthur Bryant, Feb 19 (1959?) (Alanbrooke papers, 5/1/84).
- 140 Brooke diary, unpublished, Feb 9, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5).
- 141 Stimson diary, Mar 5, 7, 8, 1942.
- 142 FDR to WSC, Mar 9, 1942 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 795ff).
- 143 Brooke diary, unpublished, Mar 10 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5). The Pacific War Council discussed it again on Mar 12, 1942. Amery (diary) warned that the Pacific/Indian Ocean boundary must be regarded as a strategic, not geographic one. ‘Winston fully saw the point.’
- 144 Dill to WSC, Mar 7, 1942 (First Sea Lord’s records, ADM.205/13).
- 145 Attlee to WSC, Jan 8 (CAB.121/1).
- 146 COS to COS Cttee, Jan 9, 1942 (CAB.121/1).
- 147 Appendix ‘F’ to JIC (42) 117(O), ‘Effect of Bombing Policy,’ Apr 6, 1942 (CAB.121/1).
- 148 Leahy diary, Mar 4–5 (Libr. of Congress, Manuscript Division, Fleet-Adm. William D Leahy papers, reel 2). M Rochat initially told Leahy that the raid had killed 5,000 and injured 1500 persons. The final death roll is stated in Leahy to FDR, Mar 10 (*ibid.*). ‘To murder, for political motives, women, children and old people, is a method of Soviet inspiration,’ protested Adm. Darlan, his anti-British feelings aroused, to Leahy in a letter on Mar 8, 1942. He ordered reprisals against British

- subjects in French North-West Africa.
- 149 *Ibid.*, Mar 7, 1942.
- 150 WSC to Dill, Mar 14, 1942, quoted by Gilbert, vol. vii, 75.
- 151 WSC to Stalin, Mar 9, and reply, Mar 14, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 293f; in *Stalin–WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, Nos. 35, 36.
- 152 WSC to Portal and Sinclair, M.93/2, Mar 13, 1942 (AIR.19/187).
- 153 Cadogan diary, Mar 16, 1942.
- 154 Brooke diary, Mar 19, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5).
- 155 Chequers register, Mar 22, 1942.
- 18: **Humiliation Valley**
- 1 WSC to Pound, Jan 22, 1942 (PREM.3/191/1).
- 2 WSC to Ismay, No. D.9/2, Jan 25, 1942 (CAB.121/1).
- 3 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Mar 2, 1942 (CAB.69/4).
- 4 David Irving, *The Destruction of Convoy PQ17* (revised and updated edition, London, 1980) (hereafter: Irving, *PQ17*), 19ff. These ULTRA intercepts were first made available by the admiralty for the hearing of a 1970 libel action against the author. Writing this work in the 1960s, he was allowed by the admiralty to copy the entire grid-map – by hand.
- 5 GC&CS Naval headlines No. 248, Mar 8, 1942, 11 A.M. (HW.1/396).
- 6 *Ibid.*, 21f; S Roskill, *The War at Sea* (London, 1956), vol. ii, 120ff; *Vorstoß Tirpitz (BdS) mit 5. Z.Fl. nach der Bäreninsel 6. bis 9. März 1942, a study by German Admiralty Historical Branch*, issued in *Operation und Taktik* (Heft 13), Aug 1944.
- 7 WSC to Pound, Mar 13, and reply, Mar 15, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/13).
- 8 Harriman to FDR, Mar 7, 1942 (loc. cit.).
- Cadogan diary, Mar 9, 1942.
- 9 Cecil King diary, Mar 12, 1942.
- 10 Robin Barrington-Ward diary, Mar 30, 1942, quoted in Donald McLachlan, *In the Chair: Barrington Ward of 'The Times'* (London, 1971), 194f. PM's card.
- 11 PM's card; and Chequers register, Mar 12–18, 1942 (copies in the author's possession; author's microfilm DI–89).
- 12 Eden diary, Mar 16; Harvey diary, Mar 15; Cadogan diary, Mar 16, 1942. Lord Moran's 'diary' made no mention of this medical episode. Sir Thomas Peel Dunhill (1876–1957) was a pioneer of thyroid gland surgery. He would also repair WSC's hernia in 1947, and treat burns on his hand in 1953.
- 13 So WSC told FDR on Mar 7, 1942 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 926ff).
- 14 Taylor, *Beaverbrook*, 525.
- 15 PM's card; Beaverbrook to WSC, Mar 12, 1942. Taylor, *Beaverbrook*, 523.
- 16 Beaverbrook memo, Mar 16 (Beaverbrook papers, D.448). He cabled to Stalin direct on Mar 19, 1942: 'I am leaving for Washington in the morning for the purpose of discussing the 1941 [Soviet] boundaries with the President.' And WSC cabled to Hopkins to impress on the president that Beaverbrook was his intimate political associate. Taylor, *op. cit.*, 524f.
- 17 WSC to Stalin, Mar 20, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 294.
- 18 Eden diary, Mar 16; Harvey diary, Mar 17, 1942.
- 19 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Mar 18, 1942 (CAB.69/4); Amery diary, Mar 18, 1942.
- 20 WSC to Stalin, Mar 21, and reply, Mar 29, 1942, in *Stalin–WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, Nos. 37 and 38.
- 21 Defence committee (Operations) meet-

- ings, Apr 17 (chaired by Attlee) and Apr 28 (chaired by WSC), 1942 (CAB.69/4).
- 22 Cadogan diary, Apr 9, 1942.
- 23 Amery diary, Mar 11, 1942.
- 24 FDR to WSC, Mar 10, received Mar 11, 1942 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 799ff and 804ff); and Churchill, vol. iv, 188f.
- 25 Cripps to WSC, Apr 4, 1942, in Mansergh, vol. i: *The Cripps Mission* (London, 1970), 519.
- 26 WSC to Auchinleck, Mar 8: Churchill, vol. iv, 262. Moran, 'diary,' 46, 'diary' for Mar 14. Brooke diary, unpublished, Mar 24, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5).
- 27 Brooke diary, Mar 13, 1942.
- 28 WSC to Auchinleck, Mar 15 and 16, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 262f; quoted imperfectly by Gilbert, vol. vii, 76.
- 29 Brooke diary, Mar 25, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5; compare the published version, Bryant, 339).
- 30 Brooke diary, unpublished, Mar 26 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5; and MS, 3/A/v, 374). Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Mar 26, 1942 (CAB.69/4).
- 31 *Ibid.*, Mar 25, 27, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5).
- 32 *Ibid.*, Mar 27 1942.
- 33 *Ibid.*, Mar 25, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5).
- 34 Eden diary, Mar 19, 1942.
- 35 Halifax secret diary, Mar 26; Beaverbrook memo: Taylor, *Beaverbrook*, 525.
- 36 Halifax secret diary, Mar 25, 1942.
- 37 Halifax diary, Mar 26, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.10).
- 38 Halifax secret diary, Apr 1, 1942.
- 39 'News received from the Upper War Room, Admiralty, 9 A.M., Mar 29, 1942' (PREM.3/376).
- 40 Nel, *op. cit.*, 82.
- 41 The German naval staff war diary states that sixty Frenchmen were killed in the explosion.
- 42 WSC – or Mountbatten – also writes inspiringly of how the Germans inflicted 'severe punishment' on the brave Frenchmen 'who on the spur of the moment rushed from every quarter to the aid of what they hoped was the vanguard of liberation.'
- 43 S W Roskill, *The War at Sea* (London, 1956), vol. ii, 173. He also wrote that 'a large number of German officers' had just gone aboard *Campbeltown* when she blew up, 'and casualties among them were heavy.' 'These repeated explosions, combined with the loss of so many of their officers, caused German troops to panic, and in the ensuing indiscriminate firing many hundreds of their fellow-countrymen, and unhappily many French workmen, were killed.' This is not supported by records in the German naval archives.
- 44 Brooke diary, unpublished, Mar 30, 1942.
- 45 *Ibid.*, Mar 31, 1942.
- 46 Quoted in Dr Hugh L'Etang, *Fit to Lead?* (London, 1980), 32.
- 47 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Apr 18, 1942 (CAB.69/4) and COS(4)103(O) Final; and Philip Ziegler, Mountbatten, chapter 14.
- 48 WSC to Sinclair, Apr 14, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vii, 84.
- 49 Cherwell to WSC, Mar 30 (Cherwell papers); circulated as DO (42) 38 to defence committee, Apr 9, 1942 (CAB.121/1).
- 50 DO (42) 38, Apr 9, 1942.
- 51 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Apr 6, 1942 (CAB.69/4).
- 52 Tizard to Cherwell, Apr 15 and 20 (Cherwell papers). For Cherwell's reply, Apr 22, 1942, see AIR.8/424.
- 53 Cherwell to Tizard, Apr 22 (AIR.19/187).
- 54 Bridges to Lord Simon, Apr 15; and to Singleton, Apr 16, 1942 (CAB.121/1).
- 55 G&CS Police Section, 'German Police,'

- report No. 30/42, signed ACT, Apr 29, quoting Rostock police report of Apr 26, 1942 (HW.1/536).
- 56 Turkish foreign minister, Ankara, to ambassador in London, No. 136, May 4, translated as #104111, May 7, 1942 (HW.1/551).
- 57 HM King George VI diary, Apr 30, 1942.
- 58 Papers on 'LMF' ('lack of morale fibre') and 'W' (waverers) cases – aircrew who forfeited the confidence of their CO's – Jul 1941–Nov 1959, are closed for 75 years (AIR.19/632).
- 59 Geoffrey Shakespeare to Sinclair, May 21, and reply, May 26, 1942 (AIR.19/187).
- 60 WSC to chiefs of staff in London, Dec 29, 1941, 10:20 P.M. GMT (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/13); and see PREM.3/47/1.
- 61 Admiralty to BAD, for Pound, Dec 31, 1941 (Pound's records, ADM.205/13).
- 62 Chiefs of staff to WSC, Jan 5, and Pound to VCNS, Jan 6, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/13).
- 63 WSC to Ismay, Jan 7, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/13).
- 64 Pound to WSC, Jan 29, and reply, Feb 3, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/13). The original in the First Sea Lord's records (ADM.205/13) was destroyed in 1949 for reasons of discretion, but WSC's copy survives in PREM.3/47/1.
- 65 Cunningham to Adm. J H Godfrey, May 17(?), 1956, quoted by Roskill, *Churchill and the Admirals*, 142.
- 66 Described by A B Cunningham in a letter to his aunt, Jun 11 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52575, vol. xix). The date of his visit to Chequers is confirmed by Chequers register, Apr 10–13, 1942.
- 67 Cunningham to Roskill, Sep 9. Cunningham related this exchange at the time: Halifax secret diary, Sep 6, 1942.
- 68 Dalton diary, Apr 6, 1943.
- 69 WSC to Pound and A V Alexander, Mar 10, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/13; WSC's file PREM.3/324/14); Churchill, vol. iv, 154.
- 70 WSC to FDR, Apr 1. Rare papers by Britain's Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) on probable German and Japanese intentions will be found in the US army Military History Institute, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, William Donovan papers, box 92a, scattered through vol. 23, 'JIC Pacific.'
- 71 WSC to FDR, Mar 23, 1942 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 958).
- 72 FDR to WSC, Mar 26, 1942 (FDR Libr., microfilm 1, 830).
- 73 WSC to Australian representative in Washington, Apr 1, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vii, 82.
- 74 A V Alexander to WSC, Jun 7, referring specifically to 'special intelligence' (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/14); WSC says Somerville received this information on Mar 28, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 157.
- 75 Pound to WSC, Apr 12, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/13).
- 76 A V Alexander to WSC, Jun 7, 1942, referring specifically to 'special intelligence' (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/14).
- 77 Marshall was contemptuous. He seems to have told Stimson: 'The British . . . got a false report of the size and newness of the Jap battleships which were there and that scared them.' Stimson diary, Apr 20, 1942. In his memoirs, vol. iv, 157, WSC attributed this information to a Catalina reconnaissance plane; the plane was piloted by Squadron Ldr Leonard Birchall of the RCAF; Birchall radioed his sighting back to base before being shot down. The Japanese rescued him, but failed to extract from him the location of Somerville's fleet.
- 78 Somerville diary, Mar 27 – Apr 4, 1942 (Churchill College, Somerville papers).

- 79 Martin diary, Apr 4, 5; Somerville diary, Apr 5, 1942.
- 80 Pound to WSC, Apr 12, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/13).
- 81 WSC, personal minute D.107/2, Jun 1, 1942 (Pound's records, ADM.205/14).
- 82 Pound to AV Alexander, Jun 6, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/14).
- 83 WSC to Cripps, Apr 5, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vii, 85.
- 84 WSC to FDR, Apr 7, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 159f.
- 85 Mackenzie King diary, Apr 16, 1942.
- 86 *Ibid.*
- 87 Rear-Adm L H K Hamilton to his mother, Apr 12 (National Maritime Museum, Hamilton papers); Irving, *PQ17*, 50.
- 88 Eden diary, Apr 11, 1942.
- 89 Linlithgow to Amery, Apr 7, 1942. Amery papers. Amery replied that WSC was determined to honour his obligations to Russia.
- 90 Wavell to chiefs of staff, Apr 12, 1942.
- 91 FDR to WSC, Mar 10. *FRUS*, 1942, vol. i, 615–16.
- 92 Hopkins's visit had been preceded by a luncheon on Mar 25 between himself, FDR, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff to discuss the report submitted by the (notoriously anti-British) Joint Planners on strategy. Like WSC, the president had hitherto shown more interest in the Middle East and the Mediterranean basin, but Marshall edged him out again into the Atlantic. On Mar 27 he urged the president to send the JCS plan over to WSC by his most trusted messenger, by-passing the Joint Staff Mission in Washington (Stimson diary, Mar 25, 27, 1942).
- 93 Hopkins to WSC, Apr 2 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, April 1942').
- 94 FDR to WSC, Apr 2, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 280.
- 95 Churchill, vol. iv, 191; Gilbert, vol. vii, 87f.
- 96 R J Moore, 93.
- 97 Cripps to WSC, Apr 1, 1942: Mansergh, vol. i, 484; and PREM.4/48/4.
- 98 Eden diary, Apr 1, 1942.
- 99 War Cabinet, Apr 2, 1942 (CAB.65/26); Mansergh, vol. i, 500.
- 100 WSC to Cripps, Apr 2, 1942: Mansergh, vol. i, 502.
- 101 Eden diary, Apr 2 1942.
- 102 Linlithgow to Amery, Apr 2: Mansergh, vol. i, 503. Amery diary, Apr 2, 1942.
- 103 R J Moore, 97.
- 104 Linlithgow to Amery, Apr 3, 1942: Mansergh, vol. i, 512.
- 105 WSC to Linlithgow, Apr 4: Mansergh, vol. i, 522. Amery diary, Apr 5, 1942.
- 106 R J Moore, 98.
- 107 Amery diary, Apr 6, 1942.
- 108 Cripps to WSC, Apr 4, 1942: Mansergh, vol. i, 519.
- 109 Chequers register, Apr 4–5, 1943.
- 110 WSC to Linlithgow, Apr 5, 1942: Mansergh, vol. i, 100; and PREM.4/48/4.
- 111 Linlithgow to Amery and WSC, Apr 6, 1942: Mansergh, vol. i, 530 and PREM.4/48/4.
- 112 Cable to Cripps, Apr 6, 1942: Mansergh, vol. i, 103 and PREM.4/48/4.
- 113 Johnson's papers are in the Alderman Library of the University of Virginia.
- 114 Cripps to WSC, Apr 9, 1942 (PREM.4/48/4).
- 115 WSC to Cripps Apr 9, 1942: Mansergh, vol. i, 563 and PREM.4/48/4.
- 116 Hopkins's note on meeting with WSC, 10:30 A.M. TO 12, Apr 9 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, file 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942'); Robert E Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins, An Intimate History* (New York, 1948), 524; and

- see Hopkins's to FDR, Apr 9, 1942, in *FRUS*, 1942, vol. i, 629–30.
- 117** WSC to Cripps, Apr 9, 1942, in Mansergh, vol. i, 564 and PREM.4/48/4.
- 118** War Cabinet meeting, midday, Apr 9 (CAB.65/26); in Mansergh, vol. i, 566. Cf. Amery diary, Apr 9, 1942: 'This was the first we had heard officially of Johnson's intervention.'
- 119** War Cabinet to Cripps, Apr 9, 1942: Mansergh, vol. i, 567, and PREM.4/48/4. These were drafted by Simon and Amery.
- 120** Cripps to War Cabinet, Apr 10, 1942: Mansergh, vol. i, 577 and PREM.4/48/4.
- 121** Johnson to FDR, Apr 11, in *FRUS*, 1942, vol. i, 631–2.
- 122** Clementine Churchill to Hopkins, Apr 10, 1942 (Hopkins papers, microfilm 11).
- 123** FDR to WSC, Apr 3, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 281.
- 124** Printed in Churchill, vol. iv, 281f.
- 125** Hopkins, unsigned memo, Apr 8 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942').
- 126** Cf. Brooke diary, Apr 8, 1942 (King's College London, Alanbrooke papers).
- 127** Hopkins memo, Apr 8 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942'). The British transcripts of the Hopkins–Marshall discussions in London are in PREM.3/333/6, fols.373–9.
- 128** Hopkins memo, Apr 9 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942').
- 129** Chiefs of staff meeting, Apr 9, 1942 (CAB.79/56).
- 130** Brooke diary, Apr 9, 1942 (King's College London, Alanbrooke papers).
- 131** Eden diary, Apr 10, 1942.
- 132** Brooke diary, Apr 10, 1942 (King's College London, Alanbrooke papers).
- 133** Hopkins to FDR, Apr 11 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942').
- 134** WSC to FDR, Apr 12, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 283 and PREM.4/48/4.
- 135** War Cabinet, Apr 13, 1942 (CAB.65/26).
- 136** Hopkins to FDR, Apr 11 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942').
- 137** Azad to Cripps, Apr 10: Mansergh, vol. i, 587; R J Moore, 120. Cripps to WSC, Apr 11, 1942, Churchill, vol. iv, 191f and PREM.4/48/4.
- 138** Churchill, vol. iv, 192.
- 139** Amery diary, Apr 10, 1942.
- 140** Eden diary, Apr 10, 1942.
- 141** WSC to Cripps, Apr 11, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vii, 88.
- 142** FDR to Hopkins for WSC, Apr 11, 1942, *FRUS*, 1942, vol. i, 633–4. The text in Churchill, vol. iv, 193 is essentially the same but paraphrased.
- 143** WSC to FDR, Apr 12, *FRUS*, 1942, vol. i, 634–5; Churchill, vol. iv, 195. Harvey diary, Apr 14, 1942.
- 144** From Amery to Linlithgow, Apr 3, 1942: Mansergh, vol. i, 517.
- 145** Ickes diary, Aug 8, 1942.
- 146** WSC to Hopkins for FDR, May 31 (Hopkins papers, box 136; Henry Wallace diary, Jun 15, 1942).
- 147** HM King George VI diary, Jul 28, 1942, 703.
- 148** Chiefs of staff meeting, Apr 14, 1942 (CAB.79/56).
- 149** PM's card.
- 150** Hopkins to FDR, Apr 14 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942').
- 151** Marshall to Stimson, Apr 15 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942').
- 152** Defence committee (Operations) meet-

- ing, Apr 14 (CAB.69/4; and Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942'); also largely published in Churchill, vol. iv, 283ff.
- 153** Brooke diary, unpublished, Apr 15, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5); Martin diary, Apr 15, 1942.
- 154** Marshall to WSC, Apr 28, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vi, 91n.
- 155** WSC to FDR, Apr 17, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 286f.
- 156** War dept. to Marshall, passed on to WSC on April 13, 1942 (HW.1/505).
- 157** Draft telegram, GC&CS to US Navy dept., Apr 17, 1942 (HW.1/504). The file has a note from Denniston to C: 'Would you approve of a copy of this being sent to the Navy dept.? If so, I will arrange to send through the usual channels.' Marginalia indicate that it went to WSC, was 'approved' and 'sent by GC&CS.'
- 158** WSC to Ismay, Mar 13, 1942, quoted in Gilbert, vol. vii, 74f.
- 159** Curtin to WSC, Apr 17, 1942 (CAB.120/611).
- 160** WSC to FDR, Apr 15, 1942.
- 161** WSC to Attlee, Apr 16, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vi, 92.
- 162** Hopkins memo, Apr 18 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942'); Eden (diary, Apr 18) established that the story was based on a newspaper report. According to Gen. Gustave Bertrand, *Enigma* (Paris, 1973), 127-8, in Feb 1942 he received a signal from C over his CADIX link (CADIX being his Vichy codebreaking unit which liaised with the SIS) requesting him to convey a personal invitation from Churchill to Weygand to take command of a landing in French North-West Africa. Weygand rebuffed Bertrand, saying that he had given his word to Pétain not to go against the latter's policies.
- 163** Hopkins memo, Apr 21 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942'); Eden diary, Apr 18, 1942.
- 164** WSC to FDR, No. 74, Apr 20 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942').
- 165** FDR to WSC, No. 138, Apr 21 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942'); it was drafted by Hopkins, who admitted it 'is a rather evasive answer but it may be all you [FDR] want to say to the Prime Minister at the moment.'
- 166** WSC to FDR for Hopkins, Apr 20 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942').
- 167** Stimson diary, Apr 20, 1942.
- 168** *Ibid.*, Apr 22, 1942.
- 169** Halifax secret diary, Apr 21, 1942.
- 170** *Ibid.*
- 171** Halifax secret diary, Apr 24, 1942. Told this, Beaverbrook said exactly the same was true for FDR, and 'one of these days Winston and he would quarrel.'
- 19: Three Men and a Baby**
- 1** Minute to C-in-C, Home Forces, Apr 7, 1942: phone call from Cdr. [C R] Thompson (wo.199/303).
- 2** Beaverbrook, quoted by Halifax secret diary, Apr 1, 1942.
- 3** Author's interview of Kay Halle, Washington, Jun 2, 1983. 'If only Randolph had married her [Kay Halle], all this would never have happened,' she quotes WSC as saying in 1955. Randolph, aged 19, had first proposed to her; suspecting he had a drinking problem she turned him down.

- 4 Winston S Churchill, *His Father's Son. The Life of Randolph Churchill* (London, 1996) (hereafter: W S Churchill, Jr, *Randolph Churchill*), 187. Randolph's divorce came through a few months after VE day. Pamela married Leland Hayward, divorced him and became the third wife of the then 80-year-old Harriman in 1971; he died on Jul 27, 1986, she died Feb 5, 1997, being accorded a state funeral in Paris.
- 5 Cf. Richard Hough, *Winston and Clementine: The Triumph of the Churchills* (London, 1990).
- 6 Cecil King diary, Feb 19; Colville diary, Apr 17, 1941 (Churchill College, CLVL.1/4).
- 7 Cecil King diary, Oct 30, 1942. 'London society,' he recorded, 'is buzzing with an affair between Averil [sic] Harriman and Mrs Randolph Ch!' – The PM's card shows that Harriman and Kathleen had drinks with WSC on the previous evening at 8:30 P.M.
- 8 Randolph Churchill to WSC, Jul 5 (W S Churchill, Jr, *Randolph Churchill*, 191; Gilbert, vol. vi, 1127); and to Pamela, Jul 5, 1941 (W S Churchill, Jr, *Randolph Churchill*, 201).
- 9 Chequers register, Feb 6–9, 13–16, 1942; and extracts from the Chequers Visitors Book (FDR Libr., Winant papers, box 189, 'Chequers').
- 10 Chequers register, Mar 17–18, 1942.
- 11 Anita Leslie, *Cousin Randolph* (London, 1985), quoted by W S Churchill, Jr, *Randolph Churchill*, 201.
- 12 W S Churchill, Jr, *Randolph Churchill*, 202f.
- 13 Clementine to WSC, Apr 11, 1942. Richard Hough, *Winston and Clementine: The Triumph of the Churchills* (London, 1990) reduces the phrase 'Parachute Jumper' to 'parachutist.' The original text will be found in Mary Soames (ed.), *Speaking for Themselves: The Personal Letters of Winston and Clementine Churchill* (London, 1998).
- 14 WSC to Randolph Churchill, Apr 12, 1942, in W S Churchill, Jr, *Randolph Churchill*, 204.
- 15 Pamela Churchill to Beaverbrook, [Apr 9?] 1942 (Beaverbrook papers, C.87, 'Pamela Churchill').
- 16 Beaverbrook kept close watch on the mounting debt and his staffer A G Millar wrote occasionally to Harriman reminding him; by Apr 1944 Beaverbrook had paid out £1,029 like this, of which Harriman had reimbursed £550 in Jul 1943 via the Royal Bank of Canada in Montreal.
- 17 KH to WSC, Apr 25, endorsed, 'Show to Mrs Churchill' (PREM.3/217/4).
- 18 Hopkins (via H Freeman Matthews) to WSC, Apr 29; and reply, WSC to Hopkins, T.652a/2 Apr 29 (PREM.3/217/4). Pamela Churchill was at Chequers on Apr 18 for the weekend; as was Lady Cripps, whose husband arrived back from India three days later. Martin diary, Apr 18, 1942.
- 19 Cecil King diary, Jun 19, 1943. There is an undated note in Pamela's handwriting in Beaverbrook's file reading, 'I do want to thank you for the wonderful presents to Baby Winston and myself.' On Dec 13, 1943 Beaverbrook sent her £100, joking: 'I hope you will spend the money on his religious instruction' (Beaverbrook papers, files C.86, 87).
- 20 WSC to Randolph, May 2, 1942, quoted by Gilbert, vol. vii, 101; and in W S Churchill, Jr, *Randolph Churchill*, 206f.
- 21 Beaverbrook to WSC, Oct 5, 1942 (Beaverbrook papers, C.87, 'Pamela Churchill').
- 22 Beaverbrook to WSC, Oct 7, 1942 (*ibid.*).
- 23 Harriman, Moscow, to Beaverbrook, Apr

- 5, 1944. 'Pamela is settling up [daughter] Kathleen's and my accounts in London and needs this to carry on. I hope that you won't mind turning it over to her' (Beaverbrook papers, C.158, 'Harriman'). The 'Harriman funds' (including with the arrears in fact £1,700) arrived and were paid into Beaverbrook's Westminster Bank account. The system continued after the war, with Harriman relying on Beaverbrook's credit and repaying the debt from time to time. On Mar 25, 1947 the debt was £629, and he paid £700 in July. In Nov 1947 Pamela's Grosvenor Square apartment was costing £230 per quarter. Beaverbrook memo, Nov 25; and ltr to Harriman, Dec 30, 1947 (*ibid.*).
- 24 Elizabeth Layton letter home, Apr 16, 1942: in Gilbert, vol. vi, 93.
- 25 Nicolson diary, Apr 23, 1942; he told Bruce Lockhart that Churchill's success in the speech was 'terrific.' Bruce Lockhart diary, May 18, 1942.
- 26 The conduct of the large British force in Singapore, recorded Nicolson, 'does not seem to have been in harmony with the past or present spirit of our forces.' Nicolson diary, Apr 23, 1942.
- 27 Dalton diary, Apr 23, 1942 (London School of Economics, Political Science Library, Hugh Dalton papers).
- 28 *Life*, Jan 28, 1946; copy in Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942.'
- 29 *Ibid.*
- 30 WSC to Randolph Churchill, May 2, 1942, quoted by Gilbert, vol. vi, 95.
- 31 G M Thomson to Beaverbrook, Apr 24, 1942 (Beaverbrook papers, D.517).
- 32 P J Grigg to his father, Apr 26, 1942 (Grigg papers, 2/4).
- 33 Halifax secret diary, Apr 24, 1942.
- 34 Cecil King diary, Apr 11, 1942.
- 35 Eden diary, Apr 24, 1942.
- 36 Arthur Christiansen, of *Daily Express*, to Beaverbrook, Apr 27, 1942 (Beaverbrook papers, D.517).
- 37 G M Thomson wrote to Beaverbrook on Apr 24 (Beaverbrook papers, D.517).
- 38 Martin diary, Apr 24, 1942.
- 39 Note by Matthews of US embassy, Apr 24, 1942 (NA, RG.59, papers of H Freeman Matthews).
- 40 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Apr 22, 1942 (CAB.69/4).
- 41 Churchill, vol. iv: *The Hinge of Fate*, 273; for signals relating to the use of the Wasp, see ADM.205/13.
- 42 WSC to Randolph, May 2, 1942, in Gilbert, vol. vii, 99.
- 43 War Cabinet, Apr 24, 1942, conf. annex (CAB.65/30).
- 44 Chiefs of staff meeting, Apr 24 (CAB.79/56); and Eden diary, Apr 24, 1942.
- 45 Morton to WSC, Apr 15; minutes by WSC, Apr 16 and 25; WSC to Morton, Apr 24. Desmond Morton to Sir Wilfrid Freeman (Vice-CAS), Apr 27, 1942: 'Of course it would be disastrous if Gen. de Gaulle knew that we were taking precautions of any kind'; to Vice-Adm. H R Moore, Apr 27; and to Sir David Petrie (MI5), Apr 27, 1942 (PREM.3/120/10b; the file was closed until 1995).
- 46 Eden diary, Apr 24, 1942; cf. Eden, *Reckoning*, 326.
- 47 Stalin to WSC, Apr 22, 1942 in *Stalin-WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, No. 40; and in PREM.3/403.
- 48 Hansard, *House of Commons Debates*, Jul 30, 1941, vol. 373, column 1504.
- 49 Note from Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs to all Missions in Moscow, Jan 6, 1942, in *Documents on Polish-Soviet Relations, 1939-1945*, vol. i, 1939-1943 (London, 1961) (hereafter: *Polish Documents*),

- 260.
- 50 Conversation between Sikorski and Cripps, Jan 26, 1942, in *Polish Documents*, 269–71.
- 51 Conversation between Sikorski and WSC, Jan 31, 1942, *ibid.*, 274–6.
- 52 Conversation between Sikorski, WSC, Eden, Bevin, Sinclair, Commander Thompson, Dr Retinger, and Captain Zamoycki, Mar 11, 1942, *ibid.*, 295–9.
- 53 Conversation between Sikorski and FDR, Mar 24, 1942, *ibid.*, 310.
- 54 PM's card, Apr 26, 1942. Alexander Ushakow, *Das Erbe Stalins in den deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen* (Cologne, 1970), 30.
- 55 Cecil King diary, May 2, 1942.
- 56 American censors intercepted a telegram from Beaverbrook to Brown on Apr 16, 1942, reading: 'I send you my personal good wishes and my hopes and expectations. I cannot oppose the Churchill candidate but I hope the newspapers give you a good show. Mention this telegram to Robertson. Sgd.: Max Beaverbrook.' An American hand notes on the intercept that Robertson was 'Business manager, *Daily Express*, and Beaver's handyman' (NA: State Dept. file 841.00/1589).
- 57 James Leasor, *War at the Top* (London, 1959), 177.
- 58 *Sunday Times*, Apr 26; Christiansen to Beaverbrook, Apr 27, 1942 (Beaverbrook papers, D.517). 'I expect this uproar will continue and increase.'
- 59 So thought Hopkins and Halifax, who wrote: 'I think that Max is yielding to wishful thinking.' Halifax secret diary, Apr 21, 1942.
- 60 *Ibid.*, Apr 24, 1942.
- 61 *Ibid.*, May 1, 1942.
- 62 Halifax to WSC, No. 2558, and to Eden, No. 2559, May 2, 1942 (FO.954/29).
- 63 Hopkins to WSC, Apr 24 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942').
- 64 WSC to Hopkins, Apr 26, cited by Gilbert, vol. vii, 97; FDR to WSC, Apr 26 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942'). Dated Apr 27, 1942 in Churchill, vol. iv, 231.
- 65 WSC to FDR, Apr 28, received 11:13 A.M. (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942').
- 66 FDR to WSC, Apr 30, 1942.
- 67 WSC to FDR, May 2, 1942, Churchill, vol. iv, 231f.
- 68 FDR to WSC, May 3, 1942, *ibid.*, 232.
- 69 Stalin to WSC, May 6, 1942 (*ibid.*, 232f; and PREM.3/403).
- 70 WSC to Stalin, May 9, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 233.
- 71 Stalin to WSC, May 13, 1942 (*ibid.*; and PREM.3/403).
- 72 Eden diary, May 1, 1942.
- 73 *E.g.*, Mackenzie King's record of Pacific War Council meeting, Washington, Apr 15, 1942; annexe to his diary (Mackenzie King papers).
- 74 Eden diary, May 2, 1942.
- 75 Chequers register, Oct 17; Amery diary, Oct 11, 14, 21, 24, 30, 31, Nov 3, 4, 1941, Jan 7, 8, 12; and PREM.4/54/1 and /2.
- 76 WSC to FDR and note by FDR, Feb 15, 1942 (FDR Libr., microfilm 6, 61f); and see FDR to WSC, Apr 16, 1942 (*ibid.*, 66).
- 77 WSC to Randolph, May 2, 1942, quoted by Gilbert, volume vii, 101.
- 78 Martin diary, May 2, 1942; King diary, May 2, 1942 (Boston Univ., Mugar Library, Cecil King papers).
- 79 WSC to Sir Reginald Dorman-Smith, May 3, 1942, in Gilbert, volume vii, 101.
- 80 WSC to Wavell, May 3, 1942, in Gilbert, volume vii, 102.

- 81 WSC to Brooke, memo M.183/2, May 14, 1942 (PREM.3/158/6).
- 82 WSC to Ismay, D.112/2, Jun 7, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/14).
- 83 WSC to FDR, May 12, 1942 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942').
- 84 Smuts to WSC, May 18, 1942 (PREM.3/158/6).
- 85 Halifax secret diary, May 20, 1942.
- 86 Ismay to WSC, May 21, 1942 (PREM.3/158/6).
- 87 WSC to Wavell, May 21, 1942 (PREM.3/158/6).
- 88 WSC to Smuts, drafted May 27, 1942, sent as T.775/2 on May 28, 1942 (PREM.3/158/6).
- 89 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Apr 28, 1942 (CAB.69/4).
- 90 Halifax secret diary, Apr 28, May 5, 1942.
- 91 FDR to WSC, Apr 29, 1942; and reply.
- 92 Brooke diary, unpublished, May 4, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5).
- 93 Eden, quoted by Bruce Lockhart diary, Jul 14, 1946.
- 94 Pacific War Council meeting, May 5, 1942 (CAB.99/26).
- 95 Brooke diary, unpublished, May 6, 1942.
- 96 Morton to WSC, May 8, 1942 (PREM.3/158/6).
- 97 Eden diary, May 11, 1942.
- 98 Harvey diary, May 18, 1942.
- 99 Eden diary, May 30; and *cf.* Jun 7, 1942.
- 100 *Ibid.*, Jun 1, 1942.
- 101 Eden to WSC, May 20, 1942 (PREM.3/186a/7).
- 102 Brooke diary, unpublished, Jun 1, 1942 (King's College London, Alanbrooke papers); such passages were sanitised from the text published by Sir Arthur Bryant.
- 103 WP (43) 34 of Aug 7, 1943, 'Relations with Gen. de Gaulle,' Jun 1940–Jun 1943 (PREM.3/121/5).
- 104 Morton to W Strang, Jun 11; minute by W H B Mack, Jun 12, 1942 (FO.371/32097). WSC told Morton he had no intention of writing a record of their talk, but the file contains the French record.
- 105 WSC paper, 'Franco-German co-operation in North Africa,' printed on Jun 5, 1942 as WP (42) 239 (PREM.3/186a/7).
- 106 Eden to WSC, draft response, Jun 11, 1942 (*ibid.*).
- 107 WSC to Eden, minute M.248/2, Jun 14 (PREM.3/186a/7). De Gaulle's intercepted telegram of Jun 6 to Gens. Catroux, Leclerc and de Larminat was removed by GCHQ from WSC's files in 1960; WSC initialled it on Jun 12. The next day Eden wrote (diary): 'Usual difficult interview with De G., tho' I always feel a sympathy with the man in his difficulties.' On Jun 19 Catroux informed C-in-C, Med. of the telegram, termed de Gaulle 'unbalanced,' and expressed the fear that his lack of faith in the Allies had 'become an obsession' (CAB.163/10).
- 108 Brooke diary, unpublished, Jul 9, 1942 (King's College London, Alanbrooke papers; and MS, 3/A/vi, 438).
- 109 Cadogan diary, Sep 19, 1942.

20: **Molotov and the Mongolian Smile**

- 1 Arnold diary, May 25, 26, 30, 1942.
- 2 *Ibid.*
- 3 Martin letter home, Sep 20, 1942.
- 4 Martin diary, Jul 23, 1942: 'Meals more expensive now in spite of 5s [five shilling] limit.'
- 5 Cecil King diary, May 2, 1942: Frank Owen questioned the head waiter. 'It is disgraceful that the PM should behave like this,' noted Cecil King privately. 'At least he should contain his greed in public.'

- 6 Cripps, quoted by Cecil King diary, Apr 30, 1942.
- 7 Beaverbrook, quoted by Halifax secret diary, Apr 21, 1942.
- 8 *Ibid.*, Apr 30, 1942.
- 9 Eden diary, Apr 27, 1942.
- 10 Dalton diary, May 12, 1942.
- 11 Amery diary, Jun 27, 1941.
- 12 Halifax secret diary, Jul 15, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A7.8.19).
- 13 Amery diary, Jun 9, 1941.
- 14 Hankey diary, Aug 31, 1942. He heard several Royal Navy captains at the United Services club grouching about this on Aug 29. 'They kept us there again late into the Middle Watch. And as usual at these late meetings their decisions were so bad that we shall somehow or other have to get them reversed, and that's no joke!' It was evident to Hankey that these naval officers had a low opinion of the War Cabinet.
- 15 Rawlings to Cunningham, Dec 1, 1942 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52570).
- 16 Brooke diary, unpublished, Dec 18, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a; and MS, 3/A/vii, p.586).
- 17 Hankey diary, May 1, 1942.
- 18 Amery diary, May 10, 1942.
- 19 For the full passage omitted from this 'broadcast speech, 10.5.42 (*not used*)' see Gilbert, vol. vii, 107f.
- 20 British Home Intelligence report for week ending May 11, quoted in report by W J Donovan to FDR, May 16, 1942 (FDR Libr., PSF, box 165-6, folder 'OSS-Donovan reports').
- 21 Because it alluded to Michael Foot's seminal work, *Guilty Men*, published anonymously in 1941 by Foot, Frank Owen, and Peter Howard. *Tribune's* editor was Aneurin Bevan.
- 22 Note by SA Moore, District Intelligence Office, Peekskill, NY, Jun 29, 1942 (NA, RG.319, Records of the Army Staff, IRR file X814 6666, 'Winston Churchill').
- 23 Harvey diary, May 6, 12, 15, 1942. Told of WSC's intent by Eden, Cadogan could only comment: 'Ye Gods!' Cadogan diary, May 15, 1942.
- 24 Eden diary, May 12. On May 2, 1942 Eden had recorded that Beaverbrook had made 'no impression whatever' on FDR.
- 25 WSC to Hopkins, May 12 (Hopkins papers, box 136). Harvey diary, May 12.
- 26 Hopkins to WSC, May 16 (Hopkins papers, box 136); Harvey diary, May 16.
- 27 Elizabeth Layton, letter home, May 16: Gilbert, vol. vii, 108. Hughes (Canberra) reported the tone of Evatt's telegrams to London on Jun 21, 1942 (CAB.120/35).
- 28 Not the 15th, as Gilbert, vol. vii, 108, says. Martin diary, May 14-16, 1942.
- 29 Chiefs of staff meeting, May 15; and Brooke, Pound, and Portal to WSC, May 16, 1942 (CAB.79/21).
- 30 WSC to chiefs of staff, May 17, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vii, 109.
- 31 War Cabinet, May 18, conf. annexe (CAB.65/30). Brooke diary, unpublished, May 18, 1942; Amery diary, May 18, 1942.
- 32 WSC to Stalin, May 19, 1942, in *Stalin-WSC Correspondence*, vol. i.
- 33 HM King George VI diary, Apr 22, 1942.
- 34 WSC to Auchinleck, Apr 26, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vii, 103.
- 35 GC&CS intercepts CX/MS/934/T.6 and T/8, initialled 'WSC, 30.4.' (HW.1/536).
- 36 WSC to Auchinleck, Apr 30, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vii, 103.
- 37 Hinsley, vol. ii, 361.
- 38 Harvey diary, May 7, 1942.
- 39 Hinsley, vol. ii, 362.
- 40 WSC to Wavell, May 5, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vii, 102.
- 41 Brooke diary, unpublished, May 7, 1942 (King's College London, Alanbrooke pa-

- pers; and MS, 3/A/v, 395).
- 42 Churchill, vol. iv, 275. Chiefs of staff meeting, May 8; Brooke diary, unpublished, May 8 (King's College London, Alanbrooke papers; and MS, 3/A/v, 395).
- 43 War Cabinet, May 8, 1942 (CAB.65/30).
- 44 WSC to Auchinleck, May 8, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 275.
- 45 WSC to Auchinleck, May 10; reply, May 19, 1942: *ibid.*, 275f.
- 46 Auchinleck to WSC, May 19, 1942, *ibid.*, 276f.
- 47 WSC to Auchinleck, May 20, *ibid.*, 277.
- 48 Harvey diary, May 6, 1942. Cadogan diary, May 7, 1942.
- 49 War Cabinet, May 21, 1942, 5:30 P.M (CAB.65/30).
- 50 Molotov to Stalin, Russian, May 21, 1942 (*Sov.-angliiskiye*, 221ff).
- 51 King George VI to Queen Mary, May 31, 339f. Brooke diary, unpublished, May 22, 1942.
- 52 Minutes of Anglo-Soviet Conference at Churchill's Home, Russian, May 22, 1942 (*Sov.-angliiskiye*, 223ff).
- 53 *Ibid.* For a British record, '22 May 1942, 11 A.M., Operations on the Continent, 1942-43,' enclosed in WSC to FDR, May 28: cf. Gilbert, vol. vii, 111.
- 54 Note by Hopkins on Molotov's after-dinner talk with FDR, May 29, 1942 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins to London, Jul 1942').
- 55 WSC to Stalin, May 23, 1942 (PREM.3/399/6).
- 56 Molotov to Stalin, Russian, May 23, 1942 (*Sov.-angliiskiye*, 230f).
- 57 Cadogan diary, May 23, 1942.
- 58 *Ibid.*, May 25; Winant to FDR, Jun 3 (FDR Libr., PSF, folder 'Winant'); Harvey diary, May 23-25, 1942. See too Winant's remarks quoted in Henry Wallace diary, Feb 12, 1943.
- 59 Eden diary, May 24, 1942.
- 60 Note on a conversation between Molotov and Eden, Russian, May 25, 1942 (*Sov.-angliiskiye*, 232).
- 61 *Ibid.* Eden's record reads: 'We spoke of progress of war & told them of Libya and our production & other matters. Molotov drew plans of the most anxious sectors of the front for Russia, Leningrad, Moscow & Kharkov. We also spoke of Treaty when M said that he had received authority to sign. We discussed drafts together. Winston talked American to them, rather too much I thought. Anyway, I put in that our war production was still greater than theirs, for Winston spoke almost as tho' we were doing scarcely anything.' Eden diary, May 25, 1942.
- 62 Brooke diary, unpublished, May 26, 1942. The embassy's guests were WSC, Eden, Attlee, Cripps, Lyttelton, Evatt (the Australian representative), Bevin, Anderson, and the chiefs of staff.
- 63 Eden diary, May 26, 1942.
- 64 Martin diary, May 26, 1942. Orme 'Moley' Sargent sent a hand-written note round to Winant with the final treaty text: 'It is to be signed at 5:30 P.M. at the F.O.' (NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files, box 7, file 'Anglo-Russian Relations'). For the text of the political and military treaties, see CAB.66/24.
- 65 Amery diary, May 26; Cadogan diary, May 26; Harvey diary, May 26, 1942: 'Bouquets, bouquets all round!'
- 66 WSC to Smuts, May 27, sent as T.775/2 on May 28, 1942 (PREM.3/158/6).
- 67 Memo by 'W R' on Molotov's visit, Jun 10 (Hoover Libr., Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart papers, box 5, file: 'World War II, 1942').
- 68 Halifax secret diary, May 29, 1942.
- 69 FDR to WSC, No. 152, May 31 (FDR

- Libr., Map Room files); as Warren F Kimball notes in 'Churchill and Roosevelt: The Personal Equation,' in *Prologue*, Washington DC, Fall 1974, 179, FDR often used BOLERO, the codeword for the pre-invasion build-up, to refer to the invasion.
- 70 Churchill, vol. iv, 305.
- 71 Quoted in the minutes of the Jul 22, 1942 meeting.
- 72 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Apr 18, 1942 (CAB.69/4) and COS (42) 103(O) Final; and Philip Ziegler, Mountbatten, chapter 14.
- 73 COS (42) 36 (O), May 5 (CAB.79/56); see Mountbatten's formal history of the Dieppe Raid, Oct 15, 1942, CAB.98/22.
- 74 COS 166th mtg, Jun 1 (extract in AIR.19/187); WSC approved the proposals on May 30, 1942.
- 75 Brooke diary, unpublished, May 23, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5; and MS, MS, 3/A/v, 401); *Turn of the Tide*, 372f.
- 76 Manuscript note by WSC, May 26, 1942, quoted by Gilbert, vol. vii, 112.
- 77 Chiefs of staff meeting, May 27, 1942 (CAB.79/56).
- 78 Brooke diary, unpublished, May 27, Jun 5, 8, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5; and MS, 3/A/v, 403, 407).
- 79 *Ibid.*, May 27, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5; and MS, 3/A/v, 403).
- 80 Minutes of meeting between WSC, Hopkins, Cherwell, Marshall, Nye, Mountbatten, Apr 11 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins in London, Apr 1942').
- 81 WSC to chiefs of staff, minute D.91/2, May [June?] 1. He appears to have sent the identical text as D.106/2 on Jun 1; Gilbert quotes both without comment in vol. vii, 100f and 115, from the same file in Churchill papers.
- 82 Pound to Director of Plans, May 27 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/21).
- 83 Memorandum in First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/22a.
- 84 Joint Planning Staff, report, 'Operation JUPITER,' Jun 5 (CAB.79/21).
- 85 Chiefs of staff meeting, Jun 8, 1942 (CAB.79/56).
- 86 Eden diary, Jun 7; Eden, *Reckoning*, 331.
- 87 Journal of James E Akins, of the freighter *Carlton*, written in German prison camp; quoted in Irving, *PQ17*, 29. For PQ16 see too Graeme Ogden, *My Sea Lady—the Story of HMT Lady Madeleine* (London, 1963).
- 88 German naval staff war diary, May 27.
- 89 WSC to FDR, May 27; War Cabinet, Jun 1 (CAB.65/30); PM's card, Jun 1, 2, 1942.
- 90 JIC report, 'The possible course of the Russian Campaign and its Implications,' Jun 1, 1942 (CAB.79/21).
- 91 Chiefs of staff meeting, Jun 1, 1942 (CAB.79/56).
- 92 FDR to WSC, Jun 1, 1942.
- 93 WSC to chiefs of staff, Jun 5, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vii, 116.
- 94 Winant to FDR, Jun 3, 1942 (FDR Libr., PSF, folder 'Winant').
- 95 Brooke diary, unpublished, Jun 11, 1942.
- 21: **One Thousand Bombers**
- 1 WSC at chiefs of staff meeting, 5:30 P.M., May 27, 1942 (CAB.79/56).
- 2 Frantisek Moravec, *Master of Spies* (London, 1981), 192.
- 3 Eden to WSC, Feb 23, Apr 5, 7, 1942 (FO.954/24).
- 4 WSC to Selborne and Morton, M.209/2, May 27, 1942 (CAB.120/827).
- 5 Ray R Cowdery, *Reinhard Heydrich: Assassination!* (Lakeville, USA, 1994).
- 6 Tábor's diary, Jun 15, 1942 (Hoover Libr., Edouard Tábor's papers, box 2).
- 7 Benes to WSC, Jun 15, 1942 (Hoover Libr.,

- Edouard Táborsky papers, box 6).
- 8** Harris to WSC, Jun 15, 1942 (Bomber Command papers, AIR.14/3507).
- 9** Portal to Attlee, Aug 14, 1942 (AIR.8/424).
- 10** Minutes by Portal, Jun 17, and Sinclair, Jun 18, 1942 (AIR.19/187).
- 11** Hinsley & Stripp, 4.
- 12** Brooke diary, unpublished, May 25–26, 1942. For part of the unsent telegram, see Churchill, vol. iv, 278f. GCHQ plucked the full text from his files in 1960: it is in CAB.163/10.
- 13** Winant to FDR, Jun 3, 1942 (FDR Libr., PSF, folder 'Winant.')
- 14** Brooke diary, unpublished, May 29, 1942.
- 15** Auchinleck and Tedder to WSC, Jun 1, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 320f.
- 16** CX/MSS/1036/T16. PzArmee Ia report dated May 31, 9 pm; and CX/MSS/1036/T29, Kesselring order, Jun 2, 1942. These intercepts were passed as MK/6181 to Auchinleck (HW.1/614).
- 17** CX/MSS/1037/T12 (*ibid.*).
- 18** CX/MSS/1037/T6, read by WSC June 2, 1942 (HW.1/615).
- 19** First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/13.
- 20** Tovey wrote to Pound on Jun 7, 1942, protesting at the 'gross understatement' of his remarks in the minutes (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/22a).
- 21** WSC to A V Alexander, minute M.227/2, Jun 4, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/14).
- 22** WSC to A V Alexander, Jun 6, 1942 (PREM.3/324/17).
- 23** Roskill, *Churchill and the Admirals*, 130.
- 24** Pound to Alexander, Jun 8, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/14).
- 25** WSC minute, Jun 9 (PREM.3/478/4); PM's card, Jun 9, 1942.
- 26** A V Alexander diary, Jun 10–21, entry for Jun 10, 1942 (Churchill College, Cambridge: A V Alexander's papers, 6/1).
- 27** J Robertson (Treasury) to Bridges, May 21; enclosing Singleton's report, DO (42) 48, May 20, 1942, 'The Bombing of Germany' (CAB.121/1).
- 28** COS (42) 171(O), Jun 16, 1942, 'The Bombing of Germany' (CAB.121/1).
- 29** Hankey diary, May 22, 1942 (Churchill College, Cambridge).
- 30** JSM Washington to COS London, May 20, 1942 (CAB.121/1).
- 31** Harris to WSC May 13, 1942 (Bomber Command papers, AIR.14/3507).
- 32** Harris to WSC, May 30, 1942 (Bomber Command papers, AIR.14/3507).
- 33** Defence committee (Operations) meeting, May 29, 1942 (CAB.69/4).
- 34** Arnold diary, May 26, 1942.
- 35** Chequers register, May 29–Jun 1, 1942; and 'Mr Winant's Visits to Chequers,' Extracts from Chequers Visitors' Book (FDR Library, Winant papers, box 189, 'Chequers').
- 36** Arnold diary, May 30, 1942.
- 37** Hopkins memo, May 30, 1942 (Hopkins papers, box 136); Sherwood, *op. cit.*, 582.
- 38** Cadogan diary, Jun 1, 1942.
- 39** Arnold diary, May 27, 1942.
- 40** WSC to FDR, Jun 1, 1942.
- 41** WSC to Portal, M.221/2, Jun 2, 1942 (AIR.19/187).
- 42** Portal to WSC, Jun 3, 1942 (AIR.19/187).
- 43** Sinclair to Vice-CAS, Jun 12, 1942 (AIR.19/187).
- 44** Eden to Sinclair, Jun 9, 1942 (AIR.19/187).
- 45** Portal to WSC Jun 17, 1942 (AIR.19/187). The eight targets included Norsk Hydro's aluminium plant in Norway, a diesel engine factory in Copenhagen, the Rotterdam port area, the Phillips work at Eindhoven, and industrial plants in Belgium.
- 46** WSC to FDR, Jun 7, 1942.

- 47 Hinsley, vol. iii, part i (London, 1983), 269.
- 48 Churchill, vol. iv, 323.
- 49 Chinese embassy transcript of the meeting in PREM.3/158/6; PM's card, Jun 3, 1942.
- 50 Hansard, *House of Commons Debates*.
- 51 Office of War Information, Bureau of Intelligence, 'Anti-British Feeling in the United States,' Jul 10 (NA, RG.84, Records Maintained by Ambassador Winant, 1938–48, box 5, file 'Morale/Public Opinion'); and Cecil King diary, Jun 3, 1942.
- 52 Eden diary, Jun 7, 1942; Eden, *Reckoning*, 331 wrongly dates this Jun 4.
- 53 WSC to Auchinleck, Jun 9, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 325.
- 54 Eden diary, Jun 9, 1942; Eden, *Reckoning*, 330.
- 55 Harvey diary, Jun 10, 1942.
- 56 Eden diary, Jun 9, 1942.
- 57 *Ibid.*
- 58 Molotov to Stalin, in Russian, Jun 10, 1942. *Sov.-angliiskiy*, 244ff; there seems to be no British official transcript.
- 59 Chiefs of staff 'aide-mémoire,' Jun 10, 1942 (CAB.120/684).
- 60 Cadogan diary, Jan 11, 1943.
- 61 Of interest for the routing of these secret 'phone jobs': the notification went as Cable No. 2802 from London (Mr Grenwell) to MIS in Washington, who were to notify the White House (NA, RG.319, Records of the Army Staff, IRR file X814 6666, 'Winston Churchill').
- 62 Harris to WSC, Jun 5, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/14).
- 63 Harris to WSC, Jun 8, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/14).
- 64 A V Alexander diary, Jun 20, 1942.
- 65 Harris to WSC, Jun 17, 1942 (Bomber Command papers, AIR.14/3507).
- 66 WSC to A V Alexander, Pound, Ismay, M.257/2, Jun 15, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/14).
- 67 Auchinleck to WSC, Jun 10, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 326–7.
- 68 WSC to Auchinleck, Jun 11, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 327.
- 69 Auchinleck to WSC, Jun 11, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 327.
- 70 Brooke diary, Jun 14, 1942 (King's College London, Alanbrooke papers; and MS, 3/A/v, 410).
- 71 Brooke diary, unpublished, Apr 17, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/5; and MS, 3/A/v, 387); Casey's important diary is now in the National Library of Australia, Canberra.
- 72 Casey to WSC, Jun 14, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 328f.
- 73 WSC to Auchinleck, Jun 14, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 331.
- 74 WSC to Auchinleck, Jun 14, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 331.
- 75 Auchinleck to WSC, Jun 15: Churchill, vol. iv, 331; Eden diary, Jun 15; Amery diary, Jun 15, 1942.
- 76 WSC to AV Alexander, Pound, and Ismay, M.261/2, Jun 16, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/14).
- 77 WSC to Auchinleck, Jun 15, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 332.
- 78 John Martin to Sir Alexander Hardinge, Jun 13, 1942 (PREM.3/459).
- 79 Brooke diary, Jun 13, 1942 (King's College London, Alanbrooke papers; and MS, 3/A/v, 410).
- 80 WSC personal minute to Ismay and chiefs of staff, D.121/2, Jun 15, 1942, COS(42) 69(O); Churchill, vol. iv, 316ff; and comments in the papers of Capt. Robert M Ellis, who was from Apr 1942 to Sep 1943 Assistant Chief of Combined Operations at the admiralty.
- 81 Hassett diary, Jun 17–18, 1942. He was a

- White House presidential secretary (FDR Libr., William D Hassett papers).
- 82 Cecil King diary, Jun 19, 1942.
- 83 WSC to the king, Jun 16, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 337.
- 84 Martin diary, Jun 17, 1942. The PM's party consisted of Brooke, Ismay, Brigadier G M Stewart (director of plans), Martin, Thompson, Kinna, Sir Charles Wilson, and Sawyers the valet. Martin to Cdr. the Hon R D Coleridge, Jun 25, 1942 (CAB.122/586).
- 85 C R Thompson, MS (Thompson papers); Jacob diary, Jun 18–25 (Churchill College, JACB.1/14); and a five page ARGONAUT diary in Ismay's files (CAB.120/33).
- 86 War Cabinet Office to Joint Staff Mission, Jun 17, 1942 (CAB.122/586).
- 87 Halifax secret diary, Jun 14, 1942.
- 88 Stimson diary, Jun 17, 1942.
- 89 Hopkins to Clementine Churchill, Jun 24, 1942 (Hopkins papers, microfilm 11).
- 90 Stimson diary, Jun 19, 1942.
- 91 Stimson diary, Jun 19; and see Minutes of CCS meeting, Jun 19, 12:30 P.M. in Jacob papers (Churchill College, JACB.1/14).
- 92 Marshall to FDR, Jun 19, 1942, in *FRUS Washington*.
- 93 Hassett diary, Jun 20, 1942.
- 94 Stimson diary, Jun 20, 1942.
- 95 *Ibid.*, Jun 21, 1942.
- 96 Schedule in PREM.10/1.
- 97 Hassett diary, Jun 19, 1942; Martin's diary records that Jimmy Roosevelt came to lunch, then they took 'tea' – in quotation marks – with Miss Delano.
- 98 Hassett diary, Jun 19, 1942.
- 99 Ismay, 254; and see WSC's version in Churchill, vol. iv, 339.
- 100 WSC to Hopkins, T.234/2, Feb 27, 1943 (PREM.3/139/8a); for a different summary of this telegram, see *FRUS Washington*.
- 101 W A Akers to Cherwell, Jun 22, 1942 (Cherwell papers, 'TUBE ALLOYS'). We found these papers in 1964 in a filing cabinet in the basement of Nuffield College Library, in a red leather deed-box which had once been locked, but broken open; the file has since been screened by British government 'weeders.' On Heisenberg see David Irving, *The Virus House* (London, 1967), and more recently Thomas Powers, *Heisenberg's War* (New York, 1993). Revealing transcripts of Heisenberg's conversations in British captivity are in WO.208/5019; in the NA:RG.77, Manhattan Project, Entry 22, The Farm Hall Transcripts.
- 102 Anderson to WSC, Jul 30, 1942 (PREM.3/139/8a); 'The primary reason for this proposal,' Anderson repeated to WSC on Jan 11, 1943, 'was the discovery that the full-scale production plant would have to be on such a scale as to bring an intolerable dislocation to our war effort if erected in this country. It was also felt, however, that a combined effort was more likely to bring quick results.'
- 103 Anderson to WSC, Jul 30, 1942 (PREM.3/139/8a; PREM.3/139/8a).
- 104 Hassett diary, Jun 20, 1942.
- 105 *Ibid.*
- 106 *Ibid.*
- 107 Ismay to Spears, Jul 21, 1942 (Churchill College, Cambridge: Gen. Sir E L Spears papers). Ismay added that the trip to the USA was 'curtailed by the news of Tobruk.'
- 108 C to Hollis for WSC, C/9799, Jun 19 (HW.1/658). Some intercepts were abstracted for WSC, Jun 28, 1942.
- 109 C to Hollis for WSC, C/9804, Jun 20 (HW.1/659). The actual intercept was abstracted for WSC, Jun 28, 1942.
- 110 WSC memo for FDR, secret, Jun 20, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 342f.
- 111 Brooke MS, 3/A/v, 42; ARGONAUT di-

- ary (see note 85).
- 112** Combined Chiefs of Staff meeting, Jun 20, 1942: *FRUS Washington*.
- 113** John Martin letter home, Jun 26–27; Stimson diary, Jun 21, 1942.
- 114** Kesselring signal, Jun 20, 3 P.M., intercepted as CX/MSS/1102/T23, June 20, 8:56 P.M.; summarised in C to Hollis for WSC, C/9810, Jun 21 (HW.1/660). Some intercepts were abstracted for WSC, Jun 28, 1942.
- 115** Sherwood to Beaverbrook, undated (Beaverbrook papers, C.175); Halifax secret diary, May 29, 1942.
- 116** Hopkins to Clementine Churchill, Jun 24, 1942 (Hopkins papers, microfilm 11).
- 117** The news had broken in London at 4:15 P.M., and was announced on the BBC's six P.M. bulletin: Tobruk had surrendered with 25,000 men 'and many generals.' Nicolson diary, Jun 21, 1942. Ismay, *op. cit.*, 254–5.
- 118** C-in-C Med. to admiralty, Jun 21, 1942, repeated to Washington as STALKY No. 43 (CAB.120/35); Churchill, vol. iv, 343.
- 119** Henry Wallace diary, Jul 28, 1942.
- 120** The note of WSC's meeting this day with FDR is in CAB.120/33. And see Churchill, vol. iv, 344. Marshal told Stimson. 'The news of Tobruk's fall came in while they were up there,' wrote Stimson, 'and of course that was a terrific blow to the Prime Minister and to all the British.' – Stimson diary, Jun 21, 1942.
- 121** Stimson diary, Jun 21, 1942.
- 122** *Ibid.*
- 123** Ismay's note is reproduced in Churchill, vol. iv, 344f.
- 124** Harvey diary, Jun 21; WSC to Attlee, Jun 22, 1942, GOOGLY No. 15 (CAB.120/33).
- 125** PM's card, and Jacob diary, Jun 22, 1942: 'Eisenhower . . . was delighted with his interview with the Prime Minister and expressed astonishment at the width of his technical and military knowledge.' Brooke believed he first met Eisenhower on Jul 1, 1942 in London. Unimpressed, Brooke would write: 'If I had been told then of the future that lay in front of him I should have refused to believe it.' Brooke MS (King's College London, Alanbrooke papers; and MS, 3/A/v, 432). For Eisenhower's recollections, see *Crusade in Europe* (London, 1948), 58. As for Mark Clark, Patton noted, he had 'made a big impression on the prime minister.' Gen. George S Patton diary, Oct 21, 1942, in Martin Blumenson (ed.), *The Patton Papers*.
- 126** Jacob diary, Jun 21, 1942.
- 127** Notes of a meeting between WSC and FDR, Jun 21, 1942 (Churchill College, Jacob papers, JACB.1/14).
- 128** *Ibid.*
- 129** Stimson diary, Jun 22, 1942.
- 130** WSC to Auchinleck, Jun 22, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 346; the version in Ismay's file is different: 'I was naturally disconcerted by your news which may well put us back to where we were 18 months ago and leave all the work of that period to be done over again. I hope no one will be unduly impressed by the spectacular blows which the enemy has struck at us' (CAB.120/33). And Churchill College, Jacob papers (JACB.1/14).
- 131** Hassett diary, Jun 20–24, 1942.
- 132** G C Marshall to FDR, Jun 23, 1942: *FRUS Washington*.
- 133** *Plain Dealer*, Cleveland (Ohio), Jun 22, 1942.
- 134** Office of War Information, Bureau of Intelligence, 'Anti-British Feeling in the United States,' Jul 10, 1942 (NA, RG.84, Records Maintained by Ambassador Winant, 1938–48, box 5, file 'Morale/

- Public Opinion’).
- 135 Hansard, *House of Lords Debates*, Jun 9, 1942, vol. 123, col. 201.
- 136 Jewish Telegraphic Agency release, Aug 30; and note by J Martin on visit by Namier, Sep 1, 1942 (PREM.4.52/3).
- 137 Weizmann to WSC, Jun 25, 1942 (Weizmann papers).
- 138 WSC was said to have left the USA before it arrived; his private secretary John Martin sent it to Weizmann’s deputy Prof. L B Namier on Aug 7, commenting that Sir James Grigg had made a statement in the House on Aug 6, 1942, and that Weizmann would probably expect no answer. The official files reveal that wherever possible Churchill had Martin intercept and answer letters from Weizmann and Namier.
- 139 Minutes by Roger Allen and A Randall, Aug 19, 1942 (FO.371/30917).
- 140 F K Roberts to Godfrey Liss, Min of Inf., Aug 21, 1942 (*ibid.*).
- 141 Martin to WSC, Oct 29; and see C Thornley to Martin, Nov 9, 1943 (PREM.4/52/3).
- 142 Martin to Namier, Mar 28, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 143 Halifax secret diary, Dec 5, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A7.8.3).
- 144 Morgenthau diary, Nov 26, 1941 (FDR Library, Henry R Morgenthau papers, vol. 466, 1020).
- 145 See FDR’s remarks to Gen. Noguès, Jan 17, 1943: *FRUS Casablanca*, 608.
- 146 See *e.g.*, Postal & Telegraphic Censorship, ‘Report on Jewry,’ Jan 22; Oct 21, 1942; and Feb 9, 1943 (HO.213/953).
- 147 Halifax diary, Oct 1, 1942.
- 148 Halifax secret diary, Jan 29, Jul 26, Sep 13, Oct 1, 1942; Jan 19, 27, 1943.
- 149 Morgenthau diary, Jul 3, 1942.
- 150 *Ibid.*, Jul 7, 1942.
- 151 Grace Tully to Felix Frankfurter, Jul 17, 1942 (Library of Congress, Felix Frankfurter papers, box 98, ‘Roosevelt’).
- 152 Eden to WSC, Mar 3, 1943 (PREM.4.52/3).
- 153 WSC to Eden, M.139/3, Mar 9, 1943 (PREM.4.52/3).

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- 1 Stimson diary, Jun 22, 1942.
- 2 John Spurling to Lieut. Col. W Stirling, Apr 27, 1942 (CAB.121/284).
- 3 Table Talk, Jun 28, midday. Henry Picker (ed.), *Hitlers Tischgespräche* (Stuttgart, 163), 419; David Irving, *The Trail of the Fox*, 152, 195, 213, Rommel’s intelligence officer Hans Behrendt confirmed to us, ‘We knew them as the Good Source.’ Reference to these Cairo intercepts will be found in Walther Hewel’s ledger of items shown to Hitler, Feb 21 (NA microfilm T120, roll 1073) and the German naval staff’s war diary, Apr 30, 1942. Originals of the Fellers dispatches from Cairo are in Gen. Marshall’s daily log, in NA, RG.218, file ‘CCS 311.3 (5 May 1942)’.
- 4 Signal to *Fliegerführer Afrika*, Ic (Intelligence), May 29, intercept CX/MSS/1027/T17, May 30, 1942 (HW.1/641).
- 5 Portal to WSC, Jun 2; WSC minute, Jun 4, 1942 (HW.1/641).
- 6 CX/MSS/1037/T6, read by WSC June 2, 1942 (HW.1/615). A pencil note on WSC’s letter reads: ‘See XG 363 to Washington, 313 from Washington 3.6.42’; this implies that the content of the decrypt was immediately brought to the American authorities’ attention.
- 7 CX/MSS/1062/T17, read by WSC June 10, 1942 (HW.1/636).
- 8 C’s covering letter C/9723, Jun 10, 1942, in this file is only a Xerox copy, the original having been withdrawn Oct 18, 1993

- under section 3(4) of Public Records Act, 1958.
- 9 C to WSC, C/9743, Jun 12, 1943 (HW.1/641).
- 10 CX/MSS/1069/T19, read by WSC June 13, 1942 (HW.1/643).
- 11 C to Portal, C/9744, Jun 12, 1942 (HW.1/642).
- 12 C to WSC, C/9761, Jun 12 (HW.1/646).
- 13 C to Portal, C/9782, Jun 16, 1942 (HW.1/653).
- 14 C to WSC, C/9779, Jun 16, 1942 (HW.1/652). C considered that the Germans had succeeded in photographing the American cypher book.
- 15 *Panzerarmee Afrika* signal, Jun 23, intercepted as CX/MSS/1122/T9, translated Jun 26, with WSC's minute, Jun 27; C to WSC, Jun 29, 1942 (HW.1/676).
- 16 *Panzerarmee Afrika* signal, Jun 23, intercepted as CX/MSS/1122/T9, translated Jun 26, with WSC's minute, Jun 27; C to WSC, C/9761, Jun 29, 1942 (HW.1/676).
- 17 David Irving, *The Trail of the Fox*, 195.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 213. For more on 'the Cairo débâcle' see Geoffrey [Kendrick?] to 'John,' Jul 31, 1942 (HW.14/47).
- 19 GC&CS, Hut 3, to ACAS(I), Jun 28, 1942 (HW.1/674).
- 20 Draft signal by C to AOC-in-C Middle East; Gp Capt. FWWinterbotham to Hut 3, undated (HW.1/674). Brereton was to discuss the messages with nobody whatsoever other than authorised British officers. 'Any document falling into enemy hands or any message enemy might intercept or any word that might be revealed by a Prisoner of War or any ill-considered action based on information leading to suspicion in enemy mind would cause immediate cessation of source which would vitally affect conduct of war on all fronts.'
- 21 Martin's diary notes only, 'P.M. had various conferences and left in evening. . .'
- 22 PM's card. Doris Castleroose to WSC, Jun 23, 1942; the letter arrived after WSC left, and Hopkins snaffled it (Hopkins papers, box 136, 'Churchill and family').
- 23 Conclusions of a meeting held at the White House, at 2:45 P.M., Jun 23, 1942 (Churchill College, Jacob papers, JACB.1/14); a ribbon copy is in CAB.120/33.
- 24 Churchill, vol. iv, 347; Inspection Programme, Camp Jackson, South Carolina (Churchill College, Jacob papers, JACB.1/14).
- 25 WSC to Stimson, Jun 25, 1942.
- 26 Stimson diary, Jun 23-5, 1942.
- 27 Berle memo, Jun 30, 1942 (FDR Libr., Adolph A Berle papers, 'diary').
- 28 Halifax diary, 'July 24' [should be Jun 24], 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.10).
- 29 Butcher diary, page A.175, Jan 20, 1943, unsealed.
- 30 Halifax Tel. No. 133 to FO, Jan 7, 1943 (FO.371/34184). Eden discussed it with WSC and Beaverbrook, but they discouraged further action.
- 31 Auchinleck to WSC, Jun 24 (CAB.120/35); Churchill, vol. iv, 348. In STALKY No. 78 to Brooke, Jun 23, 1942, Auchinleck offered to resign: 'No doubt you are already considering this and quite rightly.'
- 32 Brooke to WSC, Jun 25; Minutes of CCS meeting, Jun 25, 1942, 9:30 A.M. (Churchill College, Jacob papers, JACB.1/14).
- 33 WSC to Auchinleck, Jun 25, 1942 (CAB.120/33); Churchill, vol. iv, 349.
- 34 PM's card. Mackenzie King diary, Jun 23, 1942. Those present included Lord Halifax, Field-Marshal Dill, Walter Nash, New Zealand; Sir Girja S Bajpai, India; Sir Owen Nixon, Australia; Mr Close, South Africa.
- 35 On Jun 21, 1942 Hughes wrote from Canberra: 'Nearly 90,000 American

- troops in Australia crowd the streets producing great impression on the public mind. McArthur's [sic] confidential report to the Government is strongly anti-British. He is highly thought of, is Government adviser, his soldiers are here, the Government leans naturally to America. Strangely forget what they owe to Britain.' He strongly recommended the 'despatch of substantial number of British troops to counteract the American influence on the Australian public' (CAB.120/35).
- 36 Frank McNaughton, memo to James McConaughty, Jun 25, 1942, on WSC's remarks to Congressional leaders (Harry S Truman Library, Frank McNaughton papers).
- 37 Letter to WSC, Jun 19, 1942 (FBI Archives, Washington DC: Classified File, 'Winston Churchill').
- 38 Intercepted letters dated Jul 1 and 6, in Postal & Telegraph Censorship Report on the USA, No. 1, Sep 11, 1942 (FO.371/30656, 'United States, 1942').
- 39 Eden diary, Jun 27, 1942.
- 40 John Martin letter home, Sep 20, 1942: 'The PM . . . has been caught in this way.' On Mar 24, 1943, Churchill opened his minute on an interview with the American Archbishop Spellman, 'The Archbishop answered satisfactorily the question "Are you a Short Snorter?" and produced his credentials, which were in due form' (4/84/2a).
- 41 Brooke recorded in an unpublished segment of his diary for Jul 13, 1942 that a very disturbed telegram was received that day from Smuts about the court of inquiry. 'Eden then suggested that I should wire off to Wilson that he should cook his court of inquiry to ensure this S A commander should be exonerated!' Brooke told Eden that the court of inquiry 'must report true verdict,' but it could be kept secret by the government and 'dealt with as they thought best' (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 42 Smuts to WSC, Jun 30 (CAB.121/1).
- 43 Harvey diary, Jul 2, 1942.
- 44 Cadogan diary, Jun 29, 1942; Harvey diary, Jun 29, 1942.
- 45 C to WSC, Jun 28, 1942, initialled 'WSC, 30.vi.' enclosing CX/MSS/1118/T13, 1110/T23, 1110/T19, 1107/T28, 1104/T21, and others (HW.1/672).
- 46 PM's card, Jun 29-30, 1942.
- 47 Hughes-Hallett, unpublished MS, 155, quoted by Ziegler, *op. cit.*, 189; DEFE.2/551, fol.6. Field-Marshal B M Montgomery, *Memoirs* (London, 1956), 75f.
- 48 Chiefs of staff meeting, Jun 1, 1942 (CAB.79/56); J R M Butler, *Grand Strategy*, vol. iii, 621.
- 49 WSC to chiefs of staff, Jun 8, Gilbert, vol. vii, 117; chiefs of staff meeting, Jun 8, 1942 (CAB.79/56).
- 50 War Cabinet, Jun 11, conf. annexe (CAB.65/30); Cecil King diary, Jul 1, 1942.
- 51 DEFE.2/551, fol.7.
- 52 Earl Mountbatten of Burma, 'Operation JUBILEE: The Place of the Dieppe Raid in History,' lecture on Sep 28, 1973 in Toronto, published in the Royal United Services Institution *Journal*, March 1974, 25ff. Hughes-Hallett, *op. cit.*, 165f.; Ziegler, *op. cit.*, 190.
- 53 Brooke diary, unpublished, Jun 30, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a; and MS, 3/A/vi, 429f).
- 54 Martin diary, Jul 1; WSC to Auchinleck, Jul 1, 1942 (CAB.163/10).
- 55 Nicolson diary, Jul 2, 1942.
- 56 Cecil King diary, Jul 1-3, 1942: 'So Churchill wins one more meaningless parliamentary victory.'
- 57 Eden diary, Jul 2, 1942.

- 58 Sir Hugh Linstead (Conservative MP for Putney, 1942–64), Macmorren Lecture: ‘The Infinite Adventure of Governing Men,’ Oct 24, 1976, in *The Pharmaceutical Journal*, Dec 25, 1976.
- 59 Ismay to Spears, Jul 21, 1942 (Churchill College, Cambridge: Gen. Sir E L Spears papers).
- 60 GC&CS intercept of Alba’s Tel. No. 186, to Madrid, Jul 3, 1942 (HW.1/710).
- 61 Eden diary, Jul 2. Or as Cadogan (diary, Jul 3) had it: ‘You think I would be like a fat old bluebottle on a cowpat’; Harvey diary, Jul 3, 5, 1942.
- 62 COS meeting, (42) 195th, Jul 2; COS(W) 215 to C-in-C, Mediterranean, repeated to JSM, Washington, Jul 2, 1942, 14:20 GMT (CAB.121/284).
- 63 Brooke diary, unpublished, Jul 3, 1942.
- 64 Amery diary, Jul 3, 1942.
- 65 Brooke MS (Alanbrooke papers, 3/A/vi, 433).
- 66 Brooke diary, unpublished, Jul 3, 1942 (King’s College London, Alanbrooke papers; and MS, 3/A/vi, 432f).
- 67 Martin diary, Jul 4, 1942.
- 23: **The Knight’s Move**
- 1 Capt. Henry Denham to admiralty, Jun 18, reporting intercepted signal of the German Flottenchef, Jun 14; quoted in Irving, PQ17, 36; cf. Tovey, Despatch, Jan 3, 1943, in *London Gazette*, Oct 17, 1950.
- 2 CX/MSS/1146/T4, /T8 and /T13, Jul 2; the summary is endorsed to C’s secretary Miss Pettigrew – the model for ‘Miss Money Penny’ in the James Bond novels – ‘1.30 A.M. (à la P.M.). Attached have been taken over by “C” to P.M. & returned. They will probably be required for BONIFACE.’ (WSC obstinately insisted that 24-hour clock times be amended to ‘P.M.’ and ‘A.M.’ – Bletchley Park refused to comply and the ULTRAS were corrected in ink for his benefit throughout the war.) There is a slip reading ‘Miss Pettigrew. 2 A.M. Attached [were] read over to “C” whilst in PM’s office,’ attached to the intercepts ‘read over’ – a planned attack by ten Ju 88s on Alamein on Jul 2, congratulations from Jeschonnek to *Fliegerführer Afrika* Hoffmann von Waldau on his *Ritterkreuz*, and complaints about RAF activity (HW.1/692).
- 3 Irving, PQ17, 100f. It was not until Jul 6 that WSC read and initialled C’s file C/9937 containing the GC&CS Naval Section’s ‘Naval headlines No. 366,’ issued at 11 A.M. the day before. This summarised that Adm. Ciliax, the German fleet commander, had arrived in Alta fjord in *Tirpitz* at 7 A.M. on Jul 4, joining *Scheer*, 5 destroyers and an oiler. The U-boats had been instructed on Jul 3 to keep shadowing the convoy; one of them had briefly sighted Hamilton’s cruisers by 2 P.M. on Jul 3; at 9:30 A.M. on Jul 4 all U-boats were ordered to treat his squadron as their main target if met (HW.1/701). WSC probably received ‘rushes’ of each intercept by landline earlier than Jul 5, as soon as it was translated.
- 4 Pound to Cunningham, Aug 24, 1942 (British Library, Add. MS 52561).
- 5 WSC to Pound, Jul 13 (Pound’s records, ADM.205/14). This did not identify the precise signal from Tovey that WSC objected to. The signals concerned are however clearly admiralty to Hamilton, Jul 4, 12:30 P.M., and Tovey to Hamilton, 3:12 P.M. (Appendix to Hamilton’s preliminary report, Jul 6, 1942; Tovey, *Despatch*, and London signal log. Irving, PQ17, 101ff). It is unlikely that WSC should have bothered himself with such minutiae, *unless he had originated the admiralty signal himself.*

- 6 CX/MSS/1153/T.16. *Fliegerführer Lofoten* to *Luftflotte 5* at Kemi, Jul 4, 1942, 2:15 P.M.: 'A/c torpedo attack with 23 He 111 of I/KG.26. Probable time of attack from 6 P.M.' Intercept telexed to London at 7:10 P.M.; shown to WSC the next day (HW.1/700).
- 7 GC&CS Naval Section 'Naval Headlines No. 364,' datelined 11 A.M., Jul 3, 1942; initialled by WSC, Jul 4 (HW.1/699).
- 8 Author's interviews of Adm. Sir N E Denning, Lord Justice Winn, Capt. G R G Allen (WSC's naval ghost-writer), Adm. E L S King, Rear-Adm. E J P Brind, Vice-Adm. Sir Henry Moore, Rear-Adm. H B Rawlings, in 1963.
- 9 Halifax diary, Jul 7, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.13). Cadogan had written in his private diary on Nov 11, 1941: 'Long discussion on Ethiopia, during which I – like Pound – went actually to sleep, I think' (Churchill College, Cadogan papers).
- 10 AV Alexander to WSC, Jun 28, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/14). On Jul 8 Alexander proposed Adm. Kennedy-Purvis.
- 11 Eden diary, Jul 5, 1942. He added, 'I know little of him [Tovey] but it always seemed to me a waste to send Cunningham to America.'
- 12 Amery diary, Jul 6, 1942.
- 13 Office of War Information report, 'Anti-British Feeling in the United States,' Jul 10, 1942 (Federal Records Center, Winant papers, box 5).
- 14 Ismay, *op. cit.*, 259; Dwight D Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (London, 1948), 78f; hereafter: Eisenhower.
- 15 WSC to chiefs of staff, D.125/2, Jul 5, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/14). Although WSC claimed credit for the idea for a descent on North-West Africa, Brooke hotly argued that it had originated with the chiefs of staff. Sir James Grigg, interviewed by Sir Arthur Bryant (Alanbrooke papers, 12/xi/1/4).
- 16 Stimson diary, Jul 10, 1942.
- 17 *Ibid.*, Jul 12; the nonchalant memorandum by Marshall, King and Arnold, 'Pacific Operations,' Jul 12, 1942, underestimated the task that faced them in that theatre (Stimson papers).
- 18 Stimson diary, Jul 12, 1942.
- 19 *Ibid.*, Jul 13, 1942.
- 20 WSC to FDR, Jul 14, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/14).
- 21 Stimson diary, Jul 15, 1942.
- 22 Instructions to Marshall and King for the London conference, Jul 15, 1942, draft, not adopted (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 303, folder 'Hopkins to London, Jul 1942').
- 23 Instructions to Hopkins, Marshall, and King for the London conference, signed original, Jul 16, 1942 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 303, folder 'Hopkins to London, Jul 1942').
- 24 Dill to WSC, JSM.300, Jul 15; and reply, Jul 16, 1942 (CAB.120/528).
- 25 Stimson diary, Jul 16, 1942.
- 26 War Cabinet, Jun 10, 1942, conf. annexe (CAB.65/30).
- 27 WSC to chiefs of staff, Jun 13, 1942, in Gilbert, vol. vii, 121.
- 28 Cadogan diary, Jul 7, 1942.
- 29 Brooke diary, unpublished, Jul 9, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a; and MS, 3/A/vi, 438).
- 30 HM King George VI diary, Jul 7, 1942.
- 31 Halifax secret diary, Jul 15, 1942.
- 32 Halifax diary and secret diary, Jul 9, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.10); PM's card shows him lunching with Halifax, dining with the Edens at the Savoy. On May 12, 1943 he recalled having found Churchill very tired and nerve strained (Hickleton

- papers, A.7.8.12).
- 33 Butcher diary, 33, Jul 9, 1942, unsealed.
- 34 Harris to WSC, Jul 8, 1942 (Bomber Command papers, AIR.14/3507).
- 35 Brooke diary, unpublished, Jul 8, 1942 (King's College London, Alanbrooke papers; and MS, 3/A/vi, 437).
- 36 Brooke diary, unpublished, Jul 10, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a; and MS, 3/A/vi, 439). The answer was that the Middle East command covered Somaliland, Abyssinia, Palestine, Lebanon, Greece, Crete, Iraq, and Iran as well as the western desert.
- 37 Chiefs of staff meetings, Jul 20, 21, 27, 1942 (CAB.79/56).
- 38 Mountbatten, interviewed on BBC television, Aug 19, 1972; Ziegler, *op. cit.*, 23.
- 39 Earl Mountbatten of Burma, 'Operation JUBILEE: The Place of the Dieppe Raid in History,' lecture on Sep 28, 1973 in Toronto, published in the Royal United Services Institution *Journal*, March 1974, 25ff. During Jul 1942 Mountbatten figures on the PM's card only on Jul 23, during the Marshall–Hopkins conferences; Dieppe was not discussed.
- 40 Mountbatten to Ismay, Aug 29, 1950 (King's College London, Sir Hastings Ismay papers, II/3/260/1).
- 41 GC&CS Naval Section Naval headlines No. 369, Jul 8; C to WSC, C/9972, Jul 8, 1942 (HW.1/710).
- 42 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Jul 10, 1942, six P.M (CAB.69/4).
- 43 Halifax diary, Jul 23, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.10).
- 44 WSC to Pound, Jul 13 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/14).
- 45 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Jul 13, ten P.M (CAB.69/4); Brooke diary, unpublished, Jul 13, 1942 (King's College London, Alanbrooke papers; and MS, 3/A/vi, 440).
- 46 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Jul 13, ten P.M (CAB.69/4); Brooke diary, unpublished, Jul 13 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a; and MS, 3/A/vi, 440).
- 47 PM's card, Jul 14. Maisky at once told Winant what he thought of the British decision. Winant to FDR, Jul 15, 1942 (FDR Libr., PSF, 'Winant').
- 48 WSC to Pound and Alexander, M.294/2, Jul 15, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/14). This was the minute in which WSC added the ominous words, 'I was not aware until this morning that it was the Cruiser Adm. [Sir Louis] Hamilton who ordered the destroyers to quit the convoy [PQ17]. What did you think of this action at the time? What do you think of it now?'
- 49 Brooke MS, unpublished (Alanbrooke papers, 3/A/vi, 426).
- 50 Brooke diary, unpublished, Jul 15, 1942 (King's College London, Alanbrooke papers; and MS, 3/A/vi, 442).
- 51 Halifax secret diary, Jul 16, 1942.
- 52 Halifax diary, Jul 15, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.10).
- 53 Cecil King diary, Jul 17; PM's card, Jul 15, 1942.
- 54 Cecil King diary, Jul 17, 1942.
- 55 Eden diary, Jul 17, 1942.
- 56 C to GHQ, ME, Jul 17; Churchill inquired: 'How & when was this passed to GHQ, ME?' C replied by C/133, Jul 19, that it had gone on the same day, July 17, 1942 (HW.1/755).
- 57 Hinsley and Jack Good in Hinsley & Stripp, 141ff, 149ff.
- 58 GC&CS meeting, Mar 23, 1942 (HW.14/32). For a highly technical GC&CS history of FISH (*Geheimschreiber*) interception, Mar 1946, see 'The Interception of German Teleprinter Communications by Foreign Office Station, Knockholt' (HW.3/163).

- 59 WSC to FDR, No. 117, Jul 16; reply, No. 168, Jul 17, 1942, 00:15 A.M. (CAB.120/528). Ismay's diary and other records of the American delegation's visit are in CAB.120/82.
- 60 Col. Vivian Dykes reported to the JSM in Washington, Jul 20, 1942: 'Unrecorded and inclusive private huddles all day to be resumed tomorrow morning' (CAB.120/528).
- 61 Hopkins to FDR, Jul 20, 1942, 4 P.M (Hopkins papers, box 136). He concluded, 'Would say in general that things are progressing well.'
- 62 Halifax diary, Sep 14, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.11). Dill had warned WSC on Jul 16 that despite his kind invitation to Chequers 'our friends' felt their mission would be better served if they could have two or three days alone with their American colleagues in London first (CAB.120/528).
- 63 Hopkins to FDR, Jul 20, 1942 4 P.M (Hopkins papers, box 136).
- 64 Brooke unpublished MS (Alanbrooke papers, 3/A/vi, 446).
- 65 British minutes of a Combined Staff conference, Jul 20, 1942, 12:30 P.M (Hopkins papers, box 136; and Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins to London, Jul 1942').
- 66 Marshall and King to FDR, Jul 22, 1942 (Hopkins papers, box 136).
- 67 PM's card. Halifax diary, Sep 27, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.11). 'This is not necessarily conclusive though about Max's position.'
- 68 Cadogan diary, Jul 21, 1942.
- 69 British minutes of a Combined Staff conference, Jul 22, 1942, 3 P.M (FDR Library).
- 70 Butcher diary, Sep 9, 1942.
- 71 FDR to Hopkins, Marshall, and King, Jul 22 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins to London, Jul 1942').
- 72 NA microfilm T175, Roll 122, 7499ff. It may be commented that Eisenhower's naval aide was Harry C Butcher; and that 'Betty' was Adm. Stark's nickname. The Nazis will not have learned much from this transcript.
- 73 Marshall and King to FDR, Jul 22, 1942 (Hopkins papers, box 136).
- 74 Minutes of a Combined Staff Conference held at No. 10 Downing-street, Jul 22, three P.M (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins to London, Jul 1942').
- 75 Marshall and King to FDR, Jul 22, 1942 (Hopkins papers, box 136).
- 76 Stimson diary, Jul 23, 1942; and Stimson to FDR, Jul 23, 1942.
- 77 Stimson diary, Jul 24, 1942.
- 78 *Ibid.*
- 79 FDR to Hopkins, Marshall, King, Jul 26(?) (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins to London, Jul 1942'). FDR added this postscript to Hopkins: 'Give Winston my best and tell him not even he can stop that wedding. Randolph lunched with me and he is in fine form and the back continues to improve.' Hopkins was getting married on Jul 30, 1942.
- 80 Eisenhower to Major Gen. Orlando 'Pink' Ward, Office of Chief of Military History, Apr 5, 1951 (Eisenhower Library, file 113, 'Orlando Ward'); Eisenhower, 80.
- 81 Stimson diary, Jul 24, 1942. Charitably accepting his error, Stimson pencilled a comment later in the diary arguing that only the Russian victory at Stalingrad, the defeat of the U-boat menace, and enormous luck in landing in Africa had averted this disaster.

- 82 Eden diary, Jul 24, 1942.
 83 *Ibid.*
 84 John Martin, letter home, Jul 26, 1942.
 85 Stimson diary, Jul 27, 1942.
 86 *Ibid.*, Jul 28, 1942. Asked on Aug 9 by Stimson whether, if he were dictator or president, he would continue with TORCH, Gen. Marshall responded: 'Frankly, no.' He would halt GYMNAST – *i.e.*, TORCH – if he thought it was headed for disaster (*ibid.*, Aug 9–10, 1942).
 87 Cunningham to Pound, Washington, Aug 12, 1942 (British Library, Add. MS 52561). 'In my view,' persisted Cunningham, '[King] is a determined non-collaborator and means to work entirely for his own naval ends.' King was determined not to put US ships under British command; this surprised Pound, as they already were, on PQ escort operations.
 88 Eden diary, Jul 26, 1942.
 89 Brooke diary, unpublished, Jul 28, 1942.
 90 Stimson diary, Jul 23, 1942.
 91 Harvey diary, Jul 29, 1942; *cf.* W S Churchill, Jr, *Randolph Churchill*, 216.
 92 Eden diary, Jul 29; Martin diary, Jul 29.
 93 Cadogan diary, Jul 28–29, 1942.
 94 Halifax diary, Jul 29, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.10).
 95 Eden diary, Jul 29, 1942.
 96 Brooke diary, unpublished; Cadogan diary; War Cabinet, Jul 30 (CAB.65/27).
 97 Eden diary, Jul 30, 1942.
 98 *Ibid.*
 99 PM's card, Jul 31, 3 P.M.; Cecil King diary, Aug 1, 1942.
 100 Cecil King diary, Oct 1, 1942.
 101 Report on conduct of enlisted men, Sep 4, 1941. 'Soldiers do not altogether realize seriousness of the act' (NA, RG.319, Records of the Army Staff, IRR file X8146666, 'Winston Churchill').
 102 Cecil King diary, Oct 1, 1942.
 103 Halifax secret diary, Jul 15, 1942: 'That man [Beaverbrook] has double-crossed me three times, and I can't work any longer with him.'
 104 Eden diary, Jul 29, 1942.
 105 Beaverbrook to Paul Patterson, Sep 29, 1942 (Beaverbrook papers); Taylor, *Beaverbrook*, 538.
 106 WSC to Dill, T.1074/2, 'clear the line,' Jul 31, 1942 (original in CAB.120/528).
 107 WSC to Eden, Aug 2 ('President did not read it until I rang him up at 5 o'clock yesterday'); Minute by C Scott, Aug 19, 1942, in Eden papers (FO.954/29).
 108 Extract from WSC Tel. (to R Campbell, Washington), Aug 2, 1942 (*ibid.*).
 109 WSC to Eden, Aug 30, 1942 (*ibid.*).
 110 Campbell to FO, Aug 3, 1942 (*ibid.*).
 111 WSC to Stalin, Jul 30; and reply, Jul 31 (original in PREM.3/76a/1; and Churchill, vol. iv, 409f; *Sov.-angliiskiye*, 259f).
 112 WSC to Auchinleck, Jul 31, 1942 (CAB.120/65); *cf.* Churchill, vol. iv, 410.
 113 Auchinleck to WSC, Jul 31, quoted in Churchill, vol. iv, 411; War Cabinet, Aug 1 (CAB.65/31). Eden diary, Aug 1, 1942.
 114 Eden diary, Aug 1, 1942.
 115 King George VI to WSC, Aug 1, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vi, 159.
 116 WSC to King George VI, Aug 1, 1942: in Royal Archives, Windsor, quoted by Gilbert, vol. vi, 160.

Part III

24: **A Visit to the Ogre in His Den**

- 1 Elizabeth Layton, letter home, Aug 3, 1942: quoted by Gilbert, vol. vi, 157.
 2 *Ibid.*
 3 JSM telegram JSM 222 to WSC, Aug 1, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vi, 160.
 4 WSC to FDR, Aug 5, 1942 (PREM.3/76a/3); Churchill, vol. iv, 425. Adm. William

- H Standley, usN Ret'd, 'Winston Churchill and the Second Front,' in *US Naval Institute Proceedings*, vol. 79, No. 12, (1953), 1225. Harriman had on his staff Loy Henderson, Gen. Russell L Maxwell (from Cairo Command), Gen. Sidney P. Spaulding, of Lend-Lease Administration, a Col. Kremer, a Lieut. Gerard (aide) and Francis Stevens of the State dept. The two planes had fourteen crew members.
- 5 C to Ismay to WSC, Aug 2 (HW.1/811).
- 6 Churchill, vol. iv, 412.
- 7 C R Thompson, MS (Thompson papers).
- 8 Cadogan diary, Aug 3, 1942.
- 9 Cadogan letter home, Aug 3, 1942.
- 10 Brooke MS, unpublished (Alanbrooke papers, 3/A/vi, 457).
- 11 COS (42) 352, Aug 4 (CAB.80/37). Meeting in British Embassy, Cairo, 6 P.M., Aug 4, 1942 (CAB.120/65 and PREM.3/76a/12). On TORCH, Brooke explained that he hoped that 'by placing the American flag in the forefront at each landing place [local French] resistance would be at the most half-hearted.'
- 12 Cadogan diary, Aug 4, 1942.
- 13 Dalton diary, Aug 27, 1942, quoting Desmond Morton.
- 14 Churchill, vol. iv, 414; quoted by Hugh L'Etang, *Fit to Lead?* (London, 1980), 122.
- 15 Churchill, vol. iv, 415.
- 16 Clementine to WSC, Aug 4, 1942: quoted by Gilbert, vol. vi, 161.
- 17 Brooke diary, unpublished, Aug 6, 1942 (King's College London, Alanbrooke papers; and MS, 3/A/vi, 469: 'I may have been weak at the time. In any case God took the matter in his own hands within 24 hours of our decision.')
- 18 WSC to Clementine, Aug 9, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vi, 167ff.
- 19 Dalton diary, Aug 27, 1942, quoting Desmond Morton.
- 20 Brooke diary, unpublished, Aug 6, 1942 (King's College London, Alanbrooke papers; and MS, 3/A/vi, 467: 'There is no doubt in my mind that Winston never realized what this decision cost me.' Brooke described the reference to this decision in Churchill, vol. iv, 413 as 'surprisingly lacking in any kind of gratitude!').
- 21 WSC to Attlee, Aug 6, 1942, 8:15 P.M (CAB.120/66; Churchill, vol. iv, 415ff). Eden noted (diary): 'Winston's ideas on changes in command came in early, asking for immediate reply. Cabinet 9:30. We did not like division of command and still less calling Auch.'s new slender command Middle East. Appointment of Gott to Eighth Army pleased everybody & myself most of all. Some doubt as to whether Alexander, the very good fighting man, had headpiece for C-in-C, who is in truth a C.I.G.S. He will need a first-rate Chief of Staff. Left Attlee to draft our views.' See too Eden diary, Jul 20, 1943.
- 22 WSC to Attlee, Aug 7 (CAB.120/66; Churchill, vol. iv, 417f). Eden diary, Aug 7, 1942: 'Cabinet at 11:30 P.M. when Winston's reply came in. It was confused & unconvincing & worried me because it seemed to pretend that tho' Gott was to command 8th Army Alexander was to run the battle. An impossible division of duties & repetition of Auch.—Conyngham & Auch.—Ritchie periods.'
- 23 WSC to Auchinleck, Aug 8, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 421f; Jacob diary, Aug 8, 1942.
- 24 Jacob diary, Aug 8, 1942 (Churchill College, Jacob papers, JACB.1/16).
- 25 Brooke diary, unpublished, Aug 9, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6b).
- 26 Major William Thompson, of Mountbatten's staff, quoted in Dalton diary, Aug 27, 1942.
- 27 Gladwyn Jebb, quoted in Dalton diary,

- Aug 27, 1942.
- 28 Harvey diary, Aug 7, 1942.
- 29 Cadogan letter home, Aug 7, 1942.
- 30 Churchill, vol. iv, 418. Nicolson diary, Nov 6, 1942.
- 31 See WSC to Clementine, Aug 9, 1942, quoted in Gilbert, vol. vi, 167ff.
- 32 Cadogan diary, Aug 7, 1942.
- 33 Brooke MS, unpublished (Alanbrooke papers, 3/A/vi, 471).
- 34 Brooke diary, Aug 7, 1942.
- 35 B L Montgomery, *The Memoirs of Field-Marshal Montgomery* (London, 1958), 77f.
- 36 Harvey diary, Aug 10, 1942.
- 37 Jack (Whitworth) to Cunningham, Jun 3, 1943 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52570).
- 38 WSC to Clementine, Aug 9, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vi, 167ff.
- 39 War Cabinet, Aug 7, 1942 (CAB.65/31; Churchill, vol. iv, 419).
- 40 Jacob diary, Aug 8, 1942 (Churchill College, Jacob papers, JACB.1/16).
- 41 For Harriman's version see his telegram from Teheran to FDR, Aug 14, 1942 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 311, folder 'Churchill and Harriman in Moscow, Aug 1942').
- 42 WSC to Clementine, Aug 9, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vi, 167ff; paraphrased by WSC in Churchill, vol. iv, 420f.
- 43 WSC to Attlee, Aug 10, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vi, 160.
- 44 WSC to Alexander, Aug 10, holograph; full text, as sent: Churchill, vol. iv, 424.
- 45 Brooke unpublished MS (Alanbrooke papers, 3/A/vi, 478).
- 46 WSC to Eden, Aug 12, 1942.
- 47 Jacob diary, Aug 11, 1942.
- 48 Churchill, vol. iv, 428f.
- 49 Adm. William H Standley, USN Ret'd, 'Winston Churchill and the Second Front,' in *US Naval Institute Proceedings*, vol. 79, No. 12, (1953), 1225.
- 50 Dalton diary, Jan 13, 1942.
- 51 Cf. John D Eisenhower, MS: 'My Dad took me to Moscow,' Sep 1945 (Dwight D Eisenhower Library, box 179). Dalton diary, Dec 17, 1943.
- 52 Extracts from conversation between Stalin and Churchill and the Representatives of the Soviet Union, Aug 12, 1942. *Sov.-angliiskiye*, 265ff; translated for us by Richard Ogdon. This has either been edited for western consumption or was not as full as the official English transcript.
- 53 WSC to Attlee, Aug 12 (PREM.3/76a/11); repeated to FDR, Aug 14 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 311, folder 'Churchill and Harriman in Moscow, Aug 1942').
- 54 'Meeting at the Kremlin on Wednesday, Aug 12, 1942, at 7 P.M.' (PREM.3/76a/12 and Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 311, folder 'Churchill and Harriman in Moscow, Aug 1942'); and WP (42) 373, Aug 23, 1942 (CAB.127/23).
- 55 Extracts from conversation between Stalin and Churchill and the Representatives of the Soviet Union, Aug 12, 1942. *Sov.-angliiskiye*, 265ff.
- 56 'Meeting at the Kremlin on Wednesday, Aug 12, 1942, at 7 P.M.' (CAB.120/65; PREM.3/76a/12; and WP (42) 373, Aug 23, 1942 (CAB.127/23).
- 57 Extracts from conversation between Stalin and Churchill and the Representatives of the Soviet Union, Aug 12, 1942. *Sov.-angliiskiye*, 265ff.
- 58 Extracts from conversation between Stalin and Churchill and the Representatives of the Soviet Union, Aug 12, 1942. *Sov.-angliiskiye*, 265ff.
- 59 Extracts from conversation between Stalin and Churchill and the Representatives of the Soviet Union, Aug 12, 1942. *Sov.-*

- angliiskiye*, 265ff. Harriman to FDR, Aug 13, 1942, has it as 'You can't win wars if you aren't willing to take risks and you mustn't be so afraid of the Germans.' (FDR Libr., Map Room files, box 12, 'Miscellaneous Presidential Messages' and Harry L Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 311, folder 'Churchill and Harriman in Moscow, Aug 1942').
- 60 Harriman to FDR, Aug 13 (FDR Libr., Map Room files, box 12, 'Miscellaneous Presidential Messages' and Harry L Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 311, folder 'Churchill and Harriman in Moscow, Aug 1942')). A passage not carried in the Russian transcript.
- 61 Harriman to FDR, Aug 13 (FDR Libr., Map Room files, box 12, 'Miscellaneous Presidential Messages'). Another passage not carried in the Russian transcript.
- 62 Similar in Adm. William H Standley, USN Ret'd, 'Winston Churchill and the Second Front,' in *US Naval Institute Proceedings*, vol. 79, No. 12, (1953), 1225. The Russian transcript has, 'May God assist in its fulfilment.'
- 63 WSC to Attlee, Aug 13 (CAB.120/66; PREM.3/76a/11). Gilbert, vol. vi, 174, 183 gives first one source, then the other.
- 64 Harriman to FDR, Aug 13 (FDR Libr., Map Room files, box 12, 'Miscellaneous Presidential Messages' and Harry L Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 311, folder 'Churchill and Harriman in Moscow, Aug 1942').
- 65 'Interview of Prime Minister with M Molotov on Aug 13, at 12 noon,' WP (42) 373 (PREM.3/76a/12; and Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 311, folder 'Churchill and Harriman in Moscow, Aug 1942').
- 66 WSC to Attlee, Aug 14, 1942, 1:30 P.M (CAB.120/65; CAB.120/66); Churchill, vol. iv, 440.
- 67 Churchill, vol. iv, 437.
- 68 Dalton diary, Aug 27, 1942, quoting Desmond Morton, who was not however in the party.
- 69 Minutes of a meeting held in the Kremlin on Aug 13 at 11:15 P.M., WP (42) 373 (CAB.120/65; Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 311, folder 'Churchill and Harriman in Moscow, Aug 1942'). Those present were WSC, Stalin, Molotov, Brooke, Cadogan, Wavell, Jacob, Harriman, Tedder, with Pavlov and Dunlop again as interpreters.
- 70 The Russian document, endorsed in Rowan's handwriting: 'handed to PM by M Stalin at meeting of 13.8.42,' is in PREM.3/76a/11; SEE TOO CAB.120/65 and Churchill, vol. iv, 440f; and *Sov.-angliiskiye*, 276f.
- 71 WSC to Attlee, Aug 14, 1942 (CAB.120/65; PREM.3/76a/9).
- 72 Jacob diary, Aug 13, 1942.
- 73 WSC to Attlee, Aug 14, 1942 (CAB.120/65; PREM.3/76a/9).
- 74 Dalton diary, Aug 27, 1942, quoting Desmond Morton, whose source for this was Leslie Rowan. WSC was right. After the 1940 Nazi victories in Norway and France, Stalin and Molotov sent telegrams of congratulation to Hitler.
- 75 WSC proudly reported this remark to his War Cabinet the next day, telegram to Attlee, Aug 14 (CAB.120/66; PREM.3/76a/9), and had the whole telegram repeated to FDR, Aug 15, 1942.
- 76 Extracts from conversation between Churchill and Stalin, Aug 13, in Russian, *Sov.-angliiskiye*, 271ff. The British text has it as: 'If, by the loss of 150,000 British and American soldiers on the shores of France, real help could be given to Russia and something useful achieved, the Americans and the British would not hesitate to give

- the order.' (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 311, folder 'Churchill and Harriman in Moscow, Aug 1942').
- 77 Cadogan diary, Aug 13, 1942.
- 78 Jacob diary, Aug 13; Brooke diary, Aug 14, 1942.
- 79 Jacob notes, quoted in Gilbert, vol. vi, 191; and Henry Wallace diary, May 24, 1943; WSC's own account is in his telegram to the cabinet, Aug 15, 1943 (CAB.120/67).
- 80 Churchill, vol. iv, 442f.
- 81 WSC to Attlee, Aug 15 (CAB.120/66; CAB.120/67; Churchill, vol. iv, 444); repeated to FDR, Aug 15 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 311, folder 'Churchill and Harriman in Moscow, Aug 1942'). Clark Kerr also remarked on the 'unprecedented' long walk 'or rather trot' at Mr Churchill's side, in a telegram to Eden, Aug 16, 1942 (PREM.3/76a/11) Note that WSC told Attlee, 'Everything for us now turns on hastening TORCH and defeating Rommel' – no word about any coming Dieppe raid.
- 82 Cadogan diary, Aug 14, 1942.
- 83 *Ibid.*, Aug 15, 1942. It is not hard to see why WSC objected to the ungrammatical and platitudinous communiqué. 'A number of decisions were [sic] reached covering the field of the war against Hitlerite Germany. This just war of liberation both Governments are determined to carry on with all their power and energy until the complete destruction of Hitlerism and any similar tyranny has been achieved. The discussions, which were arrived on in an atmosphere of cordiality and complete sincerity, provided an opportunity of reaffirming the existence of the close friendship and understanding between the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the United States of America, in entire accordance with the Allied relationship existing between them.' – For the final text see Churchill, vol. iv, 449.
- 84 Cadogan diary, Aug 15, 1942.
- 85 Jacob diary, Aug 15, 1942.
- 86 Major Birse's post-war memoir: Gilbert, vol. vi, 195; and see A H Birse, *Memoirs of an Interpreter* (New York, 1967), 100ff.
- 87 Major Birse's notes, 'Record of the Prime Minister's meeting with Mr Stalin at the Kremlin at 7 P.M. on Aug 15, 1942' (CAB.120/66; PREM.3/76a/12; and Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 311, folder 'Churchill and Harriman in Moscow, Aug 1942'). The Russian transcript is virtually identical here.
- 88 Extracts from conversation between Stalin and Churchill, Aug 15, 1942, in Russian (*Sov.-angliiskiye*, 279ff).
- 89 C to Cadogan, C/9178, Apr 12, 1942, enclosing a (missing) note from WSC about intercept No. 103,151 (HW.1/491). 'If it is your desire to acquaint the Ambassador [in Moscow] it could safely be done on my line,' noted C.
- 90 WSC to FDR, No. 133, Aug 17 (Hopkins papers, box 136; and Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 311, folder 'Churchill and Harriman in Moscow, Aug 1942'). Major A H Birse's memo on this supper conversation on Aug 15–16, 1942 is in *ibid.*
- 91 Edward Raczyński, *In Allied London* (London, 1962) (hereafter: Raczyński), 116–7.
- 92 See WSC's account in Churchill, vol. iv, 446f; and his telegram to the cabinet, Aug 16, 1942 (PREM.3/76a/11).
- 93 Willis to A B Cunningham, Sep 14, 1942 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52570).
- 94 Cadogan diary, Aug 15, 1942. WSC described to his cabinet on Aug 25 how Stalin was cheerfully indifferent to the masses of kulaks who had to be 'liquidated':

- Amery diary, Aug 25, 1942. Cadogan also wrote to Halifax on Aug 29, 1942, describing this visit to Moscow and the discussion of the kulaks (Hickleton papers, A4.410.4.16).
- 95 FBI memorandum, Mar 29, 1943 on 'off the record' remarks by (Harriman? Sulzberger?) to top-ranking American newspapermen (FBI archives, Washington).
- 96 Clark-Kerr to Cadogan, Aug 21, 1942 (PREM.3/76a/10).
- 97 *E.g.*, to Wendell Willkie. Henry Wallace diary, Oct 24, 1943.
- 98 A H S[sulzberger], MS: 'Meetings With the Rt Hon Sir Winston Churchill,' Feb 1957 (Columbia University, New York: Butler Library, Daniel Longwell papers).
- 99 WSC to Attlee, Aug 16, 1942 (PREM.3/76a/11; Churchill, vol. iv, 450).
- 100 OSS, London, Report on Trip to Newcastle-on-Tyne and Vicinity, Mar 19–24, 1943 (NA).
- 101 Ismay to WSC, TULIP No. 170, Aug 18 (CAB.120/69; *cf.* PREM.3/256). WSC to Sinclair and Portal, Aug 17, 1942 (CAB.121/1 and AIR.19/187).
- 102 Sinclair and Portal to WSC, REFLEX 160, Aug 18, 1942 (*ibid.*).
- 103 WSC to Portal, Aug 19, 1942 (*ibid.* and CAB.120/67).
- 104 Portal to WSC, Aug 20, 1942 (*ibid.*).
- 105 Bernard L Montgomery, *The Memoirs of Field-Marshal Montgomery* (London, 1958), 105f.
- 106 Brooke diary, unpublished, Aug 18, 1942 (King's College London, Alanbrooke papers; and MS, 3/A/vi, 501f).
- 107 WSC to Ismay, REFLEX No. 137, Aug 17 (CAB.120/67); reply, TULIP No. 188, sent at 9:45 P.M., Aug 18, 1942 (CAB.120/69; *cf.* PREM.3/256).
- 108 Jacob diary, Aug 19, 1942.
- 109 Vice-Adm. HT Baillie-Grohman, in *The Daily Telegraph*, Nov 9, 1963. Newspaperman Cecil King wrote on Aug 16: 'There seem to be no outward and visible signs of a raid on France yet, though I had expected it before now.' On Aug 24 he heard from a friend at Lewes that the invasion barges for Dieppe had been assembled at Newhaven for all to see. 'For three or four nights before the attack, trains were roaring all night, while German planes left the place lighted up with flares and incendiary bombs.'
- 110 Eden had written in his diary, on Aug 18, 1942: 'Walked across the Downs. . . Glorious view, land, air & sea activity. Destroyers near Isle of Wight, at least 8. Flat bottomed barges off Chichester. Smoke from bombs or AA guns over Bognor. Constant air raid warnings during day & night.'
- 111 HQ, CCO, TULIP No. 198, report on JUBILEE up to 12:30, Aug 19 (CAB.120/69; *cf.* PREM.3/256).
- 112 WSC to Ismay, REFLEX No. 165, Aug 19, 9:05 P.M. (CAB.120/67 and PREM.3/256).
- 113 Ismay to WSC, TULIP No. 170, sent 10:10 P.M., rec'd Aug 20, 1942, 2:30 A.M. (CAB.120/69; *cf.* PREM.3/256).
- 114 Mountbatten to WSC, TULIP No. 220, sent 10 P.M., rec'd Aug 20, 1942, 2:50 A.M. (CAB.120/69; *cf.* PREM.3/256 and CAB.65/27); and see his report to the War Cabinet that day (CAB.65/31).
- 115 WSC to Attlee, Aug 21, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vi, 211.
- 116 Of the 4,963 Canadians in fact 907 were killed in the raid.
- 117 Ziegler, *op. cit.*, 191.
- 118 Amery diary, Aug 20, 1942.
- 119 C P Stacey, *Official History of the Canadian Army* (Ottawa, 1966), vol. i, 398.
- 120 See Hitler's secret speech to his commanders on Sep 29, 1942 (a record taken by the First Army, in its war diary,

- annexes, T312/23/9706 *et seq.*.
- 121 WSC to Attlee, Aug 20 (CAB.120/67).
- 122 In CAB.106/783; quoted by Nigel Jackson in *Monty. The Making of a General, 1887–1942* (London, 1981), 759.
- 123 Nigel Hamilton, *Monty. The Making of a General, 1887–1942* (London, 1981), 656.
- 124 Cadogan, letter home, Aug 21, 1942; in Dilks, *op. cit.*, 475–6.
- 125 Wavell to WSC, Aug 20 (PREM.4/84/4).
- 126 Grigg to WSC, Sep 15, 1942 (PREM.4/83/2).
- 127 WSC to Grigg, Sep 16, 1942 (PREM.4/84/1 and /4).
- 128 WSC to Wavell, T.1305/2, Oct 7, 1942 (PREM.4/84/4).
- 129 Wavell to WSC, Oct 15, 1942 (*ibid.*).
- 130 WSC to Grigg, Sept 6, 1942 (*ibid.*).
- 131 WSC to Attlee, REFLEX No. 177, Aug 21, 1942 (CAB.120/67); John Connell, *Auchinleck* (London, 1959), 718.
- 132 Brooke diary, Aug 14, 1942 (King’s College London, Alanbrooke papers).
- 133 Jacob diary, Aug 22, 1942.
- 134 Memorandum by C for Vice-Chiefs, MOST SECRET, Aug 28 (CAB.121/284).
- 135 C Medhurst to Hollis, Aug 11 (*ibid.*).
- 136 Memorandum by C, MOST SECRET, Aug 28, 1942 (*ibid.*).
- 137 Nigel de Grey of GC&CS noted in its secret draft history, Nov 28, 1949: ‘There is no question that British policy was to prevent US exploitation of E [ENIGMA], Naval or Military, *e.g.*, the reiterated promise in CXG.414 23.7.42 extracted by Eddy [Hastings] that [the US] navy did not mean to build Bombes. The Navy Dept’s programme when announced was regarded by everyone as a serious breach of agreement’ (HW.3/93).
- 138 *Ibid.*
- 139 A record of the talk is in PREM.4/71/4.
- 140 Cadogan diary, Aug 24, 1942.
- 141 John Martin letter home, Aug 30. For WSC’s directive that *aircraft* and *airfield* be used instead of *aeroplane* and *aerodrome*, see circular by C R W Lamplough (DDNI), Nov 5, 1942 (HW.14/57).
- 142 Amery diary, Aug 24, 1942.
- 143 Harvey diary, Aug 24, 1942.
- 144 Amery diary, Aug 25, 1942.
- 145 Chequers register, Aug 28–31; Mountbatten to Brooke, Aug 31, 1942 (Broadlands Archives, Mountbatten papers, B18; quoted by Ziegler, *op. cit.*, 195).
- 146 It was mischievously entitled ‘Dieppe: “We and British invade France” – American journal’ (PREM.3/256).
- 147 A H S[ulzberger], MS: ‘Meetings With the Rt Hon Sir Winston Churchill,’ Feb 1957 (Columbia University, New York: Butler Library, Daniel Longwell papers).
- 148 Hansard, *House of Commons Debates*, Sep 8, 1942.
- 149 Colonel Ralston, Overseas Diary, Oct 15, 1942 (Canadian National Archives, Ottawa, Ralston papers, MG.27, III B, vol. 64, ‘English trip’).
- 150 Earl Mountbatten of Burma, ‘Operation JUBILEE: The Place of the Dieppe Raid in History,’ lecture on Sep 28, 1973 in Toronto, published in the Royal United Services Institution *Journal*, March 1974, 25ff.
- 151 ULTRA History of US Strategic Air Force, Europe, vs. German Air Forces, Jun 1945, states: ‘There is hard and fast evidence in ULTRA that as early as the 12th of August the Germans knew of the forthcoming Dieppe operation’ (NA, RG.457, SRH-013). Although a high-level German report of the time also denies it, this document appears to show that we were correct in stating in *The Daily Telegraph*, the London *Evening Standard* and other newspapers in Oct 1963 that the Germans had foreknowledge. Captain Stephen Roskill RN,

- the official historian, published a lengthy rebuttal in *The Daily Telegraph*, Nov 4, 1963. For Bletchley Park's special operations during JUBILEE, see GC&CS draft history, Chap. vi, 'The Western Front from February 1942 – May 1945,' Ms, 379 (HW.3/99).
- 152** AI(K) Report No. 114/1943, Interrogation of an experienced Luftwaffe Oberleutnant, Adjutant and Ia (operations officer) of the third *Gruppe* of *Kampfgeschwader* (Bomber Wing) 26, captured in Nov 1942 in North Africa (Air Historical Branch, London). The German naval staff records also refer to 'the same Abwehr agent who reported the Dieppe raid' (naval staff war diary, Oct 31, 1942, and Mar 15, 1943).
- 153** Ramsay to A B Cunningham, Dec 10, 1942 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52570).
- 154** WSC to Ismay, Personal Minute D.224/2, Dec 21, 1942 (PREM.3/256). FDLB (Francis Brown) had reminded WSC the day before to write this minute asking for a concise report on the Dieppe raid and its plan (*ibid.*).
- 155** Ismay to Mountbatten, Dec 22, 1942 (Broadlands Archives, Mountbatten papers, B18; quoted by Ziegler, *op. cit.*, 195).
- 156** Ismay to WSC, Dec 29, 1942 (PREM.3/256); WSC initialled it as seen on Jan 4, 1943. Professor Brian Loring Villa, *Unauthorised Action* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1993).
- 157** Loring Villa, *op. cit.* 'Following your great example,' Mountbatten wrote to WSC, 'I have never tried to evade responsibility, but it would have been improper of me to have claimed powers which were not mine.' – WSC's versions in Churchill, vol. iv, 457–459, starts with the wrong date for the raid, 'Aug 17,' omits mention of the earlier date, Jun 20 ('The assault was originally fixed for July 4'), and has stark similarities with the wording of Mountbatten's later lectures on Dieppe ('For this reason no records were kept,' etc).
- 158** Colonel C P Stacey, *The Canadian Army, 1939–45* (Ottawa, 1966), vol. i.
- 25: In Chains**
- 1** Mountbatten, 'The Dieppe Raid,' Oct 15, annexe (CAB.98/22). For official British statements on the shackling of prisoners of war, Sep 2 – Dec 10, see CAB.66/33.
- 2** Mountbatten, 'The Dieppe Raid,' Oct 15, 1942, annexe (CAB.98/22). For the BBC Monitoring report on the OKW communiqué, see CAB.66/30.
- 3** War Cabinet, Oct 8, 9, 12 (CAB.65/28); Eden diary, Oct 8, 1942.
- 4** War Cabinet, Oct 12 (CAB.65/28).
- 5** War Cabinet, Oct 13 (CAB.65/28).
- 6** Colonel Ralston, Overseas Diary, Oct 5, 13 (Canadian National Archives, Ottawa, Ralston papers, MG.27, III B, vol. 64, 'English trip'). He saw WSC for nearly two hours at 6:30 P.M. on Oct 15, 1942 to discuss '(a) prisoners, (b) course of war.'
- 7** Diary of Hume Wrong, Oct 27, 1942 (Canadian National Archives, Ottawa, Hume Wrong papers, diary; and file 23, 'London, 1942'). Wrong was formerly Canadian High Commissioner in London, and 1941–42 Canadian minister in Washington.
- 8** Diary of Hume Wrong, Nov 7, 1942 (Canadian National Archives, Ottawa, Hume Wrong papers, diary; and file 23, 'London, 1942').
- 9** WSC's statement on Oct 13, *House of Commons Debates*; Archbishop of Canterbury to WSC Nov 2; A Bevir to WSC, Nov 22, 1942, and other items in PREM.4/98/2.
- 10** Defence committee (Operations) meet-

- ing, Nov 23, 1942 ten P.M (CAB.69/4).
- 11 War Cabinet Dec 3, 1942 (CAB.65/28).
- 12 War Cabinet Dec 7, 1942 (CAB.65/28).
- 13 Eden diary, Feb 5, 1943 (Avon papers, 20.1.23).
- 14 OKH Berlin (*Abt Fremde Heere West*) to *Panzerarmee Ic* (Intelligence officer), Oct 17, 1942; intercept CX/MSS/1548/T.10 (HW.1/987). The *Panzerarmee* replied on Oct 18 that it knew nothing of any such British instruction.
- 15 A V Alexander to WSC, Aug 28, 1942 (PREM.3/439/20a).
- 16 Minute by D Allen, Sep 10, 1942 (FO.371/30917).
- 17 GC&CS German Police Section, report ZIP/MSGP.37, dated Aug 11, 1942 (HW.16/6, part i).
- 18 FO to Quito, No. 105, Dec 27, 1941 (FO.371/26515); Mr Hughes Hallett had inquired what questions to ask 100 German Jewish refugees shortly arriving in Ecuador.
- 19 Tel. Norton (Berne) to FO, No. 2831, Aug 10, 1942, with the text of a telegram from Riegner to Sydney Silverman MP (FO.371/30917). The 30-year-old Riegner claimed to have the report from a 'German industrialist,' whom he has refused to identify. Dr Benjamin Sagalowitz, press officer of the Swiss Jewish community, claimed to have given the name to Leland Harrison, the American ambassador in Berne, to place in a sealed envelope; there is no archival evidence to support this. Walter Laqueur, writing in *Encounter*, Jul 1980, 13, expressed doubts that the man was either German or an industrialist. Harrison regarded Riegner's story as a 'wild rumor inspired by Jewish fears' (*ibid.*; NA: RG.226, Berne, folder 2, box 2, entry 4).
- 20 *American Hebrew*, Oct 31, 1919: 'The Crucifixion of the Jews Must Stop.'
- 21 *Jüdische Volkszeitung*, Apr 16, 1937: 'Der Vernichtungs-Feldzug gegen die Juden in Polen.' This spoke of 'daily pogroms' in Poland.
- 22 Minute by D Allen, Aug 14, 1942; Frank Roberts minuted, 'I do not see how we can hold up this message much longer' but he feared the 'embarrassing repercussions' it would provoke (*ibid.*). 'The facts are quite bad enough,' wrote Roberts, 'without the addition of such an old story as the use of bodies for the manufacture of soap.' Bernard Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe 1939-1945* (London, 1979).
- 23 Ministry of information minute, Jul 25, 1941 (INF.1/251).
- 24 Minutes by Miss T Scofield, Sep 9, 10 and 16, 1942 (FO.371/30917).
- 25 Minute by D Allen, Sep 10, 1942 (*ibid.*).
- 26 Halifax diary, Sep 4, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A7.8.11).
- 27 Halifax diary, Sep 23, 1942 (*ibid.*).
- 28 GC&CS German Police Section report No. 40/42, dated Sep 26 (HW.16/6, part ii; and HW1/929). The intercepts also established that as from Sep 1, 1942 'deaths from natural causes' among prisoners in concentration camps were to be reported 'only on pro-formas (*durch Formblatt*).'
- The typhus plague ravaging Nazi-controlled Europe from late 1941 to the end of the war was very real, and GC&CS was evidently briefed to focus attention on it. See *e.g.*, 'Police Report,' Oct 17, 1941 ('There has been noted a pretty consistent demand for anti-typhoid lymph in the eastern areas for the inoculation of Police units. It is difficult to know whether these demands in any way exceed the normal, given the conditions occasioned by war') and the report 'Typhus III,' signed by [Nigel] de G[rey], Jan 24, 1942, in HW1/148 and HW.16/6 part ii respectively.

- The Polish underground deliberately spread typhus among German occupation forces: see *e.g.*, the report from the SS *Polizeiführer* in Galicia to SS *OGruf*. Friedrich-Wilhelm Krüger, Jun 30, 1943 (Hoover Library, Ms. DS 135, G2G37). Col. L Mitkiewicz, Polish liaison officer to the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, reported to the CCS (100th Mtg, Jul 2) that in the first four months of 1943 the Polish underground had poisoned 526 Germans and administered 'typhoid fever microbes and typhoid fever lice' to Germans 'in a few hundred cases.' See too Report on The Polish Secret Army to Gen. John R Deane, JCS Secretariat, Sep 7, 1943 (NA, RG.218, Joint Chiefs of Staff, file CCS/381 'Poland - 6.30.1943-Sec. 1'). Such methods may have backfired on the Poles, as epidemics are poor respecters of nationality.
- 29 GC&CS draft history, chap. viii: 'The Russian liaison' (HW.3/101).
- 30 Tizard to WSC, Jul 15, 1943 (PREM.4/84/3).
- 31 Letters in ADM.199/606.
- 32 Tovey to Cunningham, Sep 23 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52570, vol. i).
- 33 Marshall discussed it with Stimson. Stimson diary, Sep 23, 1942.
- 34 WSC to Pound, M.421/2, Sep 28, 1942 (CAB.120/827).
- 35 David Gray (US minister in Dublin) to Winant, Jan 27, 1942 (NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files, box 219, file '800-Ireland').
- 36 Eden to Winant, Feb 10, 1942 (NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files, box 219, file '800-Ireland').
- 37 Halifax secret diary, Jun 14, 1942: 'If anyone had told us two years ago that the Americans would be planning on these lines it would have seemed, as indeed it is, pretty fantastic.'
- 38 Parker W Buhrman, US consul-general in Belfast, to Cordell Hull, Sep 11, 1942 (NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files, box 219, file '800-Ireland').
- 39 FO minute (G Millard) Aug 18, 1942 (FO.954/29).
- 40 Morrison to Dominions Secretary and PM, Aug 28, 1942 (FO.954/29).
- 41 Postal & Telegraph Censorship Report on the USA, No. 1, Sep 11 (FO.371/30656, 'United States, 1942').
- 42 Office of War Information report, 'Anti-British Feeling in the United States,' Jul 10, 1942 (Federal Records Center, Winant papers, box 5).
- 43 Hume Wrong diary, Nov 6, 1942: his former secretary Miss Butson now worked at the US embassy and reported this to him. 'She . . . is definitely not inspired' (Canadian National Archives, Hume Wrong papers, 23, 'London, 1942').
- 44 Halifax to WSC, Jun 25, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A4.410.4.11).
- 45 Amery diary, Aug 26, 1942.
- 46 Amery diary, Nov 23, 1942.
- 47 Eisenhower, 88f.
- 48 Butcher diary, 161, Aug 26, 1942, unsealed.
- 49 *Ibid.*, 211, Sep 9, 1942.
- 50 Eisenhower, 95. Eisenhower to Marshall, Aug 26, 1942.
- 51 Butcher diary, 161, Aug 26, 1942, unsealed. A government official who reviewed these pages noted 'My God' in the margin. When Butcher published a sanitised version of his diaries there was a lively correspondence between British and American authorities. Eisenhower wrote a letter of apology to WSC on Dec 18, 1945; WSC replied, Jan 26, 1946: 'I think you have been ill-used by your confidential aide. The [*Saturday Evening Post*] articles are, in my opinion, altogether below

- the level upon which such matters should be treated. Great events and personalities are all made small when passed through the medium of this small mind.’
- WSC did however apologise, ‘I really do feel very sorry to have kept you so late on various occasions. It is a fault I have. . .’ (Eisenhower Library, file ‘Churchill’). Until 2001 the 1945–6 Joint Staff Mission file on Capt. Butcher (CAB.122/1394) was withheld from the PRO largely because his book contained references to strategic deception as well as codebreaking.
- 52 JCS memorandum, in Joint Staff Mission telegram to London, Aug 25, 1942 (CAB.122/1582).
- 53 WSC to Hopkins, unsent, Churchill, vol.iv: *The Hinge of Fate*, 483–5.
- 54 WSC to FDR, Aug 27. Brooke diary, unpublished, Aug 26, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 55 COS meeting, Aug 27, 1942, 11 A.M. (CAB.79/57).
- 56 Brooke diary, unpublished, Aug 27, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 57 Butcher diary, 167, Aug 28, unsealed.
- 58 Brooke diary, unpublished, Aug 28, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 59 Harvey diary, Sep 2, 1942.
- 60 *Ibid.*, Aug 30, 1942.
- 61 Eden diary, Aug 29, 1942.
- 62 Brooke diary, unpublished, Aug 29, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 63 Stimson diary, Sep 1, 1942.
- 64 WSC to FDR, Sep 1, 1942.
- 65 Clementine to Eisenhower, Sep 1, 1942 (Eisenhower Library, file ‘Churchill’).
- 66 Brooke diary, Sep 1; Harvey diary, Sep 2, 1942.
- 67 Eden diary, Sep 3, 1942. Before returning to Washington the next day, Dill told Eden he was worried at the tangle TORCH had got itself into – ‘if torches can get into tangles.’
- 68 WSC to Hopkins, unsent, Churchill, vol.iv: *The Hinge of Fate*, 483–5.
- 69 Ralph Bennett, in Hinsley & Stripp, 37; Henry Dryden, *ibid.*, 206.
- 70 *Ibid.*
- 71 Brooke diary, unpublished, Aug 30, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 72 Hinsley, vol. ii, 412–21. The originals of the telegrams between WSC and Alexander Jul–Dec 1942 are in PREM.3/310/6. Montgomery (see following note), 108, made no reference to the ULTRA contribution, but credited his ‘intelligence staff.’
- 73 Bernard L Montgomery, *The Memoirs of Field-Marshal Montgomery* (London, 1958), 112.
- 74 *Ibid.*, 113.
- 75 Hankey diary, Aug 31, 1942 (Churchill College, Cambridge). For Bruce’s opposition to the bombing war, see his memorandum, ‘Air against the Sea,’ COS (42) 172(O)m Jun 16, 1942 (CAB.121/1).
- 76 Brooke diary, unpublished, Sep 7, 9, 12, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 77 *Ibid.*, Sep 15, 1942.
- 78 *Ibid.*, Oct 27, 1942.
- 79 Butcher diary, 128ff, Aug 15, 18, 1942, unsealed. Ray Daniell of the NYT urged Eisenhower to keep these rules.
- 80 Halifax secret diary, May 15, 1942. ‘From the letters it was very plain that some had completely succumbed to her charms. She is a dangerous woman. . .’
- 81 WSC to Bracken, Jun 7 and 10, 1942 (PREM.4/26/8).
- 82 *Ibid.*, Oct 24, 1942.
- 83 Maisky to WSC, Jul 10; WSC to Eden, Jul 11, 1942 (PREM.4/101/4a).
- 84 Cecil King diary, Oct 1, 1942.
- 85 WSC to Hopkins, Aug 14 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 311, folder ‘Churchill and Harriman in Moscow, Aug

- 1942'). For WSC's file on this see PREM.4/26/3.
- 86** Report [by Isaiah Berlin], 'Things which Americans Hold Against the British,' Jul; and Postal & Telegraph Censorship Report on the USA, No. 1, Sep 11 (FO.371/30656, 'United States, 1942').
- 87** From the obituaries of Irving Berlin in *The Sunday Telegraph*, Sep 24, 1989 and of Sir Isaiah Berlin, OM, *The Daily Telegraph*, Nov 7, 1997. Eliot A Cohen in 'Churchill at War,' *Commentary*, New York, May 1987, pages 40ff. Chequers guest register.
- 88** Martin diary, Sep 4, 1942.
- 89** A H S [Sulzberger], MS: 'Meetings With the Rt Hon Sir Winston Churchill,' Feb 1957 (Columbia University, New York: Butler Library, Daniel Longwell papers); and see 'Chequers Visiting Book' in CR Thompson papers (copy in our possession).
- 90** Sulzberger (see note 95).
- 91** Cecil King diary, Sep 7, 1942.
- 92** Jack (Tovey) to A B Cunningham, Sep 8, 1942 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52570).
- 93** Cecil King diary, Sep 11; and Nicolson diary, Sep 8, 1942.
- 94** Bridges to Martin, Jul 21 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 308, folder 'Hopkins to London, Jul 1942'); See too Cadogan diary, Jul 21, 1942.
- 95** Eisenhower, 66–7. The phrase 'lacking racial consciousness' is his.
- 96** Halifax diary, Jul 23, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.10). The MP was Wing Cdr. James.
- 97** Sulzberger (see note 95). Halifax diary, Sep 25, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.11); and *cf.* Oct 13, 1942 (*ibid.*).
- 98** Halifax diary, Sep 25, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.11); and *cf.* Oct 13, 1942 (*ibid.*).
- 99** Stimson diary, Sep 24, 1942.
- 100** *Ibid.*, Sep 29, Oct 2, 1942.
- 101** *Ibid.*
- 102** Hopkins to Marshall, Aug 19. Hopkins advised Sir Ronald Campbell on Aug 22 that Marshall had informed him that the policy was not to exceed 10.6 per cent of total US army strength; at present the coloured strength in the U.K. was 5,683 (*ibid.*). Butcher diary, 128ff, Aug 15, 18, 1942, unsealed. Ray Daniell of the *NYT* urged Eisenhower to keep these rules.
- 103** Amery diary, Jul 27, 1942.
- 104** War Cabinet, Aug 31, 1942.
- 105** Grigg, paper, WP (42) 441, Sep 1942: 'United States Coloured Troops in the United Kingdom' (PREM.4/26/9; CAB.66/30); *The Sunday Pictorial*, Sep 6; and *Sunday Express*, Sep 20, 1942.
- 106** War Cabinet, Oct 13, 1942, in the House of Commons (CAB.65/28).
- 107** Grigg to WSC, Oct 21, 1943 (PREM.4/26/9).
- 108** WSC to Grigg, Oct 20, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 109** Duke of Marlborough to WSC, Oct 21 (*ibid.*).
- 110** WSC to Grigg, Oct 22, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 111** Grigg to WSC, Dec 2, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 112** FBI memorandum, Mar 29, 1943 on 'off the record' remarks (by Harriman? Sulzberger?) to newspapermen (FBI archives, Washington).
- 113** Amery diary, Sep 9, 1942.
- 114** *Ibid.*, Aug 31, 1942.
- 115** Halifax diary, Sep 28 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.11); on Oct 26, 1942, Halifax commented dryly on 'the American . . . habit of lynching negroes, which as the lynching of three in Mississippi last week shows, is not yet out of fashion' (*ibid.*).
- 116** *Ibid.*, Nov 21, 1942.
- 117** Ickes diary, Aug 8, recording FDR's cabinet of Aug 7, 1942.
- 118** FDR to WSC, Aug 12(?), 1942:

- Mansergh, vol. i, 673ff.
- 119** Amery diary, Aug 12, 1942.
- 120** WSC to FDR, Aug 14, No. 130 (Hopkins papers: Sherwood collection, box 311, folder 'Churchill and Harriman in Moscow, Aug 1942'). One word was corrupted.
- 121** Amery diary, Dec 21. Cadogan (diary, Dec 28, 1942) noted that they decided to do no more than admit that there might be a discussion of Hongkong's future after the war. 'We are on perfectly firm ground,' he noted.
- 122** *Ibid.*, Sep 9, 10, 1942.
- 123** Halifax secret diary, Sep 14, 1942.
- 124** Halifax to Eden, Sep 14, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A4.410.4.15; and FO.954/29).
- 125** Halifax secret diary, Oct 11, 1942.
- 126** War Cabinet, Nov 18, 1942 (CAB.65/28).
- 127** Amery diary, Jan 12, 1942.
- 128** *Ibid.*, Sep 10, 1942.
- 129** *Ibid.*, Sep 19, 1942.
- 130** *Ibid.*, Jul 27, 1943.
- 131** Amery diary, Sep 22. See too *ibid.*, Sep 24, 1942. The diaries contain months of debate about who should replace Linlithgow, whose term of office had already been prolonged.
- 132** Brooke diary, unpublished, Sep 11, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 133** A letter from Moore, Apr 30, 1966, quoted in Gilbert, vii, 229.
- 134** Brooke diary, unpublished, Sep 12, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 135** Eisenhower to Marshall, Sep 15, 1942; quoted in Eisenhower, 101-4.
- 136** WSC to Eden and Hollis, M. 376/2, Sep 16, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/168).
- 137** Ismay to WSC, Sep 29 (CAB.120/827) and Oct 6 (CAB.120/529). The Catalina, FP119, had crashed on Sep 26. Report by Inter-Services Security Board to chiefs of staff, Oct 3 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/168); for a file on the possibility that this accident had compromised TORCH see PREM.3/439/17.
- See too Halifax secret diary, Oct 11, quoting Adm. Cunningham; and Ismay, *op. cit.*, 265. The SOE agent 'Marcil' was aboard the plane.
- A JIC report to C, Oct. 23, 1942, states, 'It has subsequently come to our notice, through most secret sources, that all the documents, which included a list of prominent personalities in North Africa and possibly information with regard to our organisations there, together with a notebook, have been photostatted and come into the hands of the enemy' (CAB.163/1).
- 138** Eisenhower, 96; Robert Murphy, *Diplomat among Warriors* (London, 1964), 135f (hereafter, Murphy).
- 139** Eisenhower, 95. Murphy, 133.
- 140** Henry Wallace diary, Nov 12, quoting Morgenthau. Eisenhower arranged for each of the three task force commanders to be given \$100,000 in small denomination Gold coins, with \$200,000 in reserve at his HQ: Butcher diary, 234, Sep 16, 1942, unsealed.
- 141** Butcher diary, 250, Sep 20, 1942, unsealed. Colonel Julius Holmes, minutes of Eisenhower's meeting with Murphy; in Eisenhower, 97.
- 142** Eisenhower, 98.
- 143** Butcher diary, 258, Sep 22, unsealed; there are many references in these pages to such assassination plotting between Eisenhower and Murphy (referred to as 'Colonel McGowan').
- On Sep 16, 1942 Eisenhower stipulated the 'liquidation' of the twenty German

- members should be left to the 'last possible moment.' (*Ibid.*, 235).
- 144 Brooke diary, unpublished, Sep 30, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 145 WSC to Alexander, Sep 20; Eden diary, Sep 20, 1942.
- 146 WSC to Alexander, Sep 23 (CAB.163/11).
- 147 Staff conference at Chequers, Sep 21, 1942 (CAB.79/87; PREM.3/439/20a).
- 148 Butcher diary, 269, Sep 27, 1942, unsealed.
- 149 *Ibid.*, 217, Sep 11, and 225, Sep 14, 1942.
- 150 Clark related this to Stimson a week later. Stimson diary, Sep 28, 1942.
- 151 Butcher diary, Sep 21. Brooke diary, unpublished, Sep 23, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 152 Brooke diary, unpublished, Sep 16, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a; and MS, 3/A/vii, 530).
- 153 Butcher diary, 254ff, Sep 21, 1942.
- 154 WSC to Mackenzie King, Sep 24, 1942 (Mackenzie King papers).
- 155 Jack (Tovey) to A B Cunningham, Sep 23, 1942 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52570).
- 156 WSC to Portal, M.406/2, Sep 25; and Portal's replies to WSC, Sep 26, 30, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/168 and CAB.121/1).
- 157 Air Ministry to commands, Oct 29, 1942 (AIR.8/424).
- 158 WSC to Ismay for COS Committee, D.165/2, Sep 28, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/168).
- 26: **Pig in the Middle: Darlan**
- 1 Butcher diary, 211, Sep 9, 1942, unsealed.
- 2 Capt. Wood, 'American-De Gaullist Relations 1942-44,' Jun 23, 1944; and Lieut. G M Elsey, 'President Roosevelt's Policy towards de Gaulle,' Jun 21, 1945 (NA, Official papers of Adm. W D Leahy, file 20); and see FDR's remarks on this at JCS meeting, Washington, Jan 7, 1943.
- 3 Harvey diary, Sep 14, 1942.
- 4 See the second-hand version in the Cecil King diary, Sep 11, 1942.
- 5 PM's card, Sep 30. Harvey diary, Sep 30, 1942. WP (43) 34 of Aug 7, 1943, 'Relations with Gen. de Gaulle,' Jun 1940-Jun 1943 (PREM.3/121/5).
- 6 Minute Z7530/5123/G, Meeting between the PM, Eden, and Gen. de Gaulle, Sep 30; and see de Gaulle's version to Charles Peake, Oct 6 (FO.371/31950). Note for Adm. Pound, Oct 13 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/168). See too Cadogan diary, Sep 30; and Harvey diary, Oct 1, 1942.
- 7 Brooke diary, unpublished, Sep 30, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 8 Cadogan diary, Sep 30; on Oct 2 he records a meeting with 'D Morton about cutting de Gaulle's communications'; and Harvey diary, Oct 1, 1942.
- 9 Brooke diary, unpublished, Sep 30, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 10 G C Dickens, note on a talk with Adm. Auboyneau, Oct 2, 1942 (FO.371/31950).
- 11 Llewellyn Woodward, *British Foreign Policy* (London, 1962), 122f.
- 12 Eden diary, Sep 30, 1942.
- 13 Turkish ambassador, Tel. No. 293, to Ankara, Sep 24, 1942; GC&CS decrypt No. 109507 (HW.1/29).
- 14 Nicolson diary, Sep 9, 1942.
- 15 Cadogan diary, Oct 2, 1942.
- 16 Eden diary, Oct 1, 1942.
- 17 *Ibid.*, Oct 1; Harvey diary, Oct 2, 1942.
- 18 Eden diary, Oct 2, 1942.
- 19 *Ibid.*, Oct 3; Harvey diary, Oct 1-2. On this crisis see too the Dalton diary, Sep 10,

- Oct 10, 1942.
- 20 Eisenhower to Ismay, Oct 7, 1942, with minute by WSC (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/168).
- 21 Butcher diary, 287, Oct 5, 1942.
- 22 PM's card, Oct 5, 1942.
- 23 Morton to WSC, Nov 18, 1940 with a report on low Italian morale and Whitehall talk of bombing Rome. 'There are obviously difficulties largely owing to the absence of legitimate military objectives in and around Rome itself.' Morton suggested bombing military targets and railroad lines near Rome. WSC minuted: 'We will bomb Rome when the time comes. It is only Air[?] that is keeping us back' (PREM.7/7).
- 24 Memorandum on bombing Rome given to Myron C Taylor by the Pope on Sep 17; a footnote states that Taylor presented this subject to WSC at Chequers on Sep 28, 1941 (Myron C Taylor papers; see also his papers in NA, RG.59). D'Arcy Osborne wrote on Dec 2, 1941 to the Cardinal Secretary of State warning that the Pope should not protest if the city, with its airfields, railroads, and troop concentrations was bombed (AIR.8/436).
- 25 WSC to Portal, Sep 20; and reply, Sep 24, 1941 (AIR.8/436). Portal had replied that the attack would have to come from Malta – where they had 18 Wellingtons and 26 Blenheims.
- 26 Portal to Cadogan, Oct 26, 1941 (AIR.8/436).
- 27 FO to Ld Halifax, Jan 13, 1942 (AIR.8/436).
- 28 A Sinclair to WSC, Dec 4; WSC minute, Dec 6, 1942 (AIR.8/437).
- 29 Harris, cabinet paper on Bombing Policy, WP (42) 374, Aug 24; WSC minute, Sep 9, 1942 (PREM.3/7).
- 30 WSC to Air Ministry, Sep 17, 1942 (PREM.3/7).
- 31 C Portal, 'An Estimate of the Effects of an Anglo-American Bomber Offensive against Germany,' (COS (42) 379 (O), Nov 3, 1942 (CAB.121/1).
- 32 Brooke to 'Archie' [Wavell], Oct 9, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 6/x/2/2).
- 33 Tovey to admiralty, Oct 11; WSC minute, Oct 19, 1942 (PREM.3/7).
- 34 Chiefs of staff meeting, Oct 22, 1942 (CAB.79/23).
- 35 C Portal, 'An Estimate of the Effects of an Anglo-American Bomber Offensive against Germany,' (COS (42) 379(O), Nov 3, 1942 (CAB.121/1).
- 36 Pound, COS (42) 393(O), Nov 15, 1942 (CAB.121/1).
- 37 COS meeting, (42) 319th, Nov 18, 1942 (CAB.121/1).
- 38 Ismay to PM, and PM to COS, D.182/2, Nov 1, 1942 (CAB.121/1).
- 39 Hollis to COS, COS (42) 455 (O), Dec 17; COS (42) 350th meeting, Dec 19, 1942 (CAB.121/1).
- 40 A V Alexander to WSC, Dec 25, 1942 (First Sea Lord's records, ADM.205/14).
- 41 Harvey diary, Oct 7, 9, 1942.
- 42 Eden diary, Oct 6, 1942.
- 43 *Ibid.*, Oct 8, 1942.
- 44 Elizabeth Layton, letter home, Oct 12, 1942 (Nel papers): Gilbert, vii, 238.
- 45 Amery diary, Sep 24, Oct 12, 1942.
- 46 John Martin letter home, Oct 14, 1942.
- 47 *Ibid.*, Oct 18, 1942.
- 48 Dr G McVittie (GC&CS), note on visit to Dunstable, Oct 19 (HW.14/55); and note to DDI(4), Oct 22 (HW.14/55).
- 49 WSC to Ismay, Oct 16, 1942.
- 50 Brooke to 'Archie,' Oct 9, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 6/x/2/2).
- 51 Brooke diary, unpublished, Oct 14, 16, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a; and MS, 3/A/vii, 547f).

- 52 *Ibid.*, Oct 22, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a; and MS, 3/A/vii, 555f). Compare Brooke's *published* text in Sir Arthur Bryant, *op. cit.*, 555.
- 53 Brooke diary, unpublished, Oct 13, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 54 Cadogan diary, Oct 14, 1942.
- 55 John Martin letter home, Oct 18, 1942.
- 56 Cadogan diary, Oct 19, 1942.
- 57 Eden to WSC, Oct 10; WSC note, Oct 12, 1942 (PREM.3/442/20a).
- 58 WSC to Eden, M.483/2, Oct 24, 1942 (CAB.120/529).
- 59 Duke of Alba, Tel. to Madrid No. 308, Oct 28, intercept read by WSC on Nov 1, 1942 (HW.1/1033).
- 60 Eisenhower to Marshall, Oct 13, 1942 (PREM.3/442/20a).
- 61 William Leahy, quoted in Halifax diary, Nov 23 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.11). And Leahy, *I Was There* (New York, 1950); and diary. For British concern at Leahy's pro-Vichy and anti de Gaulle posture, see R Campbell to W Mack, Aug 31, 1942 (FO.371/31982).
- 62 Murphy, 148.
- 63 Information privately communicated by Darlan's biographer Captain Claude Huan, Mar 1996; he discussed this with Chrétien several times. Clementine Churchill had received from D Cousteau, a Frenchman close to the Vichy admirals, a letter dated Torquay, Oct 9, 1942, offering to visit Darlan and swing him and the Vichy fleet round to the Allies again; a note to WSC was enclosed (ADM.199/529).
- 64 Ismay to 'CD' [chief of S.O.E.] and to C, Oct 13 (CAB.121/284). He asked for a reply by Oct 15, as the COS wanted to discuss this with 'CD' and C on Oct 16, 1942.
- 65 History of US PsyWar operations in North Africa, 51-58, quoting Marshall to Eisenhower, EYES ONLY, R-2015, CM OUT 5209, Oct 16, 1942, copy in JCS HS files. This is the relayed paraphrase of Murphy's message (Hoover Libr., Robert Murphy papers, box 52).
- 66 *Ibid.*, quoting Handy to Murphy, SIGGY B-1, n.d. (about Oct 17); Marshall to Eisenhower, No 2015, CM OUT 5209, Oct 16, 1942 (Hoover Libr., Robert Murphy papers, box 52).
- 67 *Ibid.*, quoting Harry Butcher, *My Three Years with Eisenhower*, 145-6. Memo, E P Lilly conference with Gen. Lemnitzer, Oct 14, 1946; Gen. Mark Clark, Torch operation, in *Washington Evening Star*, May 19, 1947. In his book *Calculated Risk* (New York, 1950), 70-71, Clark avoids all mention of Allied Forces headquarters' decision. Eisenhower to Marshall, EYES ONLY, No 3711, CM IN 7296, Oct 17, 1942, CCS 385.7 (10.10.42) SEC 1 (Hoover Libr., Robert Murphy papers, box 52). Only portions of these signals, avoiding the Darlan issue, were used by William L Langer in *Our Vichy Gamble* (New York, 1947), 325-6.
- 68 Eden diary, Oct 17. This is the only entry between Oct 8 and Nov 7, 1942.
- 69 Harvey diary, Oct 17, 1942.
- 70 Sargent to WSC, Taut, No. 73, Dec 19; WSC to Orme Sargent (FO), Dec 20, 1941; F D W B[rown] to V G Lawford at FO, Oct 18; endorsed 'seen by Major Morton, 19.10.', initialled J.M.M[artin]. 18.10.42' (PREM.3/186a/7).
- 71 Staff conference at No. 10 Downing-street, Oct 17, 4:30 P.M. (CAB.79/87).
- 72 History of US PsyWar operations in North Africa, quoting Eisenhower to Marshall, EYES ONLY, No 3730, CM IN 7386, Oct 17, 1942, CCS 385.7 (10.10.42) sec 1. Butcher, p. 146. PsyWar at AFHQ were not informed of the possibility of AFHQ reaching an understanding with Darlan;

- this, states the history, was an omission for which the Allies 'were to pay dearly.' These passages are lined in ink on Murphy's file copy (Hoover Libr., Robert Murphy papers, box 52).
- 73** Butcher diary, Oct 17, 1942; see the comments by Robert Sherwood (Beaverbrook papers, C.175).
- 74** WSC to Eden, Oct 18, 1942: Gilbert, with an erudite footnote about the culinary writer Mrs Hanna Glasse, vii, 240.
- 75** Harvey diary, Oct 19. Hugh Dalton also noted that Attlee displayed 'irritation with the PM' for making slow progress with post-war decisions and 'always clos[ing] everything down.' Dalton diary, Nov 17, 1942.
- 76** Harvey diary, Oct 23, 1942.
- 77** WSC to Eden, Oct 21, in Woodward, *History of British Foreign Policy*, 433–5.
- 78** FDR conversation with Morgenthau, transcript in latter's diary, Oct 11 (FDR Library, Morgenthau papers, vol. 578).
- 79** PM's card.
- 80** Butcher diary, 335, Oct 21, 1942, unsealed.
- 81** Amery diary, Oct 21; see also WSC's confident remarks to the Pacific War Council this day, Oct 21, 1942 (CAB.99/26).
- 82** Dalton diary, Oct 21, 1942.
- 83** WSC to Alexander, Oct 20, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 528. The originals of these telegrams Jul–Dec 1942 are in PREM.3/310/6 and CAB.105/19.
- 84** GC&CS draft history, Chap.vi, 'The Western Front from February 1942 – May 1945,' 355 (HW3/99).
- 85** ULTRA intercept CX/MSS/1562/T23, quoted by Hinsley, vol. ii, 427. And see CX/MSS/1562/T14, the daily report by *Panzerarmee Afrika* Ia (operations officer) for Oct 19, which WSC ordered sent out to C-in-C, Middle East, Oct 21, 1942 (HW.1/995).
- 86** WSC to FDR, Oct 23, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 528.
- 87** Queen Elizabeth to Queen Mary, Oct 19, 1942, 550.
- 88** Eleanor Roosevelt, typescript 'Diary of Trip to Great Britain, Oct 21–Nov 17, 1942,' Oct 23 in her daughter's papers (FDR Library, Anna Roosevelt Halsted papers, box 60); for WSC's file on this visit, see PREM.4/26/5.
- 89** Henry R Morgenthau Jr talking with his staff, transcript in Morgenthau diary, Nov 2, 1942 (FDR Library, Henry R Morgenthau papers, vol. 581).
- 90** Rauf Orbay (London) to Turkish foreign ministry, Ankara, Oct 24; intercept No. 110453 shown to WSC, Oct 29, 1942 (HW.1/1017).
- 91** Nel, *op. cit.*, 90f.
- 92** *Panzerarmee Afrika* Ia to Rommel, via Wehrkr XVII, No. 2794, Oct 24, intercept CX/MSS/1576/T14, transmitted Oct 25, 1942, 3:44 A.M. to Cairo for Rowan (HW.1/1008).
- 93** Dt General in Rome to *Panzerarmee Afrika*, Oct 24, 7:30 A.M. and PzArmee to Kesselring, Oct 24, four P.M. CX/MSS/C55 and C56 (HW.1/1346). They were telephoned to WSC, and sent over on Oct 25, 1942.
- 94** CX/MSS/C.57 (HW.1/1011).
- 95** Kesselring to Antonius 2, Oct 25, 5 P.M., CX/MSS/1580/T.9 (HW.1/1011).
- 96** Intercepts CX/MSS/C.58 and 59 (HW.1/1011).
- 97** Martin diary, Oct 25, 1942. The other guests that weekend were, Clementine, Sarah, Mary Churchill; 'Tommy' Thompson, and John Martin; Eleanor Roosevelt, Miss Malvina Thompson; Cherwell, Winant, Mr and Mrs Eden, the Portals, Sir A and Lady Harris, Mr Robert

- Hopkins, and a Miss Brookes. Chequers register, Oct 23–26 1942; and ‘Mr Winant’s Visits to Chequers,’ Extracts from Chequers Visitors’ Book (FDR Library, Winant papers, box 189, ‘Chequers’).
- 98 Eleanor Roosevelt diary, Oct 25, 1942 (FDR Library, Anna Roosevelt Halsted papers, box 60). Lindemann’s personal assistant was a Dr Merton.
- 99 The dinner was on Oct 27. Henry R Morgenthau Jr talking with his staff, transcript in Morgenthau diary, Nov 2, 1942 (FDR Library, Henry R Morgenthau papers, vol. 581).
- 100 Eleanor Roosevelt diary, Oct 27 (FDR Library, Anna Roosevelt Halsted papers, box 60); PM’s card, Oct 27; Brooke diary, Oct 27 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a). Henry Wallace diary, Dec 16, 1942.
- 101 WSC to Eden, Sep 20, and reply, Sep 23, 1942 (PREM.4/26/5 and FO.954/29).
- 102 Stimson diary, Nov 20, 1942.
- 103 Morgenthau talking (see note 99).
- 104 WSC to Weizmann, Oct 30 (PREM.4.52/3). The message was entirely John Martin’s idea. As for its eventual publication, see Halifax to Eden, No. 5359, Oct 30, 1942 (FO.954/29).
- 105 PM’s card.
- 106 Brooke diary, Oct, 26, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a); Bryant, 514f.
- 107 MI.19 (RPS)/1218, report, ‘Pro-Allied Subversive Action in Algiers on the night of Nov 7–8, 1942,’ Jan 20, 1943; a debriefing of two of the ‘subversives’ who directed this action – one a doctor of thirty-three, the other a businessman of twenty-two (FO.371/36116).
- 108 WSC to Eden, Oct 24; WSC to Lord Gort, Oct 30, 1942 (CAB.120/529).
- 109 Amery diary, Oct 26, 1942.
- 110 Signal from *Panzerarmee Afrika* Ia, Oct 25; intercept CX/MSS/C.60, Oct 26, 1942, 2:46 P.M. (HW.1/1014).
- 111 WSC to Mackenzie King, Curtin, and Fraser, Oct 28: Churchill, vol. iv, 534.
- 112 Cadogan diary, Oct 28, 1942.
- 113 WSC to Alexander, Oct 28, draft (PREM.3/299/1, and CAB.163/11); cf. Michael Howard, *Grand Strategy*, vol. iv (London 1972), 68. For frantic appeals by Rommel for a *Schlachtflieger* (ground attack) squadron, see the intercept of Rommel to Kesselring, Oct 28, 1942, 11:30 (HW.1/1018).
- 114 So WSC told Brooke the next morning. Brooke diary, unpublished, Oct 29, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a); omitted from Sir Arthur Bryant, *op. cit.*, 512. The fact of Eden’s visit is confirmed by PM’s card.
- 115 WSC to Brooke, Oct 28, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vii, 244.
- 116 Montgomery was told of the coming visit at 11:50 A.M., Oct 29, 1942: Nigel Hamilton, *Monty. The Making of a General, 1887–1942* (London, 1981), 825.
- 117 This whole passage was omitted by Bryant from the published Brooke diary, 512. ‘I was sent for by PM and had to tell him fairly plainly what I thought of Anthony Eden and [his] ability to judge a tactical situation at this distance.’
- 118 Cadogan diary, Oct 29, 1942: “C” showed me a lot of what looks like good news from Egypt.’
- 119 Rommel to OKW, Oct 28, 1942; in Hinsley, vol. ii.
- 120 Rommel, Order No. 2878, Oct 28; intercept CX/MSS/C/63, Oct 29; sent to Alexander as QT 4646 (GW.1/1019).
- 121 WSC to Alexander, Oct 29 (CAB.163/11); in part: Churchill, vol. iv, 534f; see Gilbert, vol. vii, 245, listing BONIFACE intercepts QT/4474, QT/4592, QT/4599, QT/4642, QT/4644 and QT/4682.

- 122 Montgomery's diary, quoted by Nigel Hamilton, *Monty. The Making of a General, 1887–1942* (London, 1981), 826.
- 123 Alexander to WSC, Oct 30, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 535.
- 124 Alexander to WSC, Oct 31: *Ibid.*, 535f.
- 125 WSC to FDR, Nov 1, 1942.
- 126 Cadogan diary, Nov 1, 1942.
- 127 C to Washington, Nov 2 (HW.14/57).
- 128 Brooke diary, Nov 2, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a); Bryant, 515. PM's card shows that Smuts, the chiefs of staff and Mountbatten were also at the luncheon.
- 129 Cadogan diary, Nov 2, 1942.
- 130 Rommel, *Zwischenmeldung* (Interim report), Nr. 2, Nov 2, in Rommel papers (NA microfilm T84, roll 276, 0884); summarised in Cadogan diary, Nov 3, and Harvey diary, Nov 3. Butcher diary, Nov 7, 1942: WSC had told Eisenhower 'that a message from Rommel to German General Staff had been intercepted in which Rommel begged for aid immediately or his force would be annihilated.'
- 131 ULTRA intercept QT/5086, Hinsley, vol. ii, 448. WSC signalled to Alexander on Nov 4, 1942: 'Presume you have read all the BONIFACE including especially No. QT/5086 sent you night of 2nd.'
- 132 These were QT/5032, QT/5039, and QT/5073: Hinsley, vol. ii, 448.
- 133 Rommel to the Führer, Nov 3, 1942. Rommel papers (NA microfilm T84, roll 276, 0886).
- 134 Amery diary, Nov 3, 1943.
- 135 Hitler to Rommel and Kesselring, Nov 3, 1942, in Rommel papers (NA microfilm T84, roll 276, 0885).
- 136 Cadogan diary, Nov 5, 1942.
- 137 Alexander to WSC, Nov 4, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 537.
- 138 HM King George VI diary, Nov 4, 1942, 553; there too the extract from the papers of Lionel Logue, the speech therapist for the king's stutter.
- 139 Brooke diary, Nov 4, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 140 Rommel to Hitler, Nov 4, 1942. Rommel papers (NA microfilm T84, roll 276, 0890).
- 141 Hitler to Rommel, Nov 4, 1942, 8:50 P.M (NA microfilm T84, roll 276, 0892).
- 142 Martin diary, Nov 4, 1942: 'In the evening arrived news of Alexander's victory in Egypt – Rommel's forces in full retreat.'
- 143 WSC to FDR, Nov 4, 1942.
- 144 Hume Wrong diary, Nov 4, 1942 (Canadian National Archives, Ottawa, Hume Wrong papers, MG.30, E.101, file 23, 'London, 1942').
- 145 WSC to Alexander, Nov 4, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 537f.
- 146 Bruce Lockhart diary, Nov 5, 1942 and Aug 15, 1958.
- 147 King George VI to WSC, Nov 5.
- 148 PM's card.
- 149 Nicolson diary, Nov 6, 1942.
- 150 Alexander to WSC, Nov 6, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 539. Most of the prisoners were however Italian. Once again Rommel's *Afrika Korps* had slipped through the net.
- 151 The 2nd New Zealand Division suffered 2,388, the 51st Highland Division 2,495, and the whole of Tenth Corps 2,886 casualties (Official Historian's papers, CAB.106/792).
- 152 JIC (42) 432 (O), 'Recent Intelligence Affecting Operation TORCH,' Nov 3, 1942 (CAB.120/529).

27: **A Little Airplane Accident**

- 1 Morton to WSC, Oct 30 (FO.371/31950).
Marshall to Eisenhower, Aug 8, 1942, Ei-

- senhower, 93.
- 2 George M Elsey, 'President Roosevelt's Policy towards de Gaulle,' Jun 21, 1945 (NA, RG.218, Joint chiefs of staff, Official papers of Adm. W D Leahy, file 20).
 - 3 Murphy to FDR, Nov 2; in Murphy, 155; cf. JSM Washington to COS, Nov 2, 1942 (CAB.120/529).
 - 4 Cadogan diary, Nov 2, 1942. Visiting the codebreakers' headquarters at Bletchley Park three days later to settle pay grievances, C told Cadogan that he had heard that 'the Giraud affair had been rather muddled.'
 - 5 Stimson diary, Nov 2, 5, 1942.
 - 6 WSC to FDR, No. 182, Nov 3, 1942 (CAB.120/529).
 - 7 Leahy diary, Nov 3; he sent the draft messages to FDR at Hyde Park. FDR to WSC, No. 206, Nov 4 (CAB.120/529). For FDR's message to Pétain see PREM.439/7. WSC had written to Eden on Oct 30 that he agreed with Morton that FDR's planned remarks to Pétain and Franco were 'out-of-date and overdone.'
 - 8 WSC to Alexander, Nov 4 (CAB.120/529).
 - 9 Murphy, 180f.
 - 10 FDR told Morgenthau that he had 'absolutely not' expected Darlan: 'But he worked out all right and he gave the orders to cease firing,' Morgenthau diary, Nov 12, 1942 (FDR Library, Henry R Morgenthau papers).
 - 11 Eisenhower, 116.
 - 12 See e.g., Nerin Gun, *Pétain, Laval, de Gaulle* (Paris, 1979), 330f. The codebreakers in the German *Forschungsamt* concluded, as Goebbels recorded on Dec 11, 1942, 'that Darlan high-tailed it to North Africa just for the purpose of defecting, and that his son's illness was only a cover for this.'
 - 13 GC&CS, French dept., MOST SECRET summary No. 323, 'Adm. Darlan,' Nov 8, 1942, issued to Loxley, Morton, and others (HW.1/1067). WSC marked two paras. on this document.
 - 14 Cadogan diary, Nov 17; the same French source, 'Hellen(?),' shows up as a sidekick to de Gaulle on Dec 7, 1942 (*ibid.*).
 - 15 Adm. Leahy diary, Nov 28, 1942 (Libr. of Congress, Manuscript Division, Fleet-Adm. William D Leahy papers, reel 2).
 - 16 *Ibid.*, Dec 7, 1942. Ray Atherton (State dept., European Division), quoted in Adm. Leahy diary, Mar 31, 1943 (Libr. of Congress, Manuscript Division, Fleet-Adm. William D Leahy papers, reel 2); and cf. Apr 6, 1943.
 - 17 Eisenhower handwritten note (Butcher papers).
 - 18 Butcher diary, Nov 7, 1942, unsealed.
 - 19 Eisenhower to WSC, No. 77, Nov 6 (CAB.120/529). On Nov 6, 1942 relayed to Gibraltar at 4:30 P.M., Marshall informed Eisenhower that, according to Murphy, Darlan had secretly flown to Algiers on the fifth, where his son was dying with 'no hope of recovery.' Darlan's presence in the TORCH area might be embarrassing, said Marshall, but it was believed he would leave before then (AFHQ file, 'Adm. Darlan,' WO.204/303).
 - 20 WSC to FDR, Nov 5, 1942 (PREM.3/439/20a).
 - 21 FDR to WSC, Nov 5, 1942 (*ibid.*).
 - 22 WSC to FDR, Nov 6, 1942 (*ibid.*, and CAB.120/529).
 - 23 WSC to Minister of State, T.1444/2, Nov 6, 1942 (CAB.120/529).
 - 24 P-219 had sailed on Oct 27, with Wright and Lieut. Col. Bradley Gaylord, US 12th Air Force, as 'passengers.' Pound to Ismay, Oct 28, 1942 (CAB.120/529).
 - 25 Charles Peake and C N Stirling minutes, Nov 7, 1942 (FO.371/31950).
 - 26 Morton to WSC, Dec 3, quoting Col.

- Brien Clarke; Clarke also claimed that Gen. Mast had surrendered Algeria, and Gen. Noguès Morocco, hours before any orders were issued by Darlan (PREM.3/442/20a). WSC's other file on North Africa, Sep–Dec 1942 (PREM.3/442/20b) has been retained by the Cabinet Office despite a review as recently as 1992.
- 27 Stimson diary, Nov 8, 1942; Eisenhower, 110–2.
- 28 Butcher diary, pages Gib-21ff, Nov 8, 1942, unsealed.
- 29 WSC speech during Secret Session, Dec 10, 1942 (Hopkins papers, box 329, 'North Africa, pre-Casablanca'; and Map Room files, box 116 file A/16); and see PREM.3/442/12.
- 30 Murphy, 161.
- 31 Eisenhower, 112. FDR told Morgenthau (diary, Nov 12, 1942) that Giraud gave the Allies a terrible time, wanting to lord it over the British, Americans, and Free French. Finally Eisenhower had to threaten to send him back to France (FDR Library, Henry R Morgenthau papers).
- 32 Eisenhower to CCS, Nov 8, 1942, 02:32 A.M. (PREM.3/442/20a).
- 33 Butcher diary, original typescript, Nov 8, 1942. This passage is not in the published version, *My Three Years with Eisenhower*.
- 34 Mason-Macfarlane spent the night at Chequers a few weeks earlier. Martin diary, Jun 12; and Chequers register, Jun 12, 1942 (copies of both in the author's possession).
- 35 Murphy points out (163) that WSC is incorrect in stating the Allies had a prior understanding with Juin.
- 36 Murphy, 163f.
- 37 From Darlan's unpublished war diary, 'Evènements du 8 novembre 1942,' written Nov 15, 1942 (courtesy of Claude Huan).
- 38 Murphy, 163f.
- 39 Elizabeth Layton, letter home, Nov 18, 1942: Gilbert, vol. vi, 252; and see her memoirs, *Mr Churchill's Secretary* (London, 1958), 91. For titbits telephoned from Major Carver of the Cabinet offices, see PREM.3/439/20a.
- 40 CX/MSS/STPF/429, originating Nov 8, 10:32 GMT; and CX/MSS/STPF/438, Nov 8, 1942 (HW.1065; the raw intercept is in HW.1/1067).
- 41 CX/MSS/STPF/433 timed Nov 8, 12:11 P.M.; CX/MSS/STPF/434, Nov 8, 1942 (HW.1/1067).
- 42 GC&CS Naval Section, Naval headlines No. 492, Nov 8, 11 A.M. (HW.1/1067).
- 43 J Martin to WSC, Nov 8, 1942 (PREM.3/439/20a).
- 44 WSC to Brigadier L C Hollis, Minute D.192/2, Nov 8, 1942 (PREM.3/442/20a and CAB.120/530).
- 45 Cadogan diary and Harvey diary, Nov 6, 8; for the record of WSC's interview with de Gaulle before lunch, Nov 8, 1942, see PREM.3/439/20a; for Eden's record see CAB.66/30.
- 46 Eden diary, Nov 8, 1942.
- 47 Lieut.-Gen. Sir F N Mason-Macfarlane, note on meeting at Government House, Nov 8, 1942; Eisenhower, 113.
- 48 WSC to Giraud, in WSC to Eisenhower, Nov 7, 1942 (CAB.120/529). It began, 'I feel the Rock of Gibraltar will be safe in your hands.'
- 49 WSC to Giraud, Nov 7, and reply to WSC; the original French text is Eisenhower Library, file 'Churchill'; copy in DDE to WSC, Nov 8, 4:43 P.M., in Butcher diary (Butcher papers, and PREM.3/439/20a and CAB.120/530).
- 50 Stimson diary, Nov 9–10, 1942.
- 51 Marshall to Eisenhower, Nov 5; Ismay to WSC, Nov 7; Churchill asked to be shown Eisenhower's telegram reporting this

- (CAB.120/529 and PREM.3/442/20a). Murphy had signalled Eisenhower via Marshall on Nov 4, 1942, that this suggestion had already been received from Giraud.
- 52 Bedell Smith to Marshall, Nov 9, 1942 (Hopkins papers, box 180).
- 53 Winant to FDR, Nov 9, 1942, 6:50 P.M (FDR Libr., Map Room files, box 11, 'FDR-Winant').
- 54 Butcher diary, 29, Nov 8, 1942, unsealed.
- 55 *Ibid.* Giraud was the target of a failed assassination attempt on Aug 28, 1944; the Arab gunman had been hired by de Gaulle's French National Committee of Liberation, from what Robert Murphy told Adm. W D Leahy (Leahy diary).
- 56 MI.19 (RPS)/1218, report, 'Pro-Ally Subversive Action in Algiers on the night of 7-8th November 1942,' Jan 20, 1943 (FO.371/36116). Lemaigre-Dubreuil travelled freely between Algiers and Vichy France and had acted earlier as the conduit between Henri d'Astier and Giraud; Giraud's luggage was hidden at the apartment of M Alexandre – whose arrest he would later order.
- 57 Stimson diary, Dec 26, 1942.
- 58 Maisky denied the charge. Eden's note on conversation with Maisky, Oct 15; initialled 'read, WSC 17.x.' (PREM.3/439/20a); Cadogan diary, Oct 15, 1942.
- 59 Hut 3 to GC&CS director, Oct, 2, 1942 (HW.1/946).
- 60 Naval Section report, 'German Preparations For Activity in the Caspian Sea,' Sep 27; C to WSC, C/918, Sep 30; WSC to C, Sep 30, 1942 (HW.1/938).
- 61 WSC to Stalin, Sep 30, 1942. In his reply Stalin admitted that the situation at Stalingrad had worsened; he asked for 800 Allied fighter planes a month, three hundred of them from Britain.
- 62 WSC to Stalin, Oct 8; Stalin to WSC, Oct 13; remarks of WSC to War Cabinet (CAB.65/32).
- 63 Stalin to Maisky, in Russian, Oct 19, 1942 (*Sov.-angliiskiye*, 294).
- 64 WSC to Stalin, Nov 5 and 7; and reply, Nov 10, 1942 (PREM.3/439/20a).
- 65 Stalin to WSC, in Russian, Nov 8, 1942 (*Sov.-angliiskiye*, 302f).
- 66 Maisky to Molotov, in Russian, Nov 10 (*ibid.*, 303ff). They also discussed Churchill's promise to send twenty fighter squadrons to southern Russia. Turning to Brooke, WSC asked if they couldn't send out some planes at once. Maisky however inferred that the PM was only acting. See too Eden diary, Nov 9; Harvey diary, Nov 10 and Cadogan, Nov 14, 1942
- 67 Brooke diary, unpublished, Nov 9 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a; and MS, 3/A/vii, 569). WSC to Lyttelton, Nov 9, 1942.
- 68 Haley (JIC) to Mockler-Ferryman, G-2 at AFHQ, Nov 11, 1942 (CAB.163/1).
- 69 Darlan, 'Evènements du 8 novembre 1942,' Nov 15, 1942.
- 70 Pound to WSC, Jan 8, 1943 (ADM.205/27, 'First Sea Lord's Correspondence With PM').
- 71 Murphy, 179f.
- 72 Stimson diary, Nov 16. For a large collection of anguished transatlantic messages on the controversy, see NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files, box 7, file 'French North Africa (de Gaulle-Darlan).'
- 73 FDR's interview is in PREM.3/437/4.
- 74 John Martin letter home, Nov 12, 1942.
- 75 Amery diary, Nov 10, 1942.
- 76 Brooke diary, Nov 10, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a); Bryant, 523.
- 77 COS paper 345 (O) 1945; WSC minute, D.139/2, Nov 9, 1942.
- 78 Brooke diary, unpublished, Nov 10, 1942. (*Ibid.* For the text of the king's speech see CAB.66/30.

- 79 Eden diary, Nov 10. Oshima to Tokyo, Nov 9, nine A.M.; telephoned to WSC at 9:30 P.M., Nov 10, 1942 (HW.1/1075).
- 80 Cecil King diary, Nov 12, 1942.
- 81 See Robert Rhodes James (ed.), *Winston S Churchill: His Complete Speeches 1897–1963* (London, 1974), vol. vi, 6688–95. Butler to Hoare, Nov 27, 1942 (Templewood papers, xiii/19).
- 82 Amery diary, Nov 12, 1942.
- 83 Amery to Linlithgow, Nov 13, 1942: Mansergh, vol. iii (London, 1970), 178.
- 84 John Martin letter home, Nov 12, 1942.
- 85 Eisenhower, 117f.
- 86 Hansard, *House of Commons Debates*, Nov 11, 1942, cols.2–39.
- 87 Eden diary, Nov 11, 1942.
- 88 Cecil King diary, Nov 13, 1942.
- 89 Eden diary, Nov 12, 1942.
- 90 WSC to FDR, Nov 11, 1942, Churchill, vol. iv, 566.
- 91 FDR to WSC, Nov 11, 1942.
- 92 Clark to Eisenhower, Nov 12, 1942, 2:58 P.M (Butcher papers).
- 93 Colonel William Stirling, minutes of the meeting between Darlan and Eisenhower, Nov 13, 1942; in Eisenhower, 120f.
- 94 Morgenthau diary, Nov 12 (FDR Library, Henry R Morgenthau papers); similar in FDR to WSC, Nov 20, 1942, Churchill, vol. iv, 571.
- 95 Stalin to WSC, Nov 27, 1942.
- 96 Eden diary, Nov 13, 1942.
- 97 Harvey diary, Nov 13, 1942.
- 98 Cadogan diary, Nov 12, 1942.
- 99 *Ibid.*, Nov 14, 1942.
- 100 Hand-written note by Bracken, undated, 'ca 23.12.1942' (FO.954/16).
- 101 WSC to FDR, Nov 17, 1942.
- 102 Eisenhower to CCS, Nov 14 (CAB.65/28) WSC to Eisenhower, Nov 14, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 567.
- 102 WSC to Stalin, Nov 13, 1942.
- 103 Harvey diary, Nov 11, 1942.
- 104 FDR to WSC, Nov 11 (CAB.65/28).
- 105 Chequers register, Nov 13–16, 1942, lists these as WSC, Thompson, Peck; Mrs Churchill, and daughters Sarah and Mary; Air Marshals Harris and Douglas, Sir Charles and Lady Portal; Smuts, Eden, Adm. Pound, Miss Magee, Mr and Mrs Moisewitsch, Miss Kenyon, generals Ismay, Bedell Smith, Brooke, Hollis, and Gale; Lords Leathers, Cherwell, and Mountbatten, and Captain Lambe.
- 106 Eden diary, Nov 14, 1942.
- 107 Nel, *op. cit.*, 63.
- 108 Eden diary, Nov 15. The diary shows that Eden suffered from blackouts, headaches, giddiness, and eye-problems – what he called 'dazzles.' *Ibid.*, Sep 3, 4, 1942.
- 109 Jack (Tovey) to A B Cunningham, Nov 16, 1942 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52570). His source must have been either Pound or Mountbatten.
- 110 *Ibid.*
- 111 WSC to Selborne, M.527/2, Nov 13, 1942 (CAB.120/827).
- 112 Cadogan diary, Nov 14–15, 1942.
- 113 WSC to FDR, Nov 17, 1942.
- 114 WSC to Pound, Nov 14, 1942.
- 115 Ramsay to Cunningham, Nov 24, 1942 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52570).
- 116 Secret draft history of US PsyWar operations in North Africa, 85ff (Hoover Libr., Robert Murphy papers, Box 52).
- 117 Eisenhower to CCS, Nov 14 (CAB.65/28); Cadogan diary, Nov 15; Eden diary, Nov 15; for the text of the Eisenhower–Darlan agreement, Nov 22, 1942, see FO.371/32148.
- 118 Brooke diary, Nov 15, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a); Bryant, 522; he omits the words 'Eden opposed.' Anthony Eden was prime minister at the time of Bryant's work editing the diaries.

- 119** Butcher diary, page A.590, Jul 16, 1943, unsealed.
- 120** WSC to FDR, Nov 15, 1942, deseriesified 1972 (Eisenhower Library, file 'Churchill'; and Butcher papers). A sanitised version of this is published in Churchill, vol. iv, 567.
- 121** Harvey diary, Nov 16, 1942.
- 122** Papers removed in 1963 from WSC's Chartwell Trust papers included a note revealing this. He later noted, 'I never wish to see this subject again. All copies of this minute are to be destroyed' (CAB.163/12).
- 123** David Gray to FDR, Nov 29, 1942 (NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files, box 219, file '800-Ireland').
- 124** Present were Mrs Churchill, Pamela Churchill, and Richard K Law, parliamentary under-secretary at the FO, as scribe. David Gray, Dublin, to Winant, Nov 24, 1942 (NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files, box 219, file '800-Ireland'). Gray and Sir John Maffey, his British counterpart in Dublin, found this statement useful. 'Neither of us have been able to obtain from Westminster or Washington any authoritative opinion on this question.'
- 125** David Gray, Dublin, to FDR, Nov 29, 1942 (NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files, box 219, file '800-Ireland').
- 126** Gray to Winant, Jan 27, 1942 (NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files, box 219, file '800-Ireland').
- 127** *Ibid.*, Nov 29, 1942.
- 128** Clementine reminded WSC of this episode, over dinner with Mackenzie King (Mackenzie King diary, Aug 10, 1943).
- 129** FDR to WSC, Nov 18, 1942: Churchill, vol. iv, 569.
- 130** Cadogan diary, Nov 22, 1942 (Churchill College, Cadogan papers).
- 131** Gray to FDR, Nov 29, 1942 (see note 125).
- 132** WSC to FDR, Nov 16, 1942; dated Nov 17 in Churchill, vol. iv, 568.
- 133** Cadogan diary, Nov 16, 1942.
- 134** Smuts to WSC, Nov 20, MOST SECRET (Eisenhower Library, file 'Churchill'; CAB.66/31 and CAB.120/530); cf. Churchill, vol. iv, 570. Lord Halifax noted after reading the telegram from Gibraltar that Smuts 'evidently feels that we are in danger of playing down Darlan too much.' Halifax secret diary, Nov 21, 1942.
- 135** WSC to Eisenhower, Nov 22, 1942 (CAB.120/530).
- 136** Darlan to Mark Clark, Nov 21; Eisenhower to CCS, Nov 24, 1942 (PREM.3/442/20a and CAB.120/530; Churchill, vol. iv, 571).
- 137** So Marshall told Dill. J C Dill to A B Cunningham, Dec 1, 1942 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52570).
- 138** Mack to William [Strang], Nov 29, 1942, AFHQ (FO.371/32145).
- 139** Eden to Mack, via C, Dec 4, 1942 (FO.371/32145). He minuted: 'I am appalled at situation which this letter reveals & agree that Mr Mack should come home at once. I regret that he went.'
- 140** Eisenhower, 123.
- 141** *Ibid.* (London, 1948), 124.
- 142** Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Nov 16, 1942, ten P.M (CAB.69/4).
- 143** *Ibid.*
- 144** Ralph Noskwith in Hinsley & Stripp, 121.
- 145** Hinsley, vol. ii, 233.
- 146** CAB.66/31.
- 147** Eden diary, Nov 20, 1942.
- 148** *Ibid.*: 'According to Winston, who did not hear, Clemmie asked De G whether [the] French fleet would come over in response to Darlan's appeal. De G flashed back, 'Never, the fleet's one ambition is to sink yours,' or something to that effect.'

- C[lementine] concluded from De G's manner that he wished the fleet luck in this & ~~flashed~~ retorted, 'You had no right to speak like that in my house.' Whereupon De G coloured up. I fear that W who has of course accepted C's account of this interview will be passionately anti De G in consequence.'
- 149 *Ibid.*, Nov 21, 1942.
- 150 Cadogan diary, Nov 21, 1942.
- 151 Eden diary, Nov 21, 1942.
- 152 *Ibid.*
- 153 WSC to Holmes, M.546/2, Nov 23, 1942 (CAB.120/530).
- 154 Cecil King diary, Dec 19, 1942.
- 155 Pamela Churchill to Hopkins, Nov 30, 1942 (Hopkins papers).
- 156 British Staff officer (Intelligence) at Gibraltar, private letter, Dec 6, quoted in NID LC Report No. 503, Dec 18, 1942 (ADM.199/529).
- 157 Winant to FDR, Dec 3, 1942 (Hopkins papers, box 330, 'Casablanca').
- 158 HM King George VI diary, Nov 28/30, 1942.
- 159 Bruce Lockhart diary, Nov 25, 1942.
- 160 Harvey diary, Nov 26; and November 28, 1942: 'PM is getting more and more enthusiastic over Darlan.'
- 161 Eden to WSC, Nov 26; minute by WSC, Dec 1, 1942 (FO.371/32145). Churchill then wrote another minute: 'This may need review in the light of events.'
- 162 Eden to Peake, Dec 9; note on talk with de Gaulle and Catroux over dinner, Dec 8, 1942 (FO.371/32145 and FO.954/8); Llewellyn Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War* (London, 1971), vol. ii, 395–8, does not refer to the deletion.
- 163 Harvey diary, Nov 28, 1942.
- 164 Eden diary, Nov 30, 1942.
- 28: **Getting Rid of Darlan**
- 1 Cadogan diary, Nov 21. Stalin to WSC, Nov 20, 1942, *Sov.-angliiskiye*, 310.
- 2 Pamela Churchill to Hopkins, Nov 30, 1942 (Hopkins papers).
- 3 Amery diary, Nov 17, 18, 1942.
- 4 *Ibid.*, Nov 19, 1942.
- 5 *News Chronicle*, Nov 27. WSC's rating had touched 89 per cent briefly during the Battle of Britain, and again briefly on his return from Washington in Jan 1942. His government's popularity rose from 49 per cent in Oct to 75 per cent in Nov 1942.
- 6 Halifax diary, Nov 10, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.11).
- 7 Amery diary, Oct 14, 1942.
- 8 Bruce Lockhart diary, Dec 27, 1942.
- 9 Brooke diary, No 18, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a); Bryant, 526; first three words omitted. Ralph Bennett and Edward Thomas in Hinsley & Stripp, 37, 48.
- 10 C to WSC, Nov 29, 1942, enclosing CX/MSS/C/82 (HW.1/1173); and Hut 3 phone message to WSC, with Rommel signal to Bastico, explaining that Fehn would stand in for him. 'An attempt by (strong) forces is not anticipated in this time' (HW.1/1175).
- 11 Cadogan diary, Nov 29, 1942.
- 12 Ramsay to Cunningham, Dec 4, 1942 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52570).
- 13 One of Hitler's stenographers suffered a similar nervous breakdown and was retired, according to the diary of fellow stenographer Karl Thöt (Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Irving Collection); he blamed the privileged insight into awful events.
- 14 Nel, *op. cit.*, 92f.
- 15 Cadogan diary, Nov 21, 1942.
- 16 Eden diary, Nov 19, 1942.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 1942.
- 18 Halifax secret diary, Nov 22, 1942.

- 19 Halifax diary, Nov 22–23, 1942 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.11).
- 20 Dalton diary, Nov 22, 1942. There was a parallel in Nazi Germany: Hitler, faced with the *éclat* of the resignation of Gen. Ludwig Beck in Aug 1938, persuaded him to stay on in the national interest – then sacked him at the height of his own prestige in Oct 1938.
- 21 Eden to Halifax, Dec 5, 1942 (PREM.3/442/20a).
- 22 Cadogan diary, Dec 5; cf. Harvey diary, Dec 17, 1942.
- 23 Martin diary, Dec 5–6, 1942.
- 24 Cadogan diary, Nov 23, 1942.
- 25 Tel. 5474 American Legation, Berne (Harrison) to State dept., Washington, Nov 27, 1942 (Myron C Taylor papers).
- 26 Myron C Taylor to FDR, by phone to Miss Tully, Nov 30, 1942 (*loc. cit.*).
- 27 Memorandum re bombing Rome given to Myron C Taylor by the Pope on Sep 17, 1941; Taylor presented this subject on Sep 28–29, 1941 to WSC and Eden. Myron C Taylor to Winant, Dec 2, 1942 (*loc. cit.*). He asked Winant for a full statement of his conversation with WSC regarding this.
- 28 Myron C Taylor to FDR (by phone to Miss Tully), Nov 30, and FDR's reply (*loc. cit.*).
- 29 Osborne to FO, Dec 15 (AIR.8/437).
- 30 Eden diary, Dec 18, 1942.
- 31 Amery diary, Dec 21; War Cabinet 171 (42) Dec 21, 1942.
- 32 COS, 'Bombing of Rome,' Dec 22, 1942 (AIR.8/437).
- 33 Smuts to Attlee, Dec 23, 1942 (*ibid.*).
- 34 Halifax to FO, Dec 28, 1942 (*ibid.*).
- 35 Eden to WSC, Dec 2; WSC minute, Dec 3, 1942 (PREM.3/242/11a).
- 36 Eden to WSC, Dec 12, 1942 (PREM.3/242/4).
- 37 Eden diary, Dec 3, 1942.
- 38 Eden, 'Proposal received from certain anti-fascist Elements in Italy,' WP (43) 27, Jan 14, 1943. Pages recently glued back into CAB.66/33.
- 39 'Lo que llevará a España a ocupar una posición como no la ha tenido desde hace siglos.' – Duke of Alba, Tel. 342 to Madrid; translated by GC&CS, Nov 27. Alba continued: 'As to Red refugees,' – meaning Juan Negrin and his ilk – 'he [Churchill] said we must bear in mind that England had always respected émigrés so long as they had no political activities, and the Spaniards will be allowed none.' WSC denied that he had received Negrin: 'I have never seen this brute.'
- On the Atlantic Charter, WSC had said 'it was given gratuitous interpretations' and one should not take it literally, 'which would only cause anarchy and disorder.'
- WSC gave the telegram no circulation, but directed that Eden should see it (HW.1/1165). It was however published by the Spanish official press. 'C' had furnished WSC in advance with decrypts of Madrid's instructions to its ambassador: BJ.111,512, Jordana to Alba, Nov 23, translated Nov 24, 1942 (HW.1/1146).
- 40 WSC to FDR, Jan 1, enclosing Special Intelligence Serial No. 75, Jan 1, 1943: Japanese ambassador in Madrid to Tokyo, reporting conversation with the Duke of Alba, Dec 23, 1942; declassified by NSA at the author's request, 1982 (FDR Libr., Map Room files, secret files).
- 41 Cadogan diary, Nov 21; Bruce Lockhart diary, Nov 22, 1942.
- 42 J C Dill to A B Cunningham, Dec 1, 1942 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52570).
- 43 Minutes by C Peake, A Eden, W Strang, and A Cadogan Nov 18–19, 1942; this file, long closed because of its references to C, was opened at the author's request (FO.371/32171).
- 44 PM's card, Nov 24, 1942, 6:45 P.M.

- 45 Information from Darlan expert Captain Claude Huan, Dec 1, 1992. Gen. Noguès's private papers reveal that upon arriving in Algiers from Morocco after the assassination, he was asked by Murphy, 'Do you agree with the choice of Comte de Paris to become the head of state?' Murphy's papers in the Hoover Library, box 46, contain a folder on Darlan, with contemporaries' manuscripts about him and an 18-page typescript in English by Darlan relating events since June 1940, including his meetings with Hitler (headed in ink, 'Life'); it includes Eisenhower to Ismay for WSC, Dec 14, containing the letter from Darlan to Churchill, Dec 4, 1942.
- 46 See Eden's summary in Tel. to Clark-Kerr for Molotov, drafted by Cadogan, Dec 30, sent as No. 434, Dec 31, 1942 (FO.371/32149).
- 47 Mason-Macfarlane to Eisenhower, Dec 8, 1942 (Dwight D Eisenhower Library, file 68, 'Sir N M Mason-Macfarlane'). D'Astier's actual position was Asst. Secretary (Interior) of the High Commissariat for North Africa.
- 48 Butcher diary, page A.46, Dec 6, 1942.
- 49 Brooke diary, Dec 3, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a); Bryant, 534.
- 50 Butcher diary, page A.44, Dec 5, 1942, unsealed.
- 51 Cunningham to Pound, Dec 5, 1942 (British Library, Add. MS 52561).
- 52 Harvey diary, Dec 1. Gen. C. R. Smith also congratulated Eisenhower on Dakar; Smith, former president of American Airlines, had a comprehensive plan for an airline network covering all Africa. Butcher diary, Dec 5, 1942, unsealed.
- 53 WSC to Eisenhower, Dec 7, 1942, 7:48 A.M. (Butcher papers). He added, 'I also agree entirely with you about *not* bombing the remnants of the Toulon fleet in the middle of your Tunis battle.'
- 54 Cadogan diary, Dec 8, 1942.
- 55 Eden to Peake, Dec 9; note on talk with de Gaulle and Gen. Catroux over dinner, Dec 8, 1942 (FO.371/32145).
- 56 WSC speech during Secret Session, Dec 10, 1942 (Hopkins papers, box 329, 'North Africa, pre-Casablanca'; and Map Room files, box 116 file A/16). Churchill, vol. iv, 573ff.
- 57 WSC speech during Secret Session, Dec 10, 1942 (Hopkins papers, box 329, 'North Africa, pre-Casablanca'; and Map Room files, box 116 file A/16).
- 58 Harvey diary, Dec 11, 1942.
- 59 WSC correspondence with *Life* editor Daniel Longwell, 1946 (Columbia University, New York: Butler Library, Daniel Longwell papers).
- 60 *Life* magazine, Feb 4, 1946, 85ff.
- 61 Harvey diary, Dec 10, 1942.
- 62 Cecil King diary, Dec 19, 1942. 'The incident,' noted King, 'trivial in itself, does show how jumpy the government is.'
- 63 Stalin to FDR, in NA, RG.59, H Freeman Matthews papers, box 13.
- 64 WSC to Eisenhower, T.1697/2, Dec 10 (Eisenhower Library, file 'Churchill'; and Harry C Butcher papers; the original is in CAB.120/530); identical text to FDR, Dec 10, 1942.
- 65 WSC to DDE, Dec 10; and to Halifax, minute T.1709.2, Dec 14, 1942 (PREM.3/442/20a).
- 66 Col. W Stirling, London, to Eisenhower, Dec 13, 11:50 P.M (Butcher papers). Stirling to Eisenhower, Dec 14, 1942, 02:12 A.M. (Eisenhower Library, file 'Churchill').
- 67 Stimson diary, Dec 15, 1942.
- 68 Darlan to WSC, Dec 4; Eisenhower to Ismay, Dec 14 (Eisenhower Library, file 'Churchill,' and Hoover Libr., Robert Murphy papers, Box 46); Ismay to WSC,

- Dec 15; WM (42) 169th conclusions, Dec 16 (CAB. 120/530). War Cabinet, Dec 15, 1942 (CAB.65/28).
- 69** Mason-Macfarlane to Eisenhower, Dec 12, 13, 1942 (Dwight D Eisenhower Library, file 68, 'Sir N M Mason-Macfarlane'; copies in CAB. 120/530).
- 70** Eden to Mack, Nov 14, Dec 6; de Gaulle to WSC, Dec 2; Stark to Eisenhower, Dec 3, and reply, Dec 13; Eisenhower to Eden, Dec 9 (wo.204/303). Minute by Sir A Rumbold, FO, Dec 15, 1942 (FO.371/32146). 'B. [Major Beaufort, the emissary of Darlan] maintained stoutly that D's presence in Algiers on zero day was fortuitous.' The next item in this file, Z.10166/8325/17, has been sealed by the FO until 2018.
- 71** Cecil King diary, Dec 19, 1942.
- 72** Harwood to Godfroy, Dec 1, 1942 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52570).
- 73** Pound to Cunningham, Nov 27, 1942 (British Library, Add. MS 52561).
- 74** WSC to C-in-C, Mediterranean, Dec 14, 1942 (British Library, Add. MS 52570).
- 75** Harvey diary, Dec 23, 1942.
- 76** Cave Brown, *Menzies*, 452f.
- 77** Mission in full: 'To hasten unity in the war effort within the French overseas territories in association with the national resistance and in co-operation with all the Allies.' Adm. Jules Docteur, *Darlan. Am. de la Flotte: la grande énigme de la guerre* (Paris, 1949).
- 78** Eisenhower to CCS and COS, NAF.48, Dec 21. He had ordered a total press clampdown on d'Astier's visit, reported Mack to FO, Dec 22. To Ismay, Mack stated on Dec 23 that d'Astier had obviously planned to stay longer (AFHQ file, wo.204/300).
- 79** See Eden's summary in Tel. to Clark-Kerr for Molotov, drafted by Cadogan, Dec 30, sent as No. 434, Dec 31, 1942 (FO.371/32149).
- 80** Stimson diary, Dec 22, 1942.
- 81** Docteur, see note 78.
- 82** J E M Carvell (Algiers) to FO, Dec 22, 1942 (FO.371/32148).
- 83** Carvell (consul-general, Algiers) to FO, Dec 19, rec'd Dec 20, 1942 (FO.371/32147).
- 84** FO to consul-general, Algiers, No. 47, Dec 21, 1942 (*Ibid.*).
- 85** WSC to Eisenhower, Dec 16, 1942 (Eisenhower Library, file 'Churchill,' and Harry C Butcher papers).
- 86** War Cabinet, WM 172 (42), Dec 23, 1942, No. 10 Downing-street, 5:30 P.M. (ADM.199/529).
- 87** Peter Ramsbotham (MI5) to Robert Coe, Dec 14, 1942 (NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files, box 7, file 'French North Africa: de Gaulle-Darlan').
- 88** Amery diary, Dec 21; War Cabinet, WM 171 (42), Dec 21, 1942, No. 10 Downing-street, 5:30 P.M. (CAB.65/28 and ADM.199/529).
- 89** War Cabinet 171 (42), Dec 21, 1942 (FO.371/32149).
- 90** Cunningham to Pound, Dec 22, 1942 (PREM.3/442/20a).
- 91** Darlan had tried to get Giraud released from captivity, which was the reason for his gratitude. Algiers (Carvell) to FO, No. 47, Dec 23, 11:45 P.M. (FO.371/32149).
- 92** Murphy to Hull, Dec 24, 1942, 9:39 A.M. (*Ibid.*). The FO commented that Darlan did not mention Giraud as a successor.
- 93** North Africa Campaign, Battle Casualties. First Army Battle Casualties, Jan 3, 1943 (PREM.3/440/4); Coldstream Guards losses on Dec 23-24, 1942 had been particularly heavy, with 41 dead and 88 wounded.
- 94** Eisenhower to CCS, Review No. 27, Dec

- 26; WSC to Hollis, Dec 27, 1942 (CAB.120/530).
- 95 Eden diary, Dec 24, 1942.
- 96 Algiers (Carvell) to FO, Tels. No. 52 and 53, Dec 24, 1942, both despatched 9:41 P.M. and received 11:20 P.M.; the third telegram, evidently telephoned through to the FO from Algiers via Tangier, still has its sender and recipient blotted out; it was released in January 1998 at our request (FO.371/32149).
- 97 FO.371/32149. Clark signalled to Eisenhower Dec 24, 'at 3:45 P.M. this date young civilian of French nationality entered Darlan's house and succeeded in firing several revolver shots.' At 5:26 P.M. Murphy to CCS: 'Darlan dead;' he asked for a news blackout; at 5:27 P.M. he informed Hull and CCS that one bullet pierced the thorax and lung, causing death, the other three struck Darlan's head and jaw. AFHQ message No. 3040 of Dec 24 then took the line: 'It is not yet known from preliminary investigation of the assassin whether the assassination was of German or Italian inspiration.' In a further message Eisenhower suggested that they broadcast the news immediately, 'so framed as to give the affair an Axis tinge' (AFHQ file, 'Adm. Darlan,' WO.204/303).
- 98 The Dominions Office informed the Dominions prime ministers by telegram at 12:40 P.M. the next day that no further details were yet available. On Dec 25 Murphy reported to Hull that the police interrogation was continuing. 'A few minutes ago . . . he has supplied the name of Bonny Chappelier [*sic*]. . . He insists he was acting on his own account inspired by hatred of Marshal Pétain and Adm. Darlan's policies.' Appropriate condolences had been extended to the admiral's widow (FO.371/32149).
- 99 FW Winterbotham, *The Ultra Secret* (New York, 1974), 99. He later confirmed to C's personal assistant Reilly that they had all been in Algiers. C's absence from London is evidenced in the Dec 1942 files in PRO series HW.1, whose cover letters he otherwise normally signed.
- 100 Lieut. Col. G Bonnet, *Rapport d'Expertise Médico-Légale concernant les blessures reçues par l'Am. de la Flotte François Darlan*, Dec 25, 1942.
- 101 Clark to Marshall, Dec 24, 1942, 10:25 P.M. (FO.371/32149). Clark had himself instructed the radio to make this broadcast.
- 102 Hughes diary, Dec 24, 1942 (Library of Congress, Everett S Hughes papers; transcribed for us).
- 103 Stimson diary, Dec 24, 1942.
- 104 Halifax to FO, Tel. No. 6220, Dec 24, 1942 (FO.371/32148).
- 105 Elizabeth Layton, letter home, Jan 8, 1941: Gilbert, vol. vi, 283.
- 106 Eden diary, Dec 25, 1942.
- 107 Mack to FO, No. 54, Dec 25, 1942, 6:20 A.M. (FO.371/32149).
- 108 FO to Mack, No. 75, Dec 25 (*ibid.*).
- 109 Mack to FO No. 55, Dec 25, 1942, 6:45 P.M. (*ibid.*).
- 110 Peake to FO (Eden), EN CLAIR, No. 178, Dec 25, received 7:50 P.M. (*ibid.*); War Cabinet distribution. Cf. USFOR London to AFHQ, *et al.*, Dec 25, 5 P.M.: while de Gaulle 'strongly condemned' the assassination as detestable, 'he further expressed opinion that Darlan's death eliminates obstacles. . .' (AFHQ file, 'Adm. Darlan,' WO.204/303).
- 111 Rumbold, minute, Jan 26 1943 (FO.371/36116).
- 112 Transcript for WSC in PREM.3/442/20a. For transcripts of Allied and Axis broadcasts about the murder see FO.371/32150. SOS London radio to AFHQ on Dec 26

- that the assassination had taken Allied propaganda officials unawares. 'Axis controlled radio stations strongly plugging story British Secret Service engineered Darlan murder at Churchill direction to get even with Roosevelt.' The FO urged AFHQ on Dec 28 neither to refute the Nazi propaganda nor to adopt the line 'Thus perish all traitors.' 'Political assassination,' stated the FO, 'is something of which we, in Britain, have never approved' (wo.204/303).
- 113** Halifax to FO, No. 6253, Dec 27, 1943.
- 114** Pound to Cunningham, Dec 28, 1942 (British Library, Add. MS 52561).
- 115** *Ibid.*; note by Eden, Jan 1, 1943 (FO.371/32150).
- 116** Carvell (Algiers) to FO, No. 69, Dec 27, 1942 (FO.371/32149).
- 117** *Ibid.*, No. 68, Dec 27, 1942 (FO.371/32149). The army chaplain who administered the sacrament told Carvell that the killer 'maintained steadfastly that he had acted from purely personal motives of hatred of the Vichy regime.'
- 118** Leahy diary, Sep 14, 1945, quoting Commander Cassady USNR of the OSS; Butcher diary, Apr 8, 1943, unsealed.
- 119** Butcher diary, page A.158, Jan 12, unsealed. Nobody wanted to probe too deeply, however, and in Sep 1943, after de Gaulle arrived in Algiers, charges against Henri d'Astier and Abbé Cordier were dropped. Henri d'Astier died shortly after the war, the Abbé became a canon at Château Thierry and died in 1974.
- 120** Chequers register, Dec 23–28, 1942. WSC's other guests were Clementine, Mary, Sarah, Diana, and John Churchill; Mrs Giles Romilly; Duncan Sandys, Miss J Montague, and the private secretaries Rowan and Peck. D'Astier and de Gaulle both signed the 'Chequers Visiting Book' (C R Thompson papers; copy in our possession); the latter source indicates a further visit by J L Garvin and d'Astier de la Vigerie on Apr 2, 1944.
- 121** So WSC reported to the War Cabinet, Dec 28, 1942 (CAB.65/28).
- 122** Eden diary, Dec 27, 1942.
- 123** WSC to FDR, No. 244, Dec 28, 1942 (FO.954/16 and CAB.120/530).
- 124** WSC to FDR, No. 243, Dec 27, 1942, containing message de Gaulle to Giraud (FO.954/8, fol.333); cf. Churchill, vol. iv, 579.
- 125** WSC to FDR, No. 244, Dec 28, 1942 (FO.954/8 and CAB.120/530).
- 126** [H Freeman] Matthews to State dept., Tel. 7355, Dec 25, noon: 'Adm. Darlan's assassin'; and Tel.7359, Dec 25, 1942, 6 P.M., 'Treatment of the Darlan Assassination by the [British] press and British broadcasters.'
- 127** Cecil King diary, Dec 30, 1942.
- 128** Butcher diary, page A.123, Dec 30, unsealed. Capt. Luizet, a *Deuxième Bureau* officer in Algiers, told Alvary Gascoigne (British Consul in Tangier) that when the French police chief in Algiers remarked that the British might oppose his policies, Murphy had replied: 'The Americans are in command in French North Africa. The British have nothing to say. If the British insist on interfering with our business, we shall fire on them.' Shown this on Dec 22, Churchill asked Morton who Luizet was; he was told that he was a French Army officer and MI6 informant since 1940. Gascoigne to FO, Dec 21; WSC minute, Dec 22; Morton to WSC, Dec 23, 1942 (PREM3/442/20b). Col. Dansey, C's second in command, confirmed that Murphy was 'an American Irishman with a hereditary hatred of England in his blood.'
- 129** Eisenhower to CCS and British COS,

- NAF.63, 'most secret,' Dec 29, 1942 (ADM.199/529). Hitherto Murphy had half-suspected Bergeret himself, as he was responsible for both the security breach which had allowed the assassin in to the palace, and for his rapid execution. Murphy, 182.
- 130 Butcher diary, Dec 29, 1942, *passim*, unsealed page A123. 'French complain to Ike that the instigators of the plot are the British Secret Intelligence.'
- 131 Cunningham to Pound, Dec 29, 1942, 6:30 P.M. (PREM.3/442/20a, CAB.120/530 and FO.945/16).
- 132 The item, NA/24/80, is currently held closed until 2018 by the Library & Records dept., at the Foreign & Commonwealth office. A (possibly unrelated) three-page War Cabinet paper WP (43) 41, circulated a few days later, has also been withdrawn from public scrutiny (CAB.66/33).
- 133 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, (42) 20th meeting, Dec 29, 1942, tenthirty P.M (CAB.69/4).
- 134 Cadogan diary, Dec 30, 1942.
- 135 Pound to Cunningham, Dec 30, 1942, 7:25 P.M. (PREM.3/442/20a and CAB.120/530). The original draft concluded: 'Please take early and energetic action to stop spread of these absurd stories,' without mention of the defence committee (FO.954/16).
- 136 Douglas Dodds-Parker, *Setting Europe Ablaze* (London, 1983). Dodds-Parker was a former Grenadier Guards officer who joined SOE in 1941, and rose to colonel in 1945. The Rubis 7.65 was allegedly owned by one Mario Faivre, who had recently cleaned it.
- 137 Minutes on file, FO.371/36116; Hansard, *House of Commons Debates*, Jan 19, 1943.
- 138 Mack to FO, No. 99, Dec 30; minute by R L Speaight, Dec 31, 1942 (FO.371/32150). Again, given War Cabinet distribution, and Bracken asked for a copy.
- 139 Churchill, vol. iv, 580.
- 29: **All the Usual Suspects**
- 1 'PREMIER STANDS AT THE HIGHEST POINT YET IN POPULARITY.' News Chronicle, Jan 12, 1943.
- 2 Halifax diary, Jan 20, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12).
- 3 *FRUS Washington*; Churchill, vol. iv (London 1951), 605ff.
- 4 Hassett diary, Feb 7, 1943.
- 5 FDR to WSC, Dec 2, 1942.
- 6 Harvey diary, Dec 7–8, 1942.
- 7 Cadogan diary, Nov–Dec 1942 *passim*.
- 8 Halifax secret diary, Nov 20, reporting a discussion with Lyttelton. The day after seeing FDR on Oct 28, 1942, Halifax had written privately to Eden: 'Incidentally, when he was talking about disarmament he said that he did not want to see France and Poland re-armed. I told him this seemed a bit difficult, but he stuck to his point. . . I did not put this in my telegram . . . it seemed rather explosive' (Hickleton papers, A.4.410.4.15).
- 9 WSC to Stalin, Dec 4, 1942 in *Stalin–WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, No. 92.
- 10 Maisky to Molotov, reporting meeting with WSC and Eden, Dec 7, 1942 (*Sov.-angliiskiye*, 32off). Eden noted (diary), 'Maisky turned up at No. 10 with message from Joe. This was disappointing as to meeting.'
- 11 Stalin to WSC, Dec 6, 1942 in *Stalin–WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, No. 93.
- 12 Maisky to Molotov, reporting meeting with WSC and Eden, Dec 7, 1942 (*Sov.-angliiskiye*, 32off).
- 13 Dwight D Eisenhower Library, John Foster Dulles papers.

- 14 Hopkins handwritten memo, Jan 11, 1943 (Hopkins papers, microfilm 21). Robert Sherwood omitted the first part of this sentence in his biography *The White House Papers of Harry Hopkins*, 669.
- 15 FDR to WSC, Dec 12, 1942.
- 16 Brooke diary, Dec 22, 23, 1942 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 17 Sir Ian Jacob diary, Dec 28, 1942.
- 18 Ismay to Stirling, Dec 29 (CAB.120/530).
- 19 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Dec 28, ten P.M. (CAB.69/4). Eden diary, Dec 28, 1942.
- 20 *Ibid.*, Dec 29, 10:30 P.M. (CAB.69/4).
- 21 WSC to FDR, No. 249, Dec 31, 1942 (CAB.120/530).
- 22 WSC to Eisenhower, Jan 1, 9:30 P.M., and reply, in Butcher diary, page A.130, Jan 1, 1943.
- 23 Brooke diary, unpublished, Jan 5, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 24 Mack to FO, No. 93, Dec 30, 1942 (ADM.199/529; also in FO.371/32150). This telegram caused consternation at the FO.R.L. Speaight minuted to Eden that he had stopped the despatch of the message to Giraud, which had gone over to Churchill that evening: 'I thought you might want to reconsider it.' 'Yes. . . well done,' noted Eden. Mack's telegram was circulated to the War Cabinet, and Bracken asked for a copy.
- 25 Morton to WSC, Dec 31, 1942: 'It seems unfortunate that Mons. d'Astier de la Vigerie has felt bound to resign,' added Morton, stating that he was reported to be a very level-headed chief of the civil administration of Algeria (PREM.3/442/20a).
- 26 Murphy to Hull, Dec 30, 1942 (ADM.199/529).
- 27 Algiers to FO, No. 104, Dec 3, 1942 (ADM.199/529).
- 28 AFHQ Memo from Col. (gsc) Julius G Holmes to Marshall, Jan 10 (wo.204/303; FO.660/12; and Butcher diary, page A.158, Jan 12, 1943, unsealed).
- 29 Pierson Dixon, memo to discuss with Murphy and Bedell Smith, Jan 11 (FO.660/12: this Macmillan file has been heavily 'weeded,' about half the items being missing without comment). Macmillan to WSC, No. 103, Jan 14, 1943 (CAB.120/531). 'One of [Henri] d'Astier's brothers [Emmanuel] is head of the Liberation movement in France and the other de Gaulle's adjutant, and he is himself a prominent Allied sympathiser.' Emmanuel d'Astier de la Vigerie, Commissioner for the Interior, French National Committee, attended meetings with the SOE and WSC and was in charge of *maquis* operations: see CAB.120/827, and his memoirs *Les dieux et les hommes* (Paris, 1952), and *De la chute à la libération de Paris* (Paris, 1965).
- 30 Holmes (see note 28).
- 31 Cadogan diary, Jan 13, 1943.
- 32 Stimson diary, Jan 7, 1943.
- 33 Chiefs of staff to Dill, COS (42) 412, Dec 29, 1942 (CAB.120/531).
- 34 WSC to Ismay, D.2/3, Jan 2, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 35 WSC to Ismay, Jan 5, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 36 Macmillan to WSC, No. 61, Jan 9 (CAB.120/531). He had sent a preliminary report on Jan 3, 1943.
- 37 Jacob, diary of Casablanca conference (Churchill College, JACB.1/20).
- 38 Brooke diary, unpublished, Jan 7, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 39 *Ibid.*, Jan 11; and Martin diary, Jan 13, 1943 (copy in our possession).
- 40 Ismay, 285.
- 41 Brooke diary, unpublished, Jan 16 and 19, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6c).
- 42 'Log of the Trip of the President' (Hopkins papers, box 330, 'Casablanca'), (hereafter:

- FDR Log), Jan 25, 1943.
- 43 John Martin, letter home, Jan 16, 1943 (copy in our possession).
- 44 WSC to Attlee, Jan 13 (CAB.120/76).
- 45 Admiralty to *Bulolo*, Jan 18, 1943 (Hopkins papers, box 330: Casablanca).
- 46 See Curtin's telegram to WSC, Jan 19: Gilbert, vol. vi, 302. Halifax diary, Jan 20, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12).
- 47 Gen. George S Patton diary, Jan 14, in Martin Blumenson (ed.), *The Patton Papers* (Hereafter: Patton diary). Cf. the PM's card, Jan 14, 1943: '... Don Q arrives. A/C F to dine with Don Q.'
- 48 Hopkins diary, Jan 14, 1943 (Hopkins papers, box 330, 'Casablanca').
- 49 Harold Macmillan, letter home, Jan 26, 1943, in *The Blast of War*, London, 1967, and *War Diaries, Politics and War in the Mediterranean, January 1943–May 1945* (London, 1984), 9.
- 50 Brooke diary, Jan 14, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6c); Bryant, *op. cit.*, 546.
- 51 Brooke diary, unpublished, Jan 20, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6c).
- 52 Jacob, diary of Casablanca conference, 115–6 (JACB.1/20).
- 53 Macmillan letter (see note 49).
- 54 For the British records of the Casablanca conference, see CAB.80/67 and CAB.88/2; and Michael Howard, *Grand Strategy*, vol. iv (London HMSO).
- 55 Ismay to Brigadier Gen. E L Spears, Feb 8, 1943 (Churchill College, Cambridge: E L Spears papers).
- 56 The PM's card lists all the conferences.
- 57 Chiefs of staff meeting, Casablanca, Jan 13, 1943, 4:30 P.M. (CAB.99/24).
- 58 WSC memo, Jan 14, 1943 (Hopkins papers, box 330: Casablanca).
- 59 Chiefs of staff meeting, Casablanca, Jan 15, 1943, 10:30 A.M. (CAB.99/24).
- 60 Arnold diary, Jan 14, 1943.
- 61 'Minutes of Meeting held at Anfa Camp on Friday Jan 15, 1943' (CAB.99/24).
- 62 Eisenhower, 151.
- 63 *Ibid.*, 153.
- 64 Brooke diary, Jan 17, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6c); Bryant, *op. cit.*, 549.
- 65 'Minutes of Meeting held at Anfa Camp on Monday Jan 18, 1943' (CAB.99/24).
- 66 WSC to Attlee, Jan 19 (CAB.120/76).
- 67 Stimson diary, Jan 19, 1943.
- 68 *Ibid.*, Jan 21, 1943.
- 69 *Ibid.*, Jan 28, 1943.
- 70 Hinsley, vol. ii, 4; and Hinsley, in Hinsley & Stripp, 144.
- 71 Jacob, diary of Casablanca conference, 80 (Churchill College, Jacob papers, JACB.1/20).
- 72 Stalin to WSC, Jan 15, 1943: Gilbert, vol. vi, 295.
- 73 WSC to Stalin, Jan 17 (PREM.3/14/2).
- 74 Cecil King diary, Feb 23, 1943.
- 75 Patton diary, Jan 18, 1943.
- 76 *Ibid.*
- 77 'Minutes of a Meeting at the White House on Thursday, Jan 7, 1943, at 1500,' attended by FDR, Leahy, Marshall, King, Arnold, and J R Deane (NA, RG.319, ABC.387, 'Germany Sec. 1a [18 Dec 43]'; and NA, RG.165, Army Operations/OPD Executive Files 1940–45, box 54). For Arnold's records of Casablanca, see the Library of Congress, H H Arnold papers, boxes 180 and 181.
- 78 Murphy, 214. Macmillan's informative 'diary of events' at Casablanca is in FO.660/86 and /87; he reported FDR's 'banns' remark in an unsent dispatch to the FO.
- 79 *FRUS Casablanca*, 608.
- 80 Patton diary, Jan 17, 1943.
- 81 Macmillan, diary of events, FO.660/86. Eden, *Reckoning*, 421.
- 82 FDR to Hull, Jan 18: *FRUS Casablanca*.

- 83 WSC to Attlee and Eden, Jan 19, 1943 (CAB.120/76). More of WSC's irate telegrams to Eden ('I must really have an answer about Joan of Arc as things will have moved on', and 'we waited all yesterday 19th for de Gaulle's answer') are in CAB.120/75, his file on SYMBOL.
- 84 Hopkins diary, Jan 19, 1943 (Hopkins papers, box 330, 'Casablanca').
- 85 Martin diary, Jan 19, 1943 (copy in our possession).
- 86 Stimson diary, Feb 3, 1943.
- 87 WSC to Hopkins, Jan 21, 1943 (Hopkins papers, box 330, 'Casablanca').
- 88 Arnold diary, Jan 21, 1943.
- 89 Jacob diary.
- 90 Hopkins notes, dictated Jan 23, 1943 (Hopkins papers).
- 91 *Ibid.*
- 92 Arnold diary, Jan 22. See Mack's account of these talks, Jan 29, 1943 (FO.660/85), and Macmillan's (FO.660/87).
- 93 Halifax diary, Feb 3, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12); and Mack's account.
- 94 WSC to War Cabinet, Jan 23, 1943 (CAB.65/37).
- 95 Halifax diary, Feb 3, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12).
- 96 Ismay to Spears, Feb 8, 1943 (Churchill College, Cambridge: E L Spears papers); and Mack's account (see note 92).
- 97 Berle diary, Jun 10, 1943 (FDR Libr., Adolph A Berle papers).
- 98 Hopkins related this afterwards. Halifax diary, Feb 22, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12). See too Murphy, 217.
- 99 Stimson diary, Feb 3, 1943.
- 100 FDR repeated this to Adolph Berle, who wrote (see note 97): 'Churchill [was] very grumpy because there was nothing to drink.'
- 101 FDR Log (see note 42).
- 102 Stimson diary, Feb 3, quoting FDR.
- 103 Patton diary, Jan 22, 1943. 'Noguès was delighted that the PM was such a boor.'
- 104 'Minutes of Meeting held at Anfa Camp on Saturday Jan 23, 1943' (CAB.99/24); cf. Brooke diary, Jan 23, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6c); Bryant, *op. cit.*, 559.
- 105 Jacob diary, Jan 23, 1943.
- 106 WSC and FDR to Stalin, Jan 25, 1943.
- 107 Macmillan, *op. cit.*, 252.
- 108 Murphy, 219.
- 109 A message was also drafted to Stalin setting out the results of this evening conference.
- 110 Hassett diary, Feb 7, 1943. FDR was narrating the events of his journey.
- 111 Handwritten notes by Hopkins, Casablanca, Jan 24, 1943 (Hopkins papers); and Mack's account (see note 92).
- 112 Patton, a silent witness of the scene, wrote in his diary, Jan 24: 'I took Gen. Noguès and Adm. [François] Michelier to call on [FDR, who] started to talk [with] de Gaulle and was very frank, when B-1 [Churchill] came in without being asked and hung around, started to leave and then came back. The whole thing was so patent a fear on the part of the British to leave French and Americans alone together, that it was laughable.'
- 113 Handwritten notes by Hopkins, Casablanca, Jan 24, 1943 (Hopkins papers).
- 114 Press conference, 12:15 P.M., Jan 24 'Log of the Trip of the President,' Jan 9-31, 1943 (Hopkins papers, box 330, 'Casablanca') quotes WSC as saying, 'I agree with everything that the President has said.' The British transcript is in CAB.120/75. Rowan informed the ministry of information on Jan 25 that WSC expressly 'agreed to use of his statement about continuing [the] struggle until unconditional surrender of enemy' (CAB.120/76).
- 115 FDR (personally initialled) to Winant,

- May 27, 1943 in *FRUS, Conferences at Washington and Québec, 1943* (US Government Printing Office, Washington, 1970).
- 116** Tel. 291 Myron C Taylor to FDR, Aug 23, 1944 (Myron C Taylor papers).
- 117** 'Minutes of a Meeting at the White House on Thursday, Jan 7, 1943, at 1500,' attended by FDR, Leahy, Marshall, King, Arnold, and J R Deane (NA, RG.319, ABC.387, 'Germany Sec.1a [18 Dec 43]'; and NA, RG.165, Army Operations/OPD Executive Files 1940-45, box 54).
- 118** WSC to Attlee, Jan 19, 1943 (PREM.4/72/1). The War Cabinet on Jan 20 felt that Italy should *not* be excluded, as this might be misunderstood in the Balkans (CAB.65/37); Eden and Attlee told WSC this on Jan 21, 1943 (CAB.120/79).
- 119** Hansard, *House of Commons Debates*, Nov 17, 1949.
- 120** Mack's account (see note 92); and Murphy, 195f.
- 121** Halifax diary, Aug 7, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.13).
- 122** Moran, 'diary,' 82.
- 123** FBI memorandum, Mar 29, 1943 on 'off the record' remarks by an unidentified American intimate of WSC, perhaps Harriman, to top-ranking American newspapermen (FBI archives, Washington). The source referred to watching a 'sunrise,' but it is historically unlikely that WSC saw many of those.
- 124** Henry Wallace diary, Feb 1, 1943.
- 125** FDR to WSC, Mar 16, 1943: Churchill, vol. iv, 662.
- 126** He referred to painting the 'pink gateway' in his telegram to Clementine, Jan 25, 1943 (CAB.120/77).
- 127** WSC to Clementine, Jan 25 (CAB.120/76); Brooke diary, unpublished, Jan 25, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6c).
- 128** Brooke MS (Alanbrooke papers, 3/A/vii); Bryant, *op. cit.*, 563.
- 129** Attlee and Eden to WSC, Jan 20, 1943 (CAB.65/37).
- 130** WSC to Eden, Jan 22, 1943: Gilbert, vol. vi, 301.
- 131** War Cabinet, Jan 25, 1943 (CAB.65/37).
- 132** Harvey diary, Jan 22, 25, 28; Eden diary, Jan 24, 1943: 'Another disordered Sunday caused this time by W's wilfulness . . . Winston still clings to his Turkey plan so we restated the reasons against it.'
- 133** Eden diary, Feb 7, 1943.
- 134** WSC to Attlee and Eden, Jan 25, 1943: Gilbert, vol. vi, 315.
- 135** Brooke diary, Jan 27, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6c); Sir Arthur Bryant, *op. cit.*, 567, *falsifies* the diary to use a softer turn of phrase.
- 136** Jacob, diary of Casablanca conference, Jan 27 (JACB.1/20); Bryant, *op. cit.*, 567n.
- 137** Macmillan, interview with Adm. Godfroy, Mar 6; WSC to Macmillan, Apr 12 and 30, 1943 (FO.660/91).
- 137** Harwood to Pound, Mar 12, 1943 (ADM.205/56).
- 138** Cunningham to Pound, Mar 15, and reply, Apr 23, 1943 (British Library, Add. MS 52561).
- 140** Arnold diary, Jan 27-28. The text is rather garbled. Brooke diary, unpublished, Jan 28, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6c).
- 141** Cadogan diary, Jan 29, 1943.
- 142** *Ibid.*, Feb 2. Brooke diary, unpublished, Jan 30, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6c), lists the participants as WSC, Cadogan, Lord Moran, Alexander, 'Jumbo' Wilson, Jacob, Drummond, Martin, Thompson, two detectives, and the valet, as well as Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen, Britain's ambassador to Turkey.
- 143** Brooke MS (Alanbrooke papers, 3/A/vii, 627).
- 144** Jacob diary, Jan 30. For records of

- Brooke's and WSC's Adana conversations of Jan 30–31, 1943 – operation SATRAP – see Eden's files, FO.954/29, fols 23 off, and CAB.120/81. 'The prime minister said that there was no suggestion of asking Turkey to make any engagement.'
- 145 Brooke diary, unpublished, Jan 31, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6c).
- 146 Halifax diary, Mar 25 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12). The FBI warned Hopkins that Ruggles was talking to press men about Churchill's conversations. 'It sounded a bit unguarded on Winston's part,' noted Halifax (Mar 31, 1943, *ibid.*). Ruggles and Vanderkloot were at Chequers on Sep 18, 1942: 'Chequers Visiting Book' in C R Thompson papers (copy in our possession). See too Jacob, diary of Casablanca conference, 148–9 (JACB.1/20).
- 147 Ankara to Berlin, Jan 30, 7:06 P.M.; C to Rowan at Cairo, Feb 1 (HW.1/1346).
- 148 Cadogan diary, Feb 2, 1943.
- 149 HM King George VI to Queen Mary, Feb 2, 1943, 558.
- 150 Madrid to Tangier, intercept ISK No. 29601, Jan 30, 1943 (HW.1/1346).
- 151 There is an SD message from Lisbon to Berlin, No. 59, Feb 4, 1943 stating that Eden had informed the Portuguese ambassador in London of WSC's desire to make this brief stop-over (HW.1/1346).
- 152 Attlee to WSC, Feb 4, 1943 (HW.1/1346; and CAB.120/75).
- 153 J Hollis, quoted by Bruce Lockhart diary, Aug 18, 1948.
- 154 Jacob MS: Gilbert, vol. vi, 331.
- 155 Desmond Morton, quoted by Bruce Lockhart diary, Feb 12, 1943.
- 156 Jacob, diary of Casablanca conference, 201 (JACB.1/20).
- 157 WSC to Eden, Feb 6 (CAB.120/76).
- 158 Butcher diary, Feb 7, 1943.
- 158 *Ibid.* An unknown hand writing in 'Tommy' Thompson's MS called this 'a preposterous story' (Thompson papers). We agree.
- 159 Jacob, diary of Casablanca conference, 203–4 (JACB.1/20).
- 160 *Ibid.*, 205.
- 30: **'Use Force if Necessary'**
- 1 WSC to Ismay, Jun 24, 1944 (PREM.4/69/2, fol. 684).
- 2 Combined Chiefs of Staff meeting, Jan 23.
- 3 Krock note, Jun 8, 1943, quoting Adm. King (Princeton University, Seeley Mudd Manuscript Libr., Arthur Krock papers).
- 4 WSC to DDE, 'July, 1943' (Eisenhower Libr., file: 'Churchill').
- 5 Eliot A Cohen, in 'Churchill at War,' *Commentary*, New York, May 1987, 40ff.
- 6 WSC to Hopkins, Jan 5, 1944 (Hopkins papers).
- 7 WSC to Ismay, Aug 8, 1943: Gilbert, vol. vi, 466.
- 8 GC&CS German Police Section, report No. 41, Oct 5, 1942 (HW.16/6, part ii).
- 9 GC&CS German Police Section intercept: Lolling, Amt D III, to Auschwitz, Oct 26, 1942 (HW.16/11).
- 10 GC&CS German Police Section intercept: *KL Sachsenhausen (gez. Liebehenschel) an Amt D III*, Oct 27, 1942 (HW.16/11).
- 11 GC&CS German Police Section intercept: *KL Buchenwald (gez. Hoven) an Amt D III, betr Meldung der Todesfällen von Häftlingen*, Dec 1, 1942 (HW.16/11).
- 12 GC&CS German Police Section intercept: *KL Auschwitz (gez. Dr. Wirths), an Amt D III, betr Stand der Fleckfiebererkrankungen*, Dec 8, 1942 (HW.16/11). The communist inmate Hermann Langbein described in *Menschen in Auschwitz* how Wirths, the *Standortarzt* at Auschwitz-Birkenau, intervened to halt the unauthorised killing by lethal injections

- of TB and other sick prisoners by fellow-doctor Friedrich Entress early in 1943.
- 13 GC&CS German Police Section intercept GPD 12381/2/4 Jan 18: *BdS Kiew und Befehlstelle Sipo und SD*, Owritsch, to Berlin, Jan 17, 1943 (HW.16/11).
- 14 GC&CS German Police Section intercept: *Bericht an HSSuP/Kiew, Gesamtergebnis Untersuchungen Hornung, 1943* (HW.16/11).
- 15 'The returns from Auschwitz, the largest of the camps with 20,000 prisoners, mentioned illness as the main cause of death, but included references to shootings and hangings. There were no references in the decrypts to gassing.' Hinsley, vol. ii, appendix, 673.
- 16 Colonel L. Mitkiewicz, Polish liaison officer to the JCS, 'Report re The Polish Secret Army,' (to the end of Apr), sent with letter Sep 7 to Brig. Gen. John R Deane, JCS Secretariat; and report by Mitkiewicz to CCS, 100th Mtg, Jul 2 (NA, RG.218, Joint Chiefs of Staff, file CCS/381 'Poland—6.30.1943—Sec.1'). By way of retaliation Mitkiewicz claimed, in the first four months of 1943 the Polish underground had assassinated Hans Frank's deputy, and had poisoned 526 Germans and administered 'typhoid fever microbes and typhoid fever lice' to Germans 'in a few hundred cases.' They also claimed to have burned down the village of Cieszyn, freshly settled by German 'colonists,' killing 64 settler families and 8 S.S. men.
- 17 COS meeting, (42) 211th (O), Dec 31, 1942 (CAB.121/1).
- 18 Notes on a staff meeting at Casablanca, Jan 18, 1943: *FRUS Casablanca*.
- 19 Portal to Attlee, Aug 14, 1942 (AIR.8/424 and AIR.19/187).
- 20 WSC paper on bombing policy, WP (42) 580, Dec 16, 1942 (AIR.19/188).
- 21 Defence committee (Operations) meeting, Dec 29, 1942, 10:30 P.M. (CAB.69/4).
- 22 WSC to chiefs of staff, M.26/3, Jan 10, 1943 (AIR.19/188).
- 23 Evidently at the CCS conference with FDR and WSC on Jan 15. 'Minutes of Meeting held at Anfa Camp on Friday Jan 15, 1943' (CAB.99/24).
- 24 H H Arnold diary, Jan 15, 1943.
- 25 PM's card, Jan 20, 1943.
- 26 US Air Force Oral History interviews, Lieut.-Gen. Ira C Eaker, K239.0512-626 and K239.0512-868; in the files are also his extensive briefing notes for the meeting with WSC (USAF, Maxwell Air Force Base).
- 27 Eden to Halifax, Feb 8, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A4.410.4.15).
- 28 Cecil King diary, Feb 14, 1943.
- 29 *Ibid.*, Jun 1943.
- 30 Martin diary, Feb 1-7, 1943 (copy in our possession.)
- 31 Harvey diary, Feb 8, 1943 (British Library, dept. of Manuscripts, Oliver Harvey papers, Add. MS.56398).
- 32 FDR to Cordell Hull for Eden, Feb 3, 1943 (FDR Libr., Map Room files, box 166, file 'A16/France').
- 33 HM King George VI diary, Feb 6/8, 559.
- 34 Eden diary, Feb 7, 1943.
- 35 Harvey diary, Feb 8, 1943 (British Library, dept. of Manuscripts, Oliver Harvey papers, Add. MS.56398).
- 36 WSC to FDR, No. 261, Feb 8, and reply, No. 257, Feb 9, 1943 (CAB.120/531).
- 37 HM King George VI diary, Feb 9, 559.
- 38 Eisenhower to British ambassador, Madrid, and others, No. us-131, Feb 2, Operations Summary, Jan 28 to Feb 1, 1943 (CAB.120/531).
- 39 WSC to Ismay, M.12/3, Feb 10, 1943 (CAB.120/531).
- 40 Ismay to WSC, Feb 13, 16 (CAB.120/531).

- Desmond Morton had minuted Ismay on Feb 16: 'BONIFACE has started talking'
- 41 Martin diary, Feb 12, 1943; PM's card (copies in the author's possession).
- 42 Martin diary, Feb 13–14, 1943; Brooke diary, unpublished, Feb 12, 15, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a; and MS, 3/A/vii, 555f).
- 43 Churchill, vol. iv, 651.
- 44 War Cabinet decision, Sep 4, 1942: Mansergh, vol. iii, 451–2. The main documents are reproduced in WP (43) 5, 'Treatment of Gandhi if he undertakes a fast,' Jan 4, and WP (43) 16, Jan 11, 1943 (CAB.66/33).
- 45 Amery diary, Jan 7, 1943. On the fifth he had written, 'Personally I should be all for letting Gandhi fast to death if he likes' (CAB.120/531).
- 46 Mansergh, vol. iii, 491.
- 47 Amery diary, Feb 7, 1943.
- 48 *Ibid.*, Feb 17, 1943.
- 49 WSC to Linlithgow, Feb 13, and reply, Feb 15, 1943 (PREM.4/49/3).
- 50 Henry Wallace diary, Jun 15, 1942.
- 51 For WSC's lack of interest in empire and his willingness to see its reduction, see the letter from Isaiah Bowman to US ambassador John Winant, Apr 28, 1944 (Hoover Libr., Robert Murphy papers, folder: 'John Winant').
- 52 Patton diary, Jan 21, 1943.
- 53 Phillips had lunched recently with their mutual friend Arthur Murray, who had expressed feelings about the PM 'which, to put it mildly, are not complimentary.' Phillips to FDR, Aug 13, 1942, writing on the OSS letterhead (FDR Libr., PSF, box 53, folder 'GB-OSS').
- 54 Amery diary, Nov 24, 1942. He found Phillips 'genuinely anxious to be helpful' and an improvement on Colonel Louis B Johnson.
- 55 The other guests at the lunch were Casey, Clementine, and Sir Archibald Clark-Kerr.
- 56 Phillips to FDR, Dec 17, 1942, again writing on an OSS letterhead (FDR Libr., PSF, box 53, folder 'GB-OSS').
- 57 Amery diary, Feb 19, 22; Amery to WSC, Feb 19, 1943 (PREM.4/49/3).
- 58 Harvey diary, Feb 26, 1943.
- 59 WSC to Halifax, Feb 21, 1943: Gilbert, vol. vi, 343.
- 60 WSC to King George VI, Feb 22, 1943: in Gilbert, vol. vi, 348.
- 61 Linlithgow to WSC, Feb 26: Mansergh, vol. iii, 737. Dr Narayan Khare, a physician, confirmed to the viceroy that Gandhi had broken the fast on Feb 21: Linlithgow to Amery, Mar 2 (*ibid.*, 746).
- 62 WSC to Smuts, Feb 26, 1943: Gilbert, vol. vi, 350.
- 63 Dalton diary, Apr 6, 1943.
- 64 WSC to Linlithgow, Feb 27, 1943 (PREM.4/49/3).
- 65 Churchill, vol. iv, 661.
- 66 Eisenhower to CCS, Feb 11, 1943, NAF.144 (CAB.105/139).
- 67 WSC to Eisenhower, Feb 13, 1943 (Eisenhower Library, file 'Churchill').
- 68 WSC to Hopkins, Feb 13, 1943 (Hopkins papers).
- 69 Butcher diary, Feb 16, 1943.
- 70 *Ibid.*, Feb 16, 1943, unsealed.
- 71 *Ibid.*, page A.234, Feb 18 and page A.293, Apr 8, unsealed; see the different text published in Butcher, *My Three Years with Eisenhower*, 264, and Eisenhower's letter to Marshall, Feb 21, 1943 in *The Eisenhower papers*, No. 832.
- 72 Butcher diary, pages A.235ff, Feb 20–21, unsealed. WSC quoted verbatim from this ULTRA in his letter to King George VI, Feb 22, 1943.
- 73 *Ibid.*, pages A.235ff, Feb 20–21, 1943, unsealed.

- 74 *Ibid.*, page A.247, Feb 23, 1943, unsealed. (PREM.3/14/2).
- 75 Brooke diary, unpublished, Feb 21, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a; and MS, 3/A/vii, 645).
- 76 WSC to Stalin, Feb 25, 1943 in Stalin–WSC Correspondence, vol. i, No. 116.
- 77 *Ibid.*
- 78 Amery diary, Mar 15, 1943.
- 79 HM King George VI diary, Feb 20/22, 1943, 561.
- 80 King George VI to WSC, Feb 22, 1943.
- 81 Brooke diary, unpublished, Feb 22, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 82 WSC to King George VI, Feb 22, 1943.
- 83 *Ibid.*: Churchill, vol. iv, 657ff.
- 84 WSC to CIGS, M.71/3, Feb 17, 1943 (CAB.120/531).
- 85 Cadogan diary, Feb 19, 1943; PM's card.
- 86 Marion Holmes diary, Feb 20: Gilbert, vol. vi, 344.
- 87 *Ibid.*, Feb 21, 1943; Gilbert, vol. vi, 344.
- 88 Mary Churchill diary, Feb 21, 1943, quoted in Mary Soames, *Clementine Churchill* (London, 1979), 332.
- 89 Harvey diary, Feb 22, 1943.
- 90 Elizabeth Layton, letter home, Mar 17: Gilbert, vol. vi, 344; and Nel, *op. cit.*, 95.
- 91 *Sunday Dispatch*, Feb 21; Cecil King diary, Feb 21, 1943.
- 92 Harvey diary, Feb 22, 1943.
- 93 WSC to Hopkins, Feb 24, 1943 (Hopkins papers; the text in Churchill, vol. iv, 660, omits the passage about Gandhi).
- 94 Bracken to Baruch, Feb 25, 1943, 6:32 P.M. (Princeton Univ., Seeley Mudd Manuscript Libr., Bernard Baruch papers).
- 95 Hopkins memo, Feb 28, 1943 (Hopkins papers, box 329, 'Trident').
- 96 Martin diary, Mar 1, 1943.
- 97 Brooke diary, Mar 1, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 98 Nel, *op. cit.*, 95.
- 99 Eden to Clark Kerr, Oct 22, 1942 (PREM.3/14/2).
- 100 Amery diary, Jan 4, 1943. John Barnes (ed.), (London, 1988).
- 101 WSC to Portal, M.15/3, Jan 6 (AIR.19/188); and Hollis's hand-written notes during the meeting, Jan 8 (*ibid.* and CAB.121/1). (WSC to Stalin, Jan 12 and 17, 1943 (PREM.3/14/2; *Sov.-angliiskiye*, 327f).
- 102 AU (42) 6th meeting, Dec 9, 1942.
- 103 Cadogan diary, Jan 11, 1943 (Churchill College, Cambridge: Cadogan papers).
- 104 Joint memorandum by Portal and Pound, 'Air Policy – Targets in France,' WP (43) 72, Feb 22 1943 (CAB.121/1).
- 105 Bey of Tunis to Swiss government; Halifax to FO, No. 359, Jan 20; COS (43) 20th meeting, Jan 23, 1943 (CAB.121/1).
- 106 WSC to Sinclair, CAB.120/76; and to Stalin, Mar 2, in Stalin–WSC Correspondence, vol. i, No. 118; Stalin's reply, Mar 3 (PREM.3/14/2; *Sov.-angliiskiye*, 347f).
- 107 Harris to WSC, Apr 8 (PREM.3/14/2); Sinclair to WSC, Apr 8; minute by WSC, Apr 10, 1943 (AIR.19, 189, 'Bombing Policy, 1943').
- 108 Goebbels diary, Mar 7, 10, 12, 1943; he was gauleiter and Reich defence commissioner for Berlin.
- 109 Laurence R Dunne MC, *Report on an Inquiry into the Accident at Bethnal Green Tube Station Shelter on the 3rd March, 1943*, Mar 23, 1943, publ. as Cmd. 6583 (PREM.4/40/15); and London Transport monograph, 'Raids through the day,' 276.
- 110 T L Rowan, minute, Mar 4, 1943 (PREM.4/40/15). On Nov 28, 1942 fire had killed 499 in Boston's Coconut Grove night club.
- 111 J Martin to WSC, Mar 5, 1943 (PREM.4/40/15).
- 112 Herbert Morrison, paper, 'Tube Shelter Inquiry,' WP (43) 137, Apr 3, 1943 (PREM.4/40/15).

- 113 WSC to Stalin, Mar 4, and reply, Mar 6, 1943 in Stalin–WSC Correspondence, vol. i, Nos. 120f.
- 114 WSC to Stalin, Mar 6, 1943, *ibid.*, vol. i, No. 122.
- 115 Harriman to Hopkins, Mar 7 (Hopkins papers). Eden diary, Mar 3, 1943.
- 116 WSC to King George VI, Feb 22, 1943.
- 117 WSC to Macmillan, Feb 24, 1943: Gilbert, vol. vi, 351.
- 118 Eden diary, Feb 25, 1943; and Eden, *Reckoning*, 367.
- 119 Harvey diary, Feb 28; and cf., *ibid.*, Mar 3, 1943.
- 120 *Ibid.*, Mar 2, 1943.
- 121 Elizabeth Layton, letter home, Mar 17, 1943: Gilbert, vol. vi, 357.
- 122 RTree memo, written on the obverse of this sketch, original in the possession of Mrs Marietta Tree, New York (copy in our possession). The party at Dytchley was Mrs Churchill, the Duff Coopers, Alice Winn and Philip Reed (Averell Harriman’s deputy). For those like Mr Gilbert unsure of the spellings the face of the postcard has the printed heading: ‘Mrs Ronald Tree, Dytchley Park, Exstone, Oxon.’
- 123 Mackenzie King diary, Apr 16, 1942.
- 124 Morrison, quoted in Dalton diary, Mar 22, 1943. At the subsequent Labour Party meeting Attlee silenced critics of the broadcast. ‘What they find hard to see,’ wrote Dalton, ‘is how completely, now and till after victory, the PM personally dominates the scene, so that any attempt to fight him at elections, or any conduct likely to provoke him to fight them, would mean that they would be blown away like feathers in a tempest’ (*ibid.*, Mar 24, 1943).
- 125 OSS report from London, No. 35,343, Apr 10, 1943 (NA, RG.226, Records of the Office of Strategic Services).
- 126 Amery diary, Apr 7, 1943.
- 127 Dalton diary, Apr 7 (London School of Economics, Political Science Library: Hugh Dalton papers, I, file 28, 104–6); and similar in Amery diary, Apr 7, 1943.
- 128 Amery diary, Apr 7, 1943.
- 129 Führer’s order No. 7 (transmitted Feb 27, evening, by Field-Marshal Albert Kesselring to HGr Afrika); intercept CX/MSS/C.106, seen by WSC Mar 2, 1943 (HW.1/1415).
- 130 Ralph Bennett in Hinsley & Stripp, 38.
- 131 Montgomery to Brooke, Mar 6, 1943 (King’s College London, Alanbrooke papers); Bryant, *op. cit.*, 588.
- 132 Eden diary, Mar 7, 1943.
- 133 ‘Chequers Visiting Book,’ in C R Thompson papers, and Martin diary, Mar 5–8, 1943.
- 134 Stalin to WSC, Mar 16, 1943, in Stalin–WSC Correspondence, vol. i.
- 135 Brooke diary, unpublished, Apr 6, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a); Montgomery signals to WSC via the ULTRA channel are in HW.1/1493 and /1529; WSC replied by the same link.
- 136 Harvey diary, Mar 11, 1943.
- 137 Halifax diary, Mar 18, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12).
- 138 Harvey diary, Mar 11, 1943.
- 139 Bruce Lockhart diary, Apr 4, 1943.
- 140 Beaverbrook to Hoare, Feb 2, 1943 (Beaverbrook papers, C.308).
- 141 Amery diary, Mar 15, 1943.
- 142 Bracken to Hopkins, Mar 26, 1943 (Hopkins papers, box 329, ‘TRIDENT’); PM’s card.
- 143 WSC to Eden, M.199/3, Mar 27 (4/84/2a); FO to D’Arcy Osborne, No. 63, Apr 1, 1943 (AIR.8/437).
- 144 Brooke diary, Mar 26, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a); Bryant, *op. cit.*, 586f.
- 145 Tel. WSC to Stalin, Mar 28 (PREM.3/14/2; *Sov.-angliiskiy*, 361ff); WSC to Sta-

- lin, Mar 30, 1943, in Stalin–WSC Correspondence, vol. i, No. 134.
- 146 Stalin to WSC, Mar 29 (PREM.3/14/2).
- 147 WSC to Stalin, Mar 30, 1943, in Stalin–WSC Correspondence, vol. i, No. 137.
- 148 WSC to Stalin, Mar 28, *ibid.*, No. 136.
- 149 Stalin to WSC, Apr 2 and 12, 1943 *ibid.*, Nos. 138 and 145.
- 150 WSC to Portal, Apr 24, and reply, Apr 28 (AIR.198/189, ‘Bombing Policy, 1943’).
- 151 Amery diary, Apr 27, 1943.
- 152 FO to Osborne, Apr 6 (AIR.8/437).
- 153 WSC to Ismay for chiefs of staff, ACTION THIS DAY, Aug 15, 1943 (CAB.120/599); and see Portal’s files on the bombing of Rome, AIR.8/436–438.
- 154 Brooke diary, unpublished, Apr 19 and 22, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 155 Dalton diary, Apr 6, 1943.
- 156 Robert Murphy to Hull, Tel. No 699 to State, Apr 24 (Hoover Libr., Robert Murphy papers, box 45). For extensive material on the alleged criminality of ‘Passy,’ see the ‘Matthews, H Freeman’ folder.
- 157 See Matthews to Murphy, No 234, London, May 15, 1943: ‘The sources mentioned in the last sentence of the embassy’s telegram No. 3269 May 11, 9 P.M. to the Department are now inclined to place more credence in reports of a Gaullist plot to assassinate Giraud. They have records of conversations at the time in “Passy’s” organisation in which they openly boast of their success in having Darlan assassinated and announces their intention of doing away with Giraud at some future date.’
- 158 Author’s interview of the pilot, Flight-Lieut. Peter Loat, DFC, Jun 7, 1967, and subsequent letters from him.
- 159 The ministry of defence informed us on Jun 6, 1967 that they had found no record of any untoward incident on this flight. No. 24 Squadron’s operational record book indicates however that Loat, who had almost exclusively flown Wellington L4237 until Apr 19, switched to Hudson M7220 for the de Gaulle flight on Apr 21, 1943 (AIR.27/295).
- 160 Letter from Auboyneau’s Flag-Lieut., William Bonaparte-Wyse, RN, ‘Sabotage Threat to de Gaulle,’ in *The Daily Telegraph*, May 11, 1967; and our interview with him at that time.
- 31: **The Hill of Goats**
- 1 Cecil King diary, Mar 23, 1943.
- 2 Dalton diary, Feb 11, 1942.
- 3 Information from John Lisners, Apr 1995. An Oxford don accidentally saw the unsanitised war cabinet minute at the PRO. In the summer of 1940 when the Duke was in Lisbon, there was alarm at his secret contacts with the Nazi authorities, which Churchill’s codebreakers were monitoring, and Churchill sent Sir Walter Monckton and an armed detective out to escort him, forcibly if necessary, onto a ship bound for the Bahamas.
- 4 Dalton diary, Jan 9, 1942.
- 5 Mackenzie King diary, Aug 24, 1943: when Lord Bessborough referred to de Gaulle as that ‘male Joan of Arc,’ another joked in WSC’s hearing: ‘He had better be careful not to be burned by the British.’
- 6 Butcher diary, *passim*. Researching for this volume in 1977, we had the sealed pages of Captain Harry C Butcher’s diary referring to these discussions opened. Eisenhower told American newspapermen on Sep 22, 1942, ‘As far as I am concerned I would lie, cheat, steal and even give orders for assassination . . . to beat the Huns,’ adding that he had already given one such order (*ibid.*).
- 7 Herschel V Johnson, Tel. 1511 to State

- dept., Stockholm, Apr 29, 1944 (NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files, box 22, file 820.02).
- 8 William Stevenson, *A Man called Intrepid* (London and New York, 1976); together with labour leader John L Lewis, W R Davis had tried to engineer a peace deal with Hitler in October 1939. See the biography of Stephenson, *The Quiet Canadian* (London, 1962) by H Montgomery Hyde. The relevant files of SIS officer Montgomery Hyde at Churchill College archives are closed in perpetuity.
- 9 Note by H F Matthews of US embassy, Apr 24, 1942 (NA, RG.59, papers of H Freeman Matthews).
- 10 Memo by Adolph Berle, May 7, 1942 (FDR Libr., Adolph A Berle diary). Fred Louis Stagg had been British consul in Havana until 1941, before becoming British secret service chief covering the west coast of South America, based on Bogotá. Cf. Dalton to Bracken, Nov 15, 1941: 'The SOE organisation in South America is centred in New York. . . As you know, SOE is charged with the conduct of subversive activities against the enemy all over the world. . . In all neutral countries [SOE] subversion must, of course, be an instrument of foreign policy' (FO.954/24). Gladwyn Jebb reported to Cadogan, Nov 16, 1941, 'Special arrangements have been made with "C" for the representation of SOE throughout North and South America' (*ibid.*). Interviewed by us in Paris, Dec 17, 1983, Stagg confirmed that he took his instructions by cypher from Stephenson's New York headquarters (code-name SUBSIDED); he described having devised one scheme to dump a German agent in a refrigerator from a chartered plane into the Pacific. On the planned killing of Dr Lopez de Mesa he was less forthcoming than the 1942 State dept. record.
- 11 Stimson diary, Dec 26, 1942.
- 12 *Ibid.*, Dec 27, 1942.
- 13 An internal memorandum dated Mar 22, 1944 by Major Peer de Silva, US army Corps of Engineers, on a discussion one day earlier with Dr J R Oppenheimer rehearsed the well-known history of the project, and confirmed that the 'relatively friendly interchange of information' in 1940, 1941, and most of 1942 had dried up when the US army assumed decisive control of the development of the weapon toward the end of 1942, at which time it 'came to an abrupt and complete halt.' Extraordinarily, Groves would claim on Apr 17, 1944: 'The halt referred to on interchange was one of the choosing of the British and not of the Army' (NA, RG.77, Office of Chief of Engineers, US army, file '000.71 British L.C.').
- 14 Conant wrote to Dean Mackenzie of Canada on Jan 2 that this order 'which restricts our interchange' was one which Dr Vannevar Bush and he had 'received from the top' – *i.e.*, from FDR himself (PREM.3/139/8a; and *FRUS Casablanca*).
- 15 *FRUS, Conferences at Washington and Québec, 1943*.
- 16 Cherwell to WSC, Jan 1943 (Cherwell papers).
- 17 Anderson to WSC, Jan 11, 1943 (PREM.3/139/8a).
- 18 Anderson to WSC, Jan 20, 1943 (*ibid.*, and CAB.120/78).
- 19 WSC to Anderson, Jan 23, 1943 (PREM.3/139/8a).
- 20 J M Martin to Harry Hopkins, Jan 23, 1943 (*ibid.*; Hopkins papers, 'TUBE ALLOYS'; and *FRUS Casablanca*).
- 21 WSC to Hopkins, Feb 15, 1943 (PREM.3/139/8a).

- 22 Lord Cherwell to WSC, Jan 20, 1943 (Cherwell papers).
- 23 WSC to Hopkins, Feb 16, 1943 (Hopkins papers, 'TUBE ALLOYS'; and PREM.3/139/8a); and *FRUS, Conferences at Washington and Québec, 1943* (US Government Printing Office, Washington, 1970).
- 24 Hopkins to WSC, Feb 24, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 25 WSC to Hopkins, draft telegram ('surely not sent') in PREM.3/139/8a.
- 26 WSC to Hopkins, Mar 18, 1943 (*ibid.*, to go 'in a locked box').
- 27 Hopkins to WSC, Mar 20 (*ibid.*, and Hopkins papers, 'TUBE ALLOYS'); the text in *FRUS, Conferences at Washington and Québec, 1943* (US Government Printing Office, Washington, 1970) is dated 'Mar 19, 1943.'
- 28 FDR to Bush, Mar 24, 1943 (Hopkins papers, 'TUBE ALLOYS').
- 29 Conant to Bush, Mar 25, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 30 Bush to Hopkins, Mar 31, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 31 WSC to Hopkins, telegram T.434/3 (PREM.3/139/8a).
- 32 Rowan (WSC's secretary) to Cherwell, Apr 5, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 33 GC&CS German Police Section, report ZIP/MSGP.41, dated Jan 1, 1943 (HW.16/6, part i).
- 34 'Operation carried out by SOE and Combined Operations,' Apr 8, 1943 (AIR.8/1767).
- 35 WSC to Selborne, M.266/3, Apr 14, 1943 (CAB.120/827).
- 36 Dill, Washington, to War Cabinet, London, Apr 3, 1943 (AIR.8/1767).
- 37 Portal to Dill, Apr 6 (*ibid.*). He amended the 'two years' on Apr 7, 1943 to 'twelve months.'
- 38 Michael W Penn [*should read Perrin*], 'Norway – Production of Heavy Water,' Aug 20, 1943 (AIR.8/1767). Tronstad was parachuted into Norway, captured, and killed.
- 39 Hollis to Portal, Oct 18 (AIR.8/1767).
- 40 Portal to Hollis, Oct 20, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 41 Bush to Hopkins, Apr 5; *New York Times*, Apr 4, 1943. The sub-headline read, 'Super-Explosive Indicated. British Counter-Action Seen in Paratroop Activity' (Hopkins papers, 'TUBE ALLOYS').
- 42 WSC to Hopkins, Apr 1, 1943 (PREM.3/139/8a).
- 43 WSC to Hopkins, Apr 11, 1943 (Hopkins papers).
- 44 Halifax to Eden, Apr 14, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A4.410.4.15).
- 45 Cherwell to WSC, Apr 7, 1943: 'TUBE ALLOYS' (Cherwell papers, 'TUBE ALLOYS'; PREM.3/139/8a).
- 46 WSC to Cherwell, Apr 11, 1943 (Cherwell papers, 'TUBE ALLOYS'; and PREM.3/139/8a).
- 47 WSC to Anderson, M.270/3, Apr 15, 1943 (PREM.3/139/8a, and CAB.120/842); Cherwell's desk diary shows he saw WSC that day (copy in our possession).
- 48 Ismay to WSC, Apr 15 (CAB.120/748). War Cabinet, Apr 15; *cf.* Lord Cherwell's desk diary, Apr 15, 1943. For the chiefs of staff meetings and documents relating specifically to the V-weapons and CROSSBOW, Jan–Dec 1943, see CAB.121/211–3.
- 49 WSC to Cherwell, Apr 22, 1943 (Cherwell papers).
- 50 Brooke diary, unpublished, Apr 19, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 51 Duncan Sandys report, COS(43) 259(O), May 17, 1943.
- 52 Sandys report, COS(43) 259(O); Jacob to WSC, May 24; Jacob to Crawford, Jun 7, 1943 (CAB.120/748).
- 53 Chronology, for meeting Nov 8, 1943 (CAB.120/748).
- 54 Edward Thomas, *ibid.*, 48.
- 55 Travis to Bayly, New York, Dec 6, 1942 (HW.14/60).

- 56 Unsigned note, Nov 30, 1942 in GC&CS files (HW.14/59).
- 57 Adolph A Berle, Jr, to Winant, Apr 23, 1943 (NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files, box 15, file 820.02A-Z).
- 58 Telford Taylor, in Hinsley & Stripp, 71ff.
- 59 Ralph Bennett, *ibid.*, 38.
- 60 GC&CS draft history, chap. ix, 'The Japanese War' (HW.3/102).
- 61 Hinsley and Stripp (see note 58), 7-8, 32, 144f.
- 62 Brooke diary, unpublished, Mar 29, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a); Bryant, *op. cit.*
- 63 On Nov 9, Col. D Capel-Dunn of the JIC had sent to Ismay remarks (CSDIC SRX 1209) overheard eight days earlier made by Gen. d Pz. Tr. Crüwell to the former commander of U-353: 'The enemy would dominate the whole Mediterranean and it would be possible for them to knock Italy out of the war to begin with, and then to conquer Europe from three points, Italy, Greece and Spain.' Later Crüwell said, 'Just think what that [Britain's command of the Mediterranean] would mean! Italy would be done for.' Morton told Capel-Dunn on Nov 25, 1942 that *Afrika Korps* commander Gen. von Thoma had said much the same both to Air Vice-Marshal Collier in the plane bringing them both back to England, and in an overheard conversation (CAB.163/3).
- 64 HM King George VI diary, Mar 31, 1943.
- 65 Dalton diary, Apr 6, 1943.
- 66 Butcher diary, pages A.307f, Apr 17, 1943, unsealed.
- 67 Col. John H Bevan's file on MINCEMEAT (CAB.154/67) contains his handwritten note, the COS decisions of Apr 7, 13, 14, 15, related working papers and drafts of the 'three letters.' The plan's authors were Flight-Lieut. Charles Cholmondeley of MI5 and Lieut.-Cdr. Ewen Montagu of Naval Intelligence. Montagu's narrative is in CAB.154/112; it originally had photos of the corpse and baggage items. See too Bevan, quoted by Gilbert, vol. vi, 405; minute by Ismay, Apr 14, 1943, quoted in Michael Howard, *Grand Strategy*, vol. iv (London 1972), 370; Montagu, *The Man Who Never Was* (London, 1953), and Roger Morgan's earlier research in *After the Battle* magazine, Nov 15, 1996.
- 68 Brooke diary, unpublished, Apr 17, 19, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 69 Cunningham to Pound, Apr 28, 1943 (British Library, Add. MS 52561).
- 70 Dr Edouard Táborsky diary, in Czech, Apr 4, 1943 (Hoover Libr., Edouard Táborsky papers, box 2); cf. Chequers register (in the author's possession; author's microfilm DI-89).
- 71 Francis Biddle, US ambassador to the exiled governments in London, to FDR, Feb 20, 1942: in *FRUS*, 1942, vol. iii, 108-110.
- 72 Minute by Frank Roberts, Aug 16; and by Harold Caccia, Aug 18, 1942 (FO.371/30917): 'He knows our views about this,' added Caccia, 'and it is a mischievous message to an extreme organisation.'
- 73 Robert E Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins* (New York, 1948), vol. ii, 708-14.
- 74 FDR to Sikorski, Apr 12, 1942, in *FRUS*, 1943, vol. iii, 373.
- 75 Berlin Radio communiqué, Apr 13, 1943, in *Polish Documents*, 523.
- 76 Count Edward Raczyński, Note on a conversation between Sikorski and WSC, Apr 15, unpublished (Gen. Sikorski archives); cf. Raczyński, *op. cit.*, 140-1. Cadogan diary, Apr 15, 1943; the OSS also reported on May 15, 1943 from London that 'in his conversations with Gen. Sikorski, Mr Churchill did not leave the Polish Premier for a moment in doubt about how he thinks himself about [the Katyn massacre]' (NA,

- RG.226, Records of the OSS, entry 126, box 272, file 353325).
- 77 Ambassador A Drexel Biddle to Hull, Apr 17, *FRUS*, 1943, vol. iii, 379.
- 78 Stalin to FDR, Apr 21, *FRUS*, 1943, vol. iii, 391; and in *Stalin–WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, No. 150, and Stalin to WSC, Apr 21, 1943, *ibid.*, vol. ii, No. 180.
- 79 WSC to Stalin, Apr 24, 1943 (*Sov.-angliiskiy*, 375); in *Stalin–WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, No. 151.
- 80 Eden diary, Apr 24, 1943.
- 81 Biddle to Hull, Jul 27, relating what Sikorski told him. *FRUS*, 1943, vol. iii, 398–400.
- 82 Raczynski, *op. cit.*, 143.
- 83 WSC to Stalin, Apr 24; he repeated this text to FDR, Apr 25, *FRUS*, 1943, vol. iii, 393.
- 84 WSC to Stalin, Apr 25, 1943 in *Stalin–WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, No. 153.
- 85 Stalin to WSC, Apr 25, 1943, *ibid.*, vol. i, No. 152.
- 86 Memorandum of phone conversation by Elbridge Durbrow, Apr 26, in *FRUS*, 1943, vol. iii, 397.
- 87 Cecil King diary, Apr 27, 1943. Bracken was visiting him when Eden phoned.
- 88 WSC to Eden, Apr 28, 1943: Gilbert, vol. vi, 389.
- 89 Raczynski, *op. cit.*, 143.
- 90 The text is in WSC to FDR, Apr 28, 1943.
- 91 WSC to FDR, Apr 28, 1943.
- 92 Cadogan diary, Apr 28. ‘A filthy day . . . and I’m running out of drink! Damn!’
- 93 WSC to FDR, Apr 29, 1943: Churchill, vol. iv, 700.
- 94 Raczynski, *op. cit.*, 144.
- 95 Cadogan diary, Apr 29, 1943.
- 96 *Ibid.*, Apr 30, 1943.
- 97 Cadogan diary, May 1; Winant to FDR, May 1, 1943 (FDR Libr., Winant).
- 98 Cadogan diary, May 6, 7, 1943.
- 99 Harvey diary, May 11, 1943.
- 100 Cadogan diary, Jun 19, 1943.
- 101 Churchill, vol. iv, 678–81.
- 102 O’Malley to Eden, May 24, 1943 (FDR Libr., PSF, folder ‘Churchill’).
- 103 WSC to FDR, Aug 13, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 104 Halifax diary, Mar 30, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12).
- 105 Amery diary, Feb 15, 25, 1943.
- 106 *Ibid.*, Apr 20, 22, 1943.
- 107 *Ibid.*, May 3, 1943.
- 108 Eden diary, Apr 21, 1943.
- 109 Harvey diary, Apr 21–26, 1943.
- 110 Eden diary, Apr 25. Hardinge offered his resignation on Jul 8, which the king, as Eden noted, ‘gleefully’ accepted; Eden regretted this as Hardinge had courage and ability, and he suspected Queen Elizabeth was at the bottom of it. ‘She has always disliked Alec’s independence of mind’ (*ibid.*, Jul 8, 1943).
- 111 Amery diary, May 3, 1943.
- 112 *Ibid.*, May 4, 1943.
- 113 Harvey diary, May 3, 1943.
- 114 Amery diary, May 7. For his letter of advice to Eden of May 9, 1943, see Mansergh, vol. iii, 955–8.
- 115 *Ibid.*, May 18. On Jun 9, 1943 (*ibid.*), WSC told him he had finally decided against sending Eden to Delhi, feeling he lacked the requisite ‘sense of mission.’
- 116 Halifax diary, May 23, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12).
- 117 Eden diary, Jun 8, 1943. ‘But he as readily admits the disadvantages. Our talk was very frank.’
- 118 Halifax diary, Jun 17–18, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12).
- 119 Amery diary, Jun 9, 14, 15, 1943.
- 120 Eden diary, Jun 14, 1943.
- 121 *Ibid.*, Jun 15, 1943.
- 122 Amery diary, Jun 21, 1943.
- 123 Lieut. Sewell’s report is in CAB.154/67.

32: 'Is that you, Winston?'

- 1 Nel, *op. cit.*, 99f.
- 2 Harvey diary, May 18, 1943. For a list of the 158 names see CAB.120/84.
- 3 WSC to Eden, PENCIL 37, May 10, 1943 (CAB.120/85).
- 4 Brooke diary, unpublished, May 7, 1943: 'There are only 3,000 troops on board instead of full 15,000 so that we are not crowded at all' (Alanbrooke papers, 5/7). Ismay, *op. cit.*, 294. Zyklon was used to disinfect ships, trains, and workers' housing; it was manufactured under licence by a London firm, which long after the war still retained as its telegraphic address 'Zyklon, London' (wo.208/2169).
- 5 *Ibid.*, Apr 30 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/6a).
- 6 Butcher diary, May 1, 1943.
- 7 Harvey diary, May 5, 1943.
- 8 Halifax secret diary, May 16, 1943.
- 9 In the list of records of Britain's Joint Staff Mission, Washington (PRO series CAB.122) is piece 1394: 'Captain Butcher, 1945-46'; its full name has been obliterated, and it is 'retained by dept.', *i.e.*, sealed.
- 10 Hassett diary, May 27, 1943.
- 11 Ickes diary, Jun 9, 1943. Lord Halifax had remarked upon the paucity of the applause. Henry Luce had published a savage letter in *Life* attacking British policy in India.
- 12 Hume Wrong diary, Nov 6, 1942. His former secretary, a Miss Butson, now worked at the US embassy and reported this to him (Canadian National Archives, Ottawa, Hume Wrong papers, MG.30, E.101, file 23, 'London, 1942').
- 13 Leahy diary, Dec 24-25, 1942; Leahy for FDR to WSC, May 7, 1943; Leahy diary, Apr 14, 1943.
- 14 The tight-lipped US history, *FRUS, Conferences at Washington and Québec, 1943* (US Government Printing Office, Washington, 1970), says only: 'Regarding the absence from the official files of such records, see Matloff, 125, footnote 87.' Arnold's records on TRIDENT are in the Library of Congress, H H Arnold papers, box 182.
- 15 Leahy, *op. cit.*, 156.
- 16 Joint Chiefs of Staff, JCS.286/1, 'Recommended Line of Action at Coming Conference,' May 8 (NA, RG.218, JCS); Matloff, 123f. Leahy diary, May 8. There is a hint of these dissensions in the Butcher diary, pages A.423ff, May 27, 1943, unsealed.
- 17 Bedell Smith reported, back in Algiers on May 25: quoted in Butcher diary, page A.424, May 27, 1943, unsealed.
- 18 Stimson diary, May 10, 1943.
- 19 *Ibid.*, May 12, 1943.
- 20 Everett S Hughes diary, May 14, 1943 (Library of Congress).
- 21 Schedule in PREM.10/1.
- 22 Halifax diary, May 6, 1943.
- 23 *Ibid.*, May 4 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12); for more on Beaverbrook's intriguing to become ambassador, see *ibid.*, May 9, 11, 12, 1943.
- 24 *Ibid.*, May 12, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12).
- 25 Stimson diary, May 12, 1943.
- 26 Combined Chiefs of Staff, Minutes of First Meeting, held in the White House, 2:30 P.M., May 12, 1943 (CAB.99/22; and see Churchill, vol. iv, 706ff).
- 27 Leahy diary, May 12, 1943.
- 28 The text is in Butcher diary, page A.405, May 13; Gilbert, vol. vi, 404, quotes only the abridged text given in the Cadogan diary, May 12. Also intercepted was the last message of Hans Cramer, commander of the *Afrika-Korps*: 'Munition verschossen, Waffen und Kriegsgerät zerstört. Das DAF hat sich befehlsgemäß bis zur Kampfunfähigkeit geschlagen. Das Deutsche Afrika-Korps muß

- wieder erstehen. Heia Safari!'
- 29 Halifax diary, May 12, 1943. (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12).
- 30 *Ibid.*, May 12, Jun 1, 1943.
- 31 *Ibid.*, May 12, 1943.
- 32 Alexander to WSC, May 12, 1943: Churchill, vol. iv, 697.
- 33 *Ibid.*, 698.
- 34 King George VI to WSC, May 13: Churchill, vol. iv, 698; and Clementine to WSC, May 13, 1943: Gilbert, vol. vi, 404.
- 35 Anna Boettiger diary, May 13, 1943 (FDR Library, Anna Roosevelt Boettiger papers).
- 36 WSC to Clementine, May 26, 1943: Mary Soames, *op. cit.*
- 37 WSC, 'Notes on ANAKIM,' May 8, 1943 (CAB.99/22; Churchill, vol. iv, 702ff).
- 38 Revised Minutes of Second Meeting held in the White House, 2 P.M., May 14, 1943 (CAB.99/22); and WSC to Attlee, May 14, 1943 (CAB.120/82). Gilbert, vol. vi, 407, is wrong in stating that this conference was held on their *return* from Shangri-La.
- 39 Leahy diary, Jun 19, 1943.
- 40 Note on CHASTISE and UPKEEP in PREM.3/14/5.
- 41 Our series of articles on the Dams Raids, published in *The Sunday Express* in May 1973, was based on the official records released to us and on private diaries and papers which Dr Barnes Wallis made available to us. See www.fpp.co.uk/bookchapters/dams/articles/dambusters/1.html.
- 42 MI14(d)/0/161, a 'most secret source' report, Jun 3, 1943 ('German police reports, unnumbered,' HW16/9).
- 43 John Martin to Sinclair and Morrison, Jun 7, 1943 (Cherwell papers).
- 44 Anna Boettiger, quoted by Ickes diary, May 23, 1943. On May 14 she herself noted, 'Shangri-La for dinner,' and added cryptically: 'PM's snuffbox and belongings to Nelson.' (FDR Library, Anna Roosevelt Boettiger papers).
- 45 Schedule in PREM.10/1; and see Churchill, vol. iv, 795–8. Thompson MS (Thompson papers); WSC's own account of this is substantially different. Churchill, vol. iv, 711f. Poet John Greenleaf Whittier (1807–1892) wrote 'Barbara Frietchie' in 1864, at the height of the Civil War.
- 46 WSC minute, May 15, 1943: Gilbert, vol. vi, 407.
- 47 Hollis to WSC, May 14 (CAB.120/88).
- 48 German High Command (OKW) to OB Südost, OB Süd, *Marinegruppenkommando Süd*, May 14, intercepted by GCHQ as CX/MSS/2571/T4 (CAB.154/67 and /112). Hinsley, vol. iii, part 1, 78. British Intelligence officers found that the captured *Seekriegsleitung* files contained photographic copies of all three letters: see DNI to Cavendish-Bentinck *et al.*, Jul 13, 1945 (*ibid.*) and British admiralty archives, PG/33216. The discovery of the corpse and 'documents' was reported at Hitler's war conference of May 8; upon leaving, he was overheard by a stenographer (Ludwig Krieger, who related this to us) to remark to a staff officer: 'Christian, couldn't this be a corpse they have deliberately played into our hands?' See David Irving, *Hitler's War* (London, 1991), 547. See too NA microfilm T78, roll 343, and Rommel's diary, May 1943 (author's microfilm DI-160). On May 25, 1943, Dr Goebbels wrote in his diary that Canaris 'energetically refuted' the hypothesis that the documents were an enemy plant (NA microfilm T84, roll 264).
- 49 Intercepts 'PM.20–23,' May 18, 1943, marked MOST SECRET (a British, not American classification) and 'To be returned to Captain E G Hastings, RN' (Hopkins papers, box 329, 'TRIDENT').

- 50 Stimson diary, May 17, 1943.
- 51 Elizabeth Layton, letter home, May 19, 1943 (Nel papers): Gilbert, vol. vi, 408.
- 52 Mackenzie King diary, May 16, 1943.
- 53 *Ibid.*, May 18, 1943.
- 54 *Ibid.*, May 18, and again on May 19, 1943.
- 55 'With that strength it would be slaughter,' agreed Mackenzie King, in his note on the meeting of the empire's general staffs, May 20, 1943 (Mackenzie King papers, MG.26, J1, vols. 114, 116, 383).
- 56 Mackenzie King diary, May 18, 1943.
- 57 Elizabeth Layton (see note 51).
- 58 Mackenzie King diary, May 18, 1943; it was 12:32 A.M. as he got into bed – the hands were in a straight line again.
- 59 Halifax diary, May 18 and 19, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12).
- 60 Text of speech in *The New York Times*, May 29; a copy of the British Information Services, Washington, transcript is in the Library of Congress, Felix Frankfurter papers, box 129, 'Churchill.' Spanish newspapers published it omitting the reference to 'Corporal Hitler.'
- 61 Ickes diary, May 23, 1943.
- 62 Clementine to WSC, May 20, 1943: Gilbert, vol. vi, 409.
- 63 Speech (see note 60).
- 64 So he told Mackenzie King, diary, May 19, 1943; there is a memo on the House 'Quiz' in these papers (Mackenzie King papers, MG.26, J1, vols. 114, 116).
- 65 Mackenzie King diary, May 19 and 21, 1943 (*ibid.*, cf. Pickersgill, 513).
- 66 Mackenzie King, memo on a conversation with FDR and WSC, May 20 (*ibid.*).
- 67 Halifax diary, May 20, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12).
- 68 Mackenzie King diary, May 20 and 21, 1943.
- 69 *Ibid.*, May 18, 1943.
- 70 Luce, on May 19, 1943, in conversation with Beaverbrook (Beaverbrook papers, D.517).
- 71 Revised Minutes of Second Meeting held in the White House, 2 P.M., May 14, 1943 (CAB.99/22).
- 72 Stilwell diary, May 14, 1943.
- 73 Record of Combined Chiefs of Staff meeting, May 20, 1943, published in *FRUS, Conferences at Washington and Québec, 1943* (Washington, 1970).
- 74 Stimson diary, May 21, 1943.
- 75 Record of Pacific War Council meeting, May 20, 1943, published in *FRUS, Conferences at Washington and Québec, 1943* (Washington, 1970).
- 76 Dill concurred with Soong, telling the Canadian representative McCarthy that it was 'humiliating' that some aspects of the agreement had not been carried out; Soong told Mackenzie King that the whole agreement had been typed out in Calcutta, and taken on to Casablanca. Mackenzie King diary, May 20, 1943.
- 77 *Ibid.*, May 20, 1943.
- 78 *Ibid.*, memo on a conversation with FDR and WSC, May 20, 1943 (Mackenzie King papers, MG.26, J1, vols. 114, 116).
- 79 *Ibid.*, May 20, 1943.
- 80 Halifax diary, May 15, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12); and cf. May 20, 1943.
- 81 WSC to Eden, PENCIL 173, May 21 (CAB.120/85); T L Rowan to Hopkins, May 16, 1943 (Hopkins papers, box 329, 'TRIDENT'). See Churchill, vol. iv, 712f.
- 82 Lord Beaverbrook, Note on Conversations, Mrs Ogden Reid, Jun 10 [1943] (Beaverbrook papers, 'Atlantic Visits'); and Thompson MS (Thompson papers). Mme Chiang Kai-shek complained to Beaverbrook that WSC had not even acknowledged her invitations to speak on *The New York Herald-Tribune* forum.
- 83 Mackenzie King diary, May 21 1943.

- 84 WSC to Eden, May 21 (CAB.120/85).
- 85 Churchill, vol. iv, 801; Eden, *Reckoning*, 447–49, confirms this. For Eden’s sympathetic views on traditional French interests in Syria and Lebanon, see the US embassy memo on his luncheon with Casey, Cadogan, Spears on Jul 12, 1943 (NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, confidential files, box 13, file ‘800 Near East’).
- 86 PREM.3/120/10b, c & d (covering 1941–2), and PREM.3/120/4, May 1943. The particularly sensitive file PREM.3/121/4 was opened on Jan 3, 2000; see *The Independent*, London, Jan 4, 2000.
- 87 See note 64.
- 88 WSC treats this matter with restraint: Churchill, vol. iv, 716. It is clear that the most incriminating evidence came from MI5. For the US memoranda, see WSC to Attlee, May 21, 1:20 P.M.; the first, from FDR to WSC, begins: ‘I am sorry, but it seems to me the conduct of the Bride continues to be more and more aggravated’ (CAB.120/85).
- 89 Tel. 3376, H Freeman Matthews, US embassy in London, to Murphy, May 15, quoting ‘British Security sources,’ i.e., MI5 or MI6 (FDR Libr., Map Room files, box 66, A16/France). His source was Inspector Richards of Scotland-yard: Richards stated that de Gaulle’s officers were talking openly in Nov 1942 of assassinating Darlan, until the general issued a warning against careless talk. After Darlan’s murder, said Richards, ‘certain people in De Gaullist circles began to boast that the Fighting French had had a hand in the plot and also intended to kill Gen. Giraud.’
- De Gaulle had said of his rival, Giraud, ‘*Ce n’est qu’un général!*’ (‘He’s just a general.’) Jacob Beam, memo to Matthews, May 18 (NA, State dept. records, files 851.00/5–1343 and /5–2143). See the undated (1945?) OSS R&A Report No. 2553, ‘Colonel “Passy”’. On Apr 19, 1945, de Gaulle’s ‘Director-General of Study and Research, French Republic,’ sent a memorandum to W J Donovan entitled, ‘Duke-street Murder Myth’; this and several other items about ‘André de Wavrin alias Colonel “Passy”’ including a memorandum by J Edgar Hoover to the US attorney-general, dated Dec 13, and the latter’s memorandum for FDR, Dec 15, 1944, have been removed from Donovan’s papers at the US army Military History Institute, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, box 76a, folder 1025. Typed copies of the most incriminating Winant telegrams are in PREM.3/121/4.
- 90 Forbes to WSC, Feb 12 (PREM.3/120/10d). See also Matthews to Beam, ‘Statements of Mr Alistair Forbes,’ Mar 23, 1943 (Murphy papers, box 45): this summarises the unvarnished editorial views of *The Observer*, *Spectator*, *Economist*, and *New Statesman* on de Gaulle.
- 91 So de Gaulle told Gen. Cochet. Tel. 3413, Winant to Hull, May 17, 1943 (FDR Libr., Map Room files, box 66, A16/France and PREM.3/121/4).
- 92 Beam to Matthews, May 18 (NA, State dept. records, files 851.00/5–1343 and /5–2143); de Gaulle had said the same to French parachutists on Feb 4. See H Freeman Matthews to Atherton, Mar 6, 1943.
- 93 Hull to FDR, May 19, 1943 (FDR Libr., Map Room files, box 66, A16/France).
- 94 Undated memo (FDR Libr., Map Room files, box 66, A16/France).
- 95 Matthews to State dept., Mar 27; Jacob Beam, memo to Matthews, May 18 (NA, State dept. records, files 851.00/5–1343 and /5–2143). Cf. Matthews to Murphy, Apr 2, 1943 (Murphy papers, box 45). His source was in part a Mrs Bologna-Heiser, who was well-informed on the ‘assassina-

- tions' which de Gaulle's officials 'are apparently able to carry out to dispose of their enemies here.' See Matthews to Beam, Mar 5, 1943 (*ibid.*). On BCRA, see *Encyclopédie du renseignement et des services secret* (Paris, 1997); BCRA merged in Nov 1993 in Algiers with others into the new DGSS: see www.interieur.gouv.fr/police/dst/dst.htm.
- 96** Matthews to Beam, Mar 5; and a detailed memo in French by Prof. Leguyon, an MI6 agent, on the murders and other atrocities at No. 10 Duke-street, Mar 16, 1943 (Murphy papers, box 45).
- 97** High Court writ, *Maurice Henri Dufour vs. Charles de Gaulle, et al.*, issued by Thomas Cooper & Co., Solicitors, London, Aug 6, 1943 (NA, RG.59, papers of H Freeman Matthews, box 13). The case was set down for hearing in Jan 1944; de Gaulle refused to accept the High Court's jurisdiction. State dept., Division of European Affairs, 'Reasons Underlying this Government's Lack of Confidence in General de Gaulle,' Jan 20, 1944 (*ibid.*).
- 98** Beam to Matthews (see note 95).
- 99** Rowan to Hopkins (see note 84).
- 100** WSC phone call to Eden, 2:05–2:15 A.M., May 21, 1943. Transcript sent in code by Navy Censorship to Captain Fenn (NA, State dept. Archives, File 851.00/5–2143; US Naval History Division, file on Capt. Herbert Keeney Fenn). According to what Eden told his secretary, Churchill had said that feelings in Washington were running high, both with FDR and with Hull; and the PM wanted the war cabinet to 'break with de Gaulle.' Harvey diary, May 21, 1943.
- 101** 'Not of course literally,' remarks the otherwise very capable editor of the published Cadogan diaries, David Dilks. Cadogan diary, Jan 11, 1943.
- 102** WSC to Eden and Attlee, May 21, 1943 (PREM.3/121/4).
- 103** Halifax diary, May 22, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12).
- 104** Harvey diary, May 24. WSC to Eden and Attlee, May 24, 1943. The next day they added, 'We have no reasons to have any illusions about de Gaulle, nor have we had any' (PREM.3/121/4).
- 105** Eden diary, May 23; Harvey diary, May 24; Cadogan diary, May 23. The War Cabinet replies to WSC are in CAB.120/88.
- 106** Everett S Hughes diary, Nov 18, 1943.
- 107** Stimson diary, May 22, 1943.
- 108** Stilwell diary, May 22, 1943.
- 109** Stilwell's note in US dept. of the army files, published in *FRUS, Conferences at Washington and Québec, 1943* (US Government Printing Office, Washington, 1970).
- 110** Stilwell diary, May 22, 1943.
- 111** Stimson diary, May 22, 1943.
- 112** *Ibid.* Ickes diary, May 23, 1943.
- 113** From a British embassy memorandum on the luncheon, which WSC caused to be sent to FDR, published in *FRUS, Conferences at Washington and Québec, 1943* (US Government Printing Office, Washington, 1970), and paraphrased at length in Churchill, vol. iv, 717ff.
- 114** Henry Wallace diary, May 24; wrongly dated May 22 in published edition, *op. cit.*, 207ff. The ellipsis denotes words that were perhaps omitted out of tact.
- 115** Halifax diary, May 22 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12). For WSC's version of this conversation of May 22, see his Tel.163 to FDR, May 28 (FDR Libr., Map Room files); and *cf.* Churchill, vol. iv, 802–7.
- 116** Ickes diary, May 22, 1943.
- 117** Halifax diary, May 22, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12).
- 118** *Ibid.*, May 23, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12).

- 119 Harvey diary, May 11, 1943. 'PM wants to seize the Azores.'
- 120 'Agreed we might *ask* Salazar for facilities but must not *take* them.' Cadogan diary, May 11, 1943.
- 121 Compare the robust plans revealed in the documents with the version rendered in Churchill, vol. iv, 716: 'I had a particular regard for the rights of Portugal,' etc.
- 122 *FRUS*, 1943, iii, 116–7.
- 123 Cadogan diary, May 21, 1943; and *cf.* Bruce Lockhart diary, Jul 14, 1946.
- 124 Halifax diary, Jan 8, 1942.
- 125 Eden diary, Jul 24, 1943.
- 126 *Ibid.*, Aug 2. Cadogan (diary, Aug 2, 1943) records that WSC was 'simply tiresome and mulish, insisting on date September 15th, and getting v. excited at times, and silly.'
- 127 Cadogan diary, Jun 19, 1943.
- 128 Hansard, *House of Commons Debates*, Oct 12, 1943, cols.716–18.
- 129 Wallace diary (see note 116).
- 130 Clementine to WSC, May 20; reply, May 21, 1943.
- 131 Henry Wallace diary, May 24; he recalled WSC's turn of phrase to Harry S Truman after the war, and the new president replied: 'It is just like Churchill to make a crack like that' (*ibid.*, Mar 12, 1946).
- 132 Leahy diary, May 24, 1943.
- 133 *Ibid.*, May 24 (in fact May 25), 1943.
- 134 Stilwell diary, May 25, 1943.
- 135 *The New York Times*, May 26, 1943.
- 136 Transcript published in *FRUS, Conferences at Washington and Québec, 1943* (US Government Printing Office, Washington, 1970); and (PREM.4/72/2).
- 137 Stimson diary, May 27, 1943.
- 138 As WSC put it to Smuts, Jul 16, 1943: Gilbert, vol. vi, 414.
- 139 Butcher diary, page A.424, May 27 and A.427, May 29, 1943: Marshall was given only a few hours' notice to pack. According to Harriman, it was FDR who decided to send Marshall to avert the danger of their strategy being skewed by the British. Memo by Beaverbrook (Beaverbrook papers, D.517).
- 140 Stimson diary, May 25, 1943.
- 141 *Ibid.*, May 27, 1943.
- 142 Stimson, quoted by Frankfurter diary, May 30, 1943 (Library of Congress, Felix Frankfurter papers, box 22).
- 143 Dill to A B Cunningham, May 25, 1943 (Cunningham papers, Add. MS 52570).
- 144 Halifax to WSC, May 28 (Hickleton papers, A4.410.4.11). To Eden, the ambassador wrote on the same day: 'Winston . . . was very good about seeing a lot of people and I am sure it will have been well worth while. The general impression for example that he made on a mixed grill of Congressmen and Senators that we collected here [on May 22] will have got spread abroad and will not be without valuable result' (*ibid.*, A4.410.4.15).
- 145 Baruch to Bracken, Jul 16, 1943 (Princeton University, Seeley Mudd Manuscript Libr., Bernard Baruch papers). *Cf.* Bernard Baruch, *The Public Years* (New York, 1960), 300.
- 146 Halifax diary, May 23, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12).
- 147 *Ibid.*, May 22, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.12).
- 148 Oral History of George M Elsey, Apr 9, 1970 (Harry S Truman Library, Independence, Missouri).
- 149 Hassett diary, May 29, 1943.
- 150 Frankfurter diary, May 26, 1943 (Library of Congress, Felix Frankfurter papers, box 22). The judge interpreted this to mean that FDR detected in WSC a dangerous immaturity.

- 151 Lord Moran, *op. cit.*, chap. 40: 'Fighting Back,' 447.
- 33: **Cheated of the Bomb**
- 1 Schedule in PREM. 10/1.
- 2 Groves had locked the Canadian Eldorado company into exclusive contracts to produce 700 tons of uranium oxide – that company's entire output until mid-Nov 1945; he had also put Eldorado under contract to refine the 2,000 tons of Belgian Congo uranium-ore concentrates which the British had shipped to the USA for safe-keeping when war broke out. Finally, Groves had put the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Corporation under exclusive contract to manufacture heavy water at Trail in British Columbia, Canada.
- 3 Anderson to WSC, May 13 and 15, 1943 (PREM. 3/139/8a and CAB. 120/87).
- 4 Mackenzie King diary, May 20, 1943; memo, 383f.
- 5 *Ibid.*, May 21, and *cf.* Aug 8, 1943.
- 6 Undated 'Note on TUBE ALLOYS,' endorsed 'Yes,' by WSC (PREM. 3/139/8a).
- 7V Bush, 'Memorandum of Conference with Mr Harry Hopkins and Lord Cherwell at the White House, May 25, 1943' (Hopkins papers, 'TUBE ALLOYS').
- 8 Original memorandum in the FDR Library, reproduced in *FRUS, Conferences at Washington and Québec, 1943* (US Government Printing Office, Washington, 1970).
- 9 Cherwell to Hopkins, May 30 in *FRUS, Conferences at Washington and Québec, 1943* (US Government Printing Office, Washington, 1970).
- 10 WSC to Anderson, first message, May 26, 1943 (PREM. 3/139/8a and CAB. 120/86).
- 11 WSC to Anderson, second message, *Ibid.*; Churchill, vol. iv, 723.
- 12 WSC to Hopkins, Jun 10 (PREM. 3/139/8a; and *FRUS, Conferences at Washington and Québec, 1943*, US Government Printing Office, Washington, 1970).
- 13 Cherwell to WSC, Jul 26, 1945 (Cherwell papers).
- 14 WSC to Hopkins, Jun 10, 1943 (Hopkins papers, box 'TUBE ALLOYS').
- 15 Hopkins to WSC, Jun 17, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 16 WSC to FDR, Jul 9, 1943.
- 17 WSC to Anderson, Jul 18, 1943 (CAB. 120/842).
- 18 FDR to Bush, Jul 20, 1943, quoted in letter J E Doyle to Hull, Nov 5, 1945 (FDR Libr., PSF 172); Lord Cherwell's appointment book records visits from V Bush on Jul 14 and 22, 1943, the latter at No. 10 Downing-street (copy in our possession).
- 19 Cherwell to WSC, Jul 22, 1943 (Cherwell papers).
- 20 FDR to WSC, Jul 26, in *FRUS, Conferences at Washington and Québec, 1943* (US Government Printing Office, Washington, 1970).
- 21 In our opinion an honourable man, Stimson 'said that he now knew that this impression was wrong and both he and Gen. Marshall expressed a willingness and desire to restore full collaboration.' At this meeting on Aug 5, 1943 Anderson obtained confirmation that Stimson and Marshall in fact knew very little about the project.
- 22 WSC to Anderson, Jul 23, 1943 (CAB. 120/842).
- 23 Draft agreement, in *FRUS, Conferences at Washington and Québec, 1943* (US Government Printing Office, Washington, 1970).
- 24 WSC to Anderson and Cherwell, Jul 29; WSC to FDR, Jul 29, enclosing 'Draft heads of an Agreement between the President of the United States of America and the Prime Minister of Great Britain.' *FRUS, Conferences at Washington and Québec, 1943*

- (US Government Printing Office, Washington, 1970). The CPC consisted of Stimson, Bush, Conant (USA); Dill and Llewellyn (Britain); and CD Howe, Canadian minister of munitions and supply.
- 25 Halifax diary, Aug 5, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.13).
- 26 Halifax secret diary, May 26, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.19).
- 27 Butcher diary, May 27, 1943, unsealed, quoting Bedell Smith.
- 28 Macmillan, letter home, Jun 4, 1943, in *The Blast of War*, London, 1967, and *War Diaries* (London, 1984), 94.
- 29 *Ibid.*, Jun 4, in *The Blast of War*, London, 1967, and *War Diaries* (London, 1984), 94.
- 30 'Autograph Book of Passengers on Mr Churchill's Personal Aircraft, 1943-45' (Thompson papers). The PM's York transport plane LV633 was named 'Ascalon.' Its flight navigation log is in the RAF Museum, Hendon, on microfiche MFC.76/5 together with that of his subsequent Douglas Skymaster EW999.
- 31 Butcher diary, June 4, 1943.
- 32 *Ibid.*, May 29; Cdr Thompson to private office, PENCIL 424, May 29, 1943 (CAB.120/86).
- 33 Butcher diary, May 27, unsealed, quoting Bedell Smith. Bedell Smith had reported the Intelligence about Kursk on May 25.
- 34 Minutes of meeting in Eisenhower villa, May 29, 5 P.M. (CAB.120/29); Butcher diary, May 29, 1943.
- 35 Butcher diary, May 30, 1943.
- 36 *Ibid.*
- 37 Amery diary, Jul 14, 1943.
- 38 Stimson diary, Jun 1, 1943.
- 39 On Jan 26, 1943 WSC had cabled to Giraud, 'We also spoke [at SYMBOL] of the importance which I attach to getting a certain General out of France.' His next message specified Georges (CAB.120/76). And see State dept. memo, 'Reasons' (chap. 32, note 97).
- 40 *Ibid.*
- 41 Official Dispatch No. 209 from Algiers to OSS for Donovan, May 29, 1943 (NA, OSS file CD 19299).
- 42 Butcher diary, May 30, 1943, unsealed.
- 43 For Adm. Godfroy's move, and Churchill's venom toward him, see PREM.3/179/5 and /6.
- 44 Official Dispatch No. 243 from Algiers to OSS for Donovan, Jun 3, 1943 (NA, OSS file CD 19480).
- 45 Butcher diary, June 1, 1943.
- 46 Butcher diary, May 30, 1943, unsealed.
- 47 Eden diary, May 31, 1943.
- 48 Butcher diary, Jun 1, 1943.
- 49 Eisenhower, 184.
- 50 J M Robb diary, Jun 2, 1943 (RAF Museum, Hendon: Air Chief Marshal J M Robb papers, 71/9/68).
- 51 Note by Harold Macmillan, Jun 1, 1943, in *The Blast of War*, London, 1967, and *War Diaries* (London, 1984), 100.
- 52 Butcher diary, Jun 1, 1943, unsealed, quoting Commander Kitteredge, US naval liaison officer to de Gaulle.
- 53 Official Dispatch No. 253 from Algiers to OSS for Donovan, Jun 5, 1943 (NA, OSS file CD 19564).
- 54 Eisenhower, *op.cit.*, 185.
- 55 Minutes of conf., Jun 3, 1943 (CAB.120/82). Butcher diary, Jun 4, 1943. Present were Marshall, Eisenhower, Major-Gen. T T Handy and Bedell Smith, with Churchill, Eden, Cunningham, Brooke, Tedder, Montgomery, Ismay, on the British side.
- 56 Official Dispatch No. 253 from Algiers to OSS for Donovan, Jun 5, 1943 (NA, OSS file CD 19564).
- 57 Official Dispatch No. 252 from Algiers, Colonel Eddy to Donovan, Jun 5 (NA, OSS file CD 19559): the OSS's Colonel William

- Eddy reported that Churchill, Giraud, and de Gaulle dined there on June 4; the P.M. told the French generals that de Gaulle must co-operate with Giraud and the Allied Command, 'or else.' 'There now seems to be a good chance of escaping a personal dictatorship by de Gaulle.'
- 58 Official Dispatches No. 254, 255 from Algiers to OSS for Donovan, Jun 5, 1943 (NA, OSS file CD 19571).
- 59 Amery diary, Jun 5, 1943.
- 60 Chequers register, Jun 5–7; Martin diary, Jun 5, and letter home, Jun 6, 1943.
- 61 Halifax diary, Sep 9, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.13).
- 62 A T Harris, *Bomber Offensive* (London, 1947), 154f.
- 63 Harris to WSC, May 8, 1943 (PREM.3/14/5). The file contains working papers indicating that, before composing a new message to Stalin at this time, WSC inquired the latest German cities bombed since the last such telegram.
- 64 Ministry of Information Home Intelligence Report, No. 140, Jun 10, 1943 (CAB.121/106).
- 65 Eden diary, Jun 15, 1943.
- 34: **'Soldiers Must Die'**
- 1 Sikorski to WSC, May 24, 1943 (Gen. Sikorski archives).
- 2 FO.371/34614a, 'Gen. Sikorski's Visit to the Middle East.' And, 'The Diary of Gen. Sikorski's last Journey in the Middle East' (Canadian National Archives, Papers of Tadeusz Romer, M.6.61, D68, vol. 3).
- 3 Ambassador Bogomolov, quoted by Francis Biddle to FDR, Jun 2, *FRUS*, 1943, vol. iii, 426.
- 4 Sikorski diary (Gen. Sikorski archives).
- 5 Cadogan diary, Jun 28, 1943.
- 6 FDR to Stalin, Jun 4, in *Stalin–WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, No. 161; reply, Jun 11, 1943 (*ibid.*, vol. i, No. 162).
- 7 Maisky, conversation with WSC, Jun 9, 1943 (*Sov.-angliiskiye*, 390ff).
- 8 Stalin to WSC, Jun 11 (*ibid.*, 393f). Eden diary, Jun 12, 1943.
- 9 WSC to Stalin, Jun 18 (*ibid.*, 395ff). WSC to Stalin, Jun 19, 1943 in *Stalin–WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, No. 163.
- 10 Bruce Lockhart diary, Jul 4, 1943.
- 11 Harriman to FDR via Hopkins, Jul 5, 1943 (Hopkins papers, box 157, 'Harriman'). This is reproduced in the official *FRUS, The Conferences at Cairo and Teheran, 1943*, 13–15, omitting WSC's intriguing remarks about China and de Gaulle.
- 12 Eden diary, Jun 24, 1943.
- 13 *Ibid.*, Jun 25, 1943.
- 14 Harriman to Hopkins for FDR, Jul 5 (Hopkins papers, box 157, 'Harriman'; and PSF, folder 'Great Britain, 1943').
- 15 Brooke diary, unpublished, Jun 28, 1943 (Alanbrooke papers, 5/7).
- 16 WSC to FDR, Jun 23, 1943.
- 17 Harold Macmillan diary, Jul 5, 1943, in *The Blast of War* (London, 1967), and *War Diaries* (London, 1984), 141.
- 18 *Ibid.*, Jul 6, 1943, 142.
- 19 *Ibid.*, Jul 9, 1943, 144.
- 20 Butcher diary, page A.452, Jun 4, 1943.
- 21 WSC to FDR, No. 302, Jun 10, 1943 (AIR.8/437).
- 22 Chiefs of staff 121st meeting, Jun 8 (*ibid.*).
- 23 Memo by M[yrton] C T[aylor], Jun 11, 1943 (Myron C Taylor papers).
- 24 Eden to chiefs of staff, COS (43) 317(O), Jun 17; chiefs of staff 129th meeting Jun 18, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 25 FDR to WSC, No. T.859/4, No. 321, Jun 19; and reply, No. 291, Jun 22 (*ibid.*).
- 26 Cadogan letter, Jun 25, 1943, circulated as COS (43) 341(O) (*ibid.*).
- 27 Welsh, RAF delegation in Washington, to

- Portal, Jun 26, 1943, 15:30 GMT (*ibid.*).
28 Chiefs of staff to Washington and Eisenhower, Jun 29, 1943 (*ibid.*).
29 Combined Chiefs to Eisenhower, Jun 26, 1943 (*ibid.*).
30 The Vatican addressed the same message to the USA. Archbishop A G Cicognani, Archbishop of Laodicea, Apostolic Delegation to the USA, to Myron C Taylor, Jun 25, 1943 (Myron C Taylor papers).
31 Archbishop A G Cicognani, Archbishop of Laodicea, Apostolic Delegation to the USA, to Myron C Taylor, Jun 28, 1943 (Myron C Taylor papers).
32 Holy See telegram No. 198, Jun 28 (*ibid.*).
33 FDR to WSC, No. 303, Jul 5, 1943 (*ibid.*).
34 JSM Washington to War Cabinet Offices, Jul 11, 1945 (*ibid.*).
35 Harris to Portal, Jul 11, 1943; see too Bomber Command operation order No. 162, Dec 3, 1942 (AIR.8/437).
36 Portal to WSC, Jul 13, 1943 (AIR.8/437).
37 Eden to WSC, Jul 14; WSC minute, Jul 16, 1943 (AIR.8/437). Harris was duly informed.
38 Stalin to WSC, Jun 24; Stalin to WSC, Jun 26, 1943: *Sov.-angliiskiye*, 400, 402f.
39 Eden diary, Jun 26, 1943.
40 WSC to Stalin, Jun 27 (*Sov.-angliiskiye*, 403f). Harriman to FDR via Hopkins, Jul 5, 1943 (Hopkins papers, box 157, 'Harriman'); Harriman spent that weekend Jun 24–28 at Chequers.
41 Cadogan diary, Jun 28. Sikorski diary, Jun 30, 1943 (Gen. Sikorski archives).
42 This German traitor was Peter Herbert Cleff, of Essen. He was lying; in deference to his wishes, the file on him has been sealed (wo.208/3464).
43 Eden diary, Jun 16, 1943.
44 WSC to Cripps, Jun 17 (CAB.120/748).
45 Derek Taunt in Hinsley & Alan Stripp, 109.
46 WSC to Sandys, C.17/3, Jun 25, 1943 (CAB.120/748).
47 FO to WSC, Jun 29, report from Mr Osborne, Switzerland (Cherwell papers).
48 WSC to Ismay, Jul 21 (CAB.120/748).
49 Ministry of Information Home Intelligence Report, No. 140, Jun 10, 1943 (CAB.121/106).
50 Leahy diary, Jun 11, 1943.
51 Stimson diary, Jun 10, 1943.
52 Eden diary, Jun 11, 1943.
53 Official Dispatch No. 286 from Algiers to OSS for Donovan, Jun 12, 1943 (NA, OSS file CD 19842).
54 Butcher diary, page A.483, Jun 12, 1943, unsealed.
55 Capt. Wood, 'American–De Gaullist Relations 1942–44,' Jun 23, 1944; and Lieut. G M Elsey, 'President Roosevelt's Policy towards de Gaulle,' Jun 21, 1945 (NA, RG.218, JCS, Official Papers of Adm. W D Leahy, file 20).
56 State dept. memo, 'Reasons' (see chap. 32, note 97).
57 WSC to editors, Jun 12, 1943 (PREM.3/121/1); also quoted in State dept. memo, 'Reasons' (see chap. 32, note 97).
58 FDR to WSC, Jun 17. Stimson diary, Jun 17, 1943. In cabinet that day Stimson advised FDR that de Gaulle was so unstable he might provoke a fight between French forces (*ibid.*). Capt. Wood (see note 55) and Elsey (*op. cit.*).
59 Macmillan diary, Jun 18, 1943.
60 Eden diary, Jun 18, 1943.
61 Matthews to Ray Atherton, head of the European dept. of the State dept., Jun 25, in Leahy diary; the full text is in the Murphy papers, box 25. 'Doc' Matthews wrote to Murphy on Jun 26, 1943: 'I wonder, incidentally, if you realize how close you came to getting instructions from the highest quarters around June 17th . . . to

- stop the Committee from meeting and to break openly with the modern Jeanne d'Arc' (*ibid.*).
- 62 For several of these often harrowing censorship summaries on the Jewish question from 1941 to 1943 see HO.213/953.
- 63 Information & Records Branch, 'Postal and Telegraph Censorship, Report on Jewry,' No. 7, Jul–Dec 1943, London, Feb 26, 1944 (NA, RG.84, US embassy in London, secret files, box 22, 'London Conf files, 1944'). The letter quoted rounded off this 32-page report.
- 64 *Ibid.*
- 65 Dr C Weizmann to WSC, Apr 2, 1943 (PREM.4.52/3).
- 66 WSC to Eden and Cranborne, M.291/3, Apr 18, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 67 Stanley to WSC, Apr 19, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 68 Cranborne to WSC, Apr 19, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 69 Eden to WSC, Apr 20, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 70 Weizmann to WSC, May 18, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 71 Weizmann's *aide-mémoire* on a meeting with FDR, Jun 11, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 72 O Stanley to F Brown, Jul 24, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 73 See note 63.
- 74 Amery diary, Jul 2, 1943.
- 75 Weizmann to WSC, July 21, 1943 (PREM.4.52/3).
- 76 *Ibid.*, and Martin to Weizmann, Jul 28, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 77 Weizmann to Bracken, Jul 27, 1943; copied to J Martin (PREM.4.52/3).
- 78 Martin to WSC, Oct 29, 1943; minute Martin to J Peck thereon (PREM.4.52/3).
- 79 Mason-Macfarlane to WSC, Jul 5, 00:05 A.M. (Portal's files, AIR.8/779, 'Death of Sikorski'); the plane had crashed at 11:15 P.M., so this was a very swift report. A telegram from HQ RAF Gibraltar to the Air Ministry stated that the four bodies were those of Sikorski, Klimecki, Whitley, and Pinder. Mason-Macfarlane's telegram to the Polish president reporting the crash, Jul 5, 1943, is in FO.371/34614b, now labelled 'Death of General Sikorski.' This was not the FO's original title for this file: unusually, in the current PRO guide to record-series FO.371 the last four or five entries on this page including those for pieces 34614a and 34614b were retyped and pasted-over so as to obliterate the original file titles. The prime minister's own 1943 files on Poland so far released (PREM.3/351–8) do not include any on the general's death. We have also used a number of items from files still held (1967) at Government House, Gibraltar, including folder 222/1943, 'Death of General Sikorski.'
- 80 Air HQ, Gibraltar, Intelligence Section, 'Flying from the Rock,' Aug 1945; this study regretted that the crash had focused 'unwarranted' attention on the airstrip's safety. Our examination of the controller's log book preserved at Air Traffic Control Gibraltar revealed that the page covering this crash had been torn out.
- 81 RAF Gibraltar (North Front), Operations Record Book (ORB), 1943 (AIR.28/306, and /1035–1038); and appendices (/310). The 'Mae West' mystery was mentioned in the Inquiry (see note 93) by several witnesses testifying on oath, and by the governor of Gibraltar in a five-page MS dated Jul 18, 1945 which we first found (see our website <http://www.fpp.co.uk/Legal/Discovery/DI/1858.html>). The pilot could not have strapped it on in the 17 seconds that his plane was airborne. Rather than explain why he wore it this time on takeoff (there may have been a relatively innocent explanation), Prchal denied it.
- 82 Search operations were conducted from RAF Gibraltar (New Camp): ORB, May 1942–Sep 1944 (AIR.28/303–4). The two

- unauthorised passengers were W H Lock and Harry Pinder. Lock was said to be from the Ministry of War Transport; Pinder was a former naval telegraphist who ran a Newcastle pub before 1939, behind which he also ran a school for training radio-operators. With the outbreak of war, he was arrested on charges of possessing foreign currency (he had a one-billion Reichsmark note framed behind the bar) and 'transmitting secret information' to the enemy. After being detained again under Regulation 18B he was released again to 'help the war effort' (Letter from ERD'Alessio, Jul 15, 1977). The *Navy List* shows him as a Warrant Telegraphist, seniority of May 4, 1934. A colleague, Lieut.-Commander John Lawn, described Pinder in a letter to us of Jun 26, 1969 as a wireless officer in the Fleet. Ludwik Lubienski, Polish liaison officer in Gibraltar, described him however under Polish interrogation, Dec 9, 1943, as being 'in fact Head of the British Intelligence Service in the Middle East.' His body was not found.
- 83 WSC to Helena Sikorska, Jul 5, 1943, published in *Leader of a Nation at War. The Posthumous Homage of 'The Voice of Poland'* (Glasgow, 1943); full text in David Irving, *Accident. The Death of General Sikorski* (London, 1967).
- 84 Halifax diary, Jul 5, 1943 (Hickleton papers, A.7.8.13).
- 85 Halifax diary, Jul 6 (*Ibid.*). Churchill's war minister, P J Grigg, who witnessed the crash, told Gen. Macready that he blamed pilot error (*ibid.*, Jul 12, 1943).
- 86 Minute by D Allen, Jul 15, 1943 (FO.371/34614b).
- 87 Lord Killearn, to FO, Cairo, Jul 8, 1943 (FO.371/34614b).
- 88 Our interview of Helena Sikorska, Jun 26, 1966.
- 89 Ministry of Information, Home Intelligence Report, No. 145, Jul 15, 1943 (CAB.121/106).
- 90 Letter by Eric Seal (WSC's PPS, 1939-41), in *The Times*, Jan 3, 1969.
- 91 Letter by John Colville, Ian Jacob, John Martin, John Peck, Lord Portal, and Leslie Rowan, in *The Times*, Jan 2, 1969. Patrick Howarth, the S.O.E. officer responsible for all activities connected with the Poles in the Mediterranean theatre, wrote in *The Daily Telegraph* on Feb 17, 1972 that while he did not exclude the possibility of foul play, S.O.E. was not involved.
- 92 Diary of Lieut.-Col. Erwin Lahousen, chief of *Abwehr II* (our microfilm DI-43).
- 93 This was not the first incident involving the general. An incendiary device had been found aboard his plane, flying to the United States on March 21, 1942. Halifax diary, May 14, 1942; the balance of evidence suggests that it was planted by a certain deranged Polish officer. Sumner Welles subsequently stated the belief that the Jul 1943 crash was caused by sabotage (*The Katyn Forest Massacre, Congressional Hearings*, 2080). The RAF Court of Inquiry found that the plane crashed for indeterminate reasons (the transcript is in our collection; in the Sikorski institute archives, London; and the files of the Vice-Chief of Air Staff, AIR.2/9234); Portal's dossier on the crash is AIR.8/779; another file is in ACAS papers, AIR.20/5411. The Inquiry cleared the Czech pilot Edward Prchal of blame; in the 1970s he agreed to place his papers in the Hoover Library, but shortly before his death in California a few years later, of cancer, he revoked the gift; he is buried in the Czech section of Brookwood in England.
- 94 Sinclair to Ivor Thomas, MP, Feb 21, 1945 (AIR.19/320).

- 95 Hansard, *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 390, cols. 1946–1950, Jul 6, 1943.
- 96 A V Alexander to WSC, Jul 14; and C Wallworth to Rowan, Jul 18, 1943 (FO.371/34614b).
- 97 Rowan to V G Lawford, Jul 16, 1943. The FO drafted WSC's response to the Polish president (FO.371/34614b).
- 98 Rowan to R S Crawford, Jul 17, 1943 (AIR.8/779, 'Death of Sikorski').
- 99 WSC to Portal, M.480/3, Jul 18; Portal's reply, Jul 18: he 'understood' that a bracket controlling the tail elevators had been found to be fractured and sent to RAE Farnborough on Jul 12, where experts were still investigating whether this was because of metal fatigue or impact damage (Chief of Air Staff's files, AIR.8/779, 'Death of Sikorski'). There is no reference to this in the Inquiry. On Jul 22 the Vice-CAS signalled to Air Cdre Simpson that the Chief Inspector of Accidents at RAE had now signalled details of the findings to Flight Lieut. John W Buck, who was investigating on the spot (*ibid.*).
Air Marshal Sir John Slessor wrote to Air Marshal Sir Douglas Evill on Jul 28, 1943, 'I don't think that there is any question of sabotage, though I am not altogether happy about the evidence of the guards from the King's Regiment [at Gibraltar]. For instance one fellow who was acting as sentry admits that another witness got into the aircraft at about 7 o'clock in the morning without being observed' (AIR.20/5411).
- 100 F K Roberts, minute, Sep 20, 1943 (FO.371/34614b).
- 101 When we published our 1967 book *Accident*, Harold Wilson's government opened a file; apart from a number of items withdrawn for security reasons, this is now in the public domain, PREM. 13/2644: 'Death of General Sikorski.'
- 102 So she told us. But on Dec 3, 1944 WSC sent her this telegram: 'I thank you most sincerely for the kindness of your message. I often think of your wise and heroic husband. Winston Churchill' (copy in our collection).
- 103 Our interview of Helena Sikorska and Mme Olga Lisiewicz, Jun 26, 1966.
- 104 Cadogan diary, Jul 5, 1943: 'This is a great blow. There's *no-one* to take his place.'
- 105 Joseph Retinger's notes, edited by John Pomian: *Memoirs of an Eminence Grise* (Sussex Univ. Press, 1971), 140.
- 106 *Ibid.*, 144. Cf. Raczynski, *op. cit.*, 151. PM's card, Jul 5, 1943.
- 107 See the British record of the Moscow Oct 1944 discussions, TOLSTOY (PREM.3/434/2; see also PREM.3/66/7, 'Spheres of Influence in the Balkans'), and Warren F Kimball's essay, 'Churchill and Roosevelt: The Personal Equation,' in *Prologue*, Washington DC, Fall 1974, 169ff: here, 171.
- 108 PM's card, Jul 6, 1943.
- 109 Raczynski, *op. cit.*, 151. Romer's papers at the Canadian National Archives are an important archival source for our vol. iii.
- 110 Selborne to Eden, Aug 12; D Allen minute, Aug 26; Victor Cavendish Bentinck, Aug 23; Law to Selborne, Aug 30, 1943 (FO.371/34551).
- 111 'Report on Meeting between Premier Mikolajczyk and Prime Minister Churchill in the presence of Dr J H Retinger, Jul 21, 1943, 3 P.M.,' in Polish (Hoover Library, Papers of Stanislas Mikolajczyk). Rather mysteriously, the transcript ends: 'M [Mikolajczyk] requested a very firm stand from the British in this respect, emphasising the gratitude due for saving B's life.'
- 112 Count Edward Raczynski, *In Allied Lon-*

- don* (London, 1962), 159f.
- 113 Eden diary, Jul 20, 1943; Eden, *Reckoning*, 399.
- 114 John Martin letter home, Jul 25, 1943 (copy in our possession).
- 116 Cadogan diary, Jul 7, 1943.
- 117 Ministry of Information, Home Intelligence Report, No. 145, Jul 15, 1943 (CAB.121/106).
- 118 WSC to Stalin, Jul 8, 1943 in *Stalin–WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, No. 168. Churchill wrote: ‘It [HUSKY] comprises the overseas movement of half a million men in which sixteen hundred large ships and twelve hundred special landing vessels are employed.’
- 119 Stalin to WSC, Jun 24, 26, Aug 9; replies, Jun 27, Jul 8, 10, 1943 in *Stalin–WSC Correspondence*, vol. i, Nos. 165–70.
- 120 Harriman to Hopkins, Jul 22, 1943 (Hopkins papers, box 329, ‘QUADRANT’).
- on Feb 9, 1942 (HW.1/378).
- 5 Summary of intercepts by GC&CS Naval Section, Feb 20, 1942: ‘Mining of Scharnhorst and Gneisenau’ (HW.1/382).
- 6 C to WSC, Mar 20; and BJ No. 102,443, Oshima to Tokyo, No. 378, Mar 17, translated Mar 20. The next page, addressed to C from an SIS official on Mar 20, reads: ‘The Director. President Roosevelt has asked that this message should be shown to the Prime Minister. [sgd.] E EARNSHAW SMITH’ (HW.1/429). There is a very similar item in HW.1/431, C to WSC, Mar 21, 1942: FDR wants him to see BJ No. 102,473, titled, ‘GERMAN WAR PLANS: JAPANESE AMBASSADOR, BERLIN, SEES RIBBENTROP.’ The white slip glued to this intercept reads: ‘The Director. President Roosevelt has asked that this message shall be brought to the notice of the Prime Minister. [sgd.:] R J H JENKINS, GC&CS.’
- 7 C to WSC, C/5389, Jan 20, 1944 (HW.1/2344).
- 8 Roosevelt’s message is dated ‘Dec 19, 1943,’ perhaps an error for Jan 1944.
- 9 C to Washington, CXG.395, Jan 22, with para. 6 of Tel. No. 545, WSC to FDR, Jan 16, 1944 (HW.1/2344).
- 10 Rowan to WSC, Jun 28, 1944 (CAB.163/10).
- 11 Turkish minister in Budapest to Ankara, No. 108, Jul. 7; BJ No. 133,668: July 14, 1944 (HW.1/3084).
- 12 Prof. Warren F Kimball, ‘Churchill and Roosevelt: The Personal Equation,’ in *Prologue*, Washington, Fall 1974; and his collection *Churchill & Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence*, especially vol. i at pages xix–xxii, where Kimball summarises his own conclusions about the ‘completeness’ of the correspondence. He believes that both may have ordered telephone censors not to transcribe the conversations.

Appendices I – III

- 1 See the illuminating JIC file resulting from this weeding operation, CAB.163/12, released in 2000. In 1960 after US–UK exchanges on the WSC–Roosevelt correspondence ‘involving messages carrying the wartime codeword’ – like some fearsome deity, the word ULTRA was never to be mentioned – GCHQ examined the entire No. 10 file of WSC’s papers and removed fifty-five items containing wartime special intelligence. In 1963 twelve more items were removed from the Chartwell Trust papers.
- 2 Morton to WSC, Jul 22, 1940 (PREM.7/7).
- 3 Memo by Adolph Berle, Mar 10, 1942, state department file 841.20211/36.
- 4 Oshima to Togo, No. 80, Jan 18, translated as BJ No. 101,022, Feb 8, shown to WSC

- 13 War Cabinet, Confidential, 'Panel on Security Arrangements in Government Departments,' Fifth Report, Aug 12, 1942.
- 14 BBC Radio Four interview of Ruth Ive, 'Listening in to History,' Apr 21, 1990.
- 15 Knox to FDR, Oct 23, 1943 (FDR Libr., PSF.4695). See page 781 above for Fenn's transcript of the WSC–Eden conversation of May 21, 1943, which we surfaced from state department files in 1977 (NA, state department file 851.00/5-2143).
- 16 Office of Censorship, Administrative Subject files Manual, Aug 15, 1943; this lists several relevant boxes, including Nos. 61, 62, 65, and 66, Foreign Govt. Agencies (British); and unnumbered boxes relating to O12-c/4, Radiotelephone & Radiotelegraph, 'US–British agreement on radiotelephone calls'; transcripts of telephone conversations (see Manual, 54); Québec conf., and Roosevelt–Churchill, and Roosevelt–Stalin (Manual, 68).
- 17 Prof. Harold Deutsch to us, Mar 26, 1979.
- 18 SS *Gruppenführer* Gottlob Berger to Heinrich Himmler, Apr 9, and reply, Apr 14, 1942 (Himmler files, NA microfilm T175, roll 125, 9917, 9924ff).
- 19 Berger to Himmler's secretary Rudolf Brandt, May 21, 1942 (NA microfilm T175, roll 139, 7377f).
- 20 Berger to Himmler, Jul 20, 1942 (NA microfilm T175, roll 117, 2481).
- 21 *Forschungsanstalt der Deutschen Reichspost* to Berger, Jul 23, 8:43 A.M.; forwarded by SS *Hauptamt* to Führer headquarters, Karl Wolff, 10:50 'mit der Bitte um Vorlage beim Führer.' Returned on Aug 13, 1942 (Himmler files, NA Microfilm T175, roll 122, 7449ff).
- 22 See too Goebbels diary, Sep 11, 1943, pages 27–28.
- 23 E S Herbert, Director, Postal and Telegraph Censorship, to the war office, July 5, 1940 (National Archives of Canada, RG.24, vol.12,430, 'Transatlantic Telephone Calls').
- 24 Byron Price, Director, Office of Censorship, to Stephen Early (of FDR's staff), Jan 23, 1942 (NA, RG.216, Office of Censorship, O12-c/4; see note 16).
- 25 Herbert to Price, Feb 21, 1942 (*ibid.*).
- 26 Ditto, Feb 24, 1942 (*ibid.*). Holograph note: 'Hassett telephoned from White House Feb 26, 1942, saying Okay. BP'.
- 27 Price to [Capt. Fenn], Mar 28, 1942 (*ibid.*).
- 28 Price to Charles de Graz, Nov 27, 1943 (*ibid.*).
- 29 Frederic Hudd, of High Commissioner's Office, Canada House, London, to Senior Officer, Canadian Military HQ: 'Transatlantic Radio telephone,' Apr 8, 1942 (see note 23).
- 30 The Canadian list was short: generals A G L McNaughton, H D G Crerar, and P J Montague, Group Capt. Walsh (list dated Oct 26, 1941).
- 31 War Cabinet, 'Panel on Security Arrangements in Government Departments,' Fifth Report, Aug 12, 1942.
- 32 WSC to Eden, Oct 12, 1942, M.440/2 (CAB.120/767: 'Transatlantic radiotelephone').
- 33 Major-Gen. P J Montague to the High Commissioner, Oct 2, 1942 (see note 23).
- 34 Henry Maine (FO, Room 17) to Sir Edwin Herbert, Feb 25, 1943 (DEFE.1/391).
- 35 Patents No. 3,967,066, awarded to Bell's Robert C Mathes, and No. 3,967,067, to Bell's Ralph K Potter. See *The New York Times*, Jul 3, 1976. 'The speech was encoded with electronic pulses called "key signals" and transmitted by short-wave radio. At the receiving end the key signals

- were subtracted and the listener heard only the clear message.' The recipient had to start simultaneously the identical phonograph disc of the key-signal pattern being transmitted. Discs were changed every day.
- 36 Ismay to WSC, Feb 16, 1943 (CAB.120/768). Turing warned that as the electronic speech translation system being used by the Bell system (project X-61753) depended on a numerical code, 'any standard deciphering process can be applied.' American control meant that they could listen in to their heart's desire (Joint Staff Mission to war cabinet, Feb 20, 1943, *ibid.*).
- 37 Dr Robert Price, citing documents of the 805th Signal Service Company, in *IEEE Transactions on Communications*, vol. COM-31, No. 1, Jan 1983. See William R Bennett, 'Secret Telephony and Spread-Spectrum Communication,' on pages 98ff of the same issue, and especially David Kahn, 'Cryptology and the origins of spread spectrum,' in *Spectrum*, Sep 1984, 70ff.
- 38 Stimson to FDR, Aug 4, 1943: Brief report on certain features of overseas trip (FDR Libr., FDR papers).
- 39 Ismay to WSC, Apr 28, 1943 (CAB.120/768).
- 40 H Redman to Adm. Sir P Noble, Gen. G N Macready, and Air Marshal Sir William Welsh, Jul 27, 1943 (CAB.122/293).
- 41 Hollis to Ismay, Oct 14, 1943 (CAB.120/768).
- 42 OKW War Diary, July 31, 1943. See our vol. iii.
- 43 War department, AGO, to all concerned, Jul 9, 1943 (CAB.122/293). The US authorities offered to users a record of each conversation 'upon application to the War Department Classified Message Center,' as a subtle warning that they were recording all conversations on the link. There was an authorised list of users at each end, to which the chiefs of staff occasionally added names: e.g., COS (43) 118th meeting, Jul 26, 1943.
- 44 Hopkins memo, Oct 7, 1943 (FDR Libr., Hopkins papers, box 299).
- 45 Hopkins to Adm. Brown, Oct 8 (*ibid.*, Hopkins papers, 'Churchill').
- 46 McCarthy to Hopkins, Oct 12 (*ibid.*).
- 47 *Ibid.*
- 48 F D L B[rown] to [John] Martin, Oct 9; and to E Bridges, Oct 11; WSC handwritten note, Oct 11, 1943 (PREM.4/69/2). For other WSC documents on the 'transatlantic X-RAY telephone' see e.g., COS (45) 123, Jan 14, 1945: 'X-RAY service' in CAB.120/768.
- 49 US military attaché London, to war dept., with message Winant to Marshall containing WSC letter Dec 10, 1945 (George C Marshall Research Libr., Lexington, Virginia: Marshall papers, box 61, folder 11). The original, dated Dec 9, inserts 'even before ARGENTIA' in WSC's handwriting (NA, RG.84, Winant papers). Halifax reported to the FO, Dec 17, that Marshall testified to the Congress 'that he had warned both the late President and Mr Churchill to be extremely careful when using the transatlantic telephone not to speak openly of MAGIC information since it was easy for the Germans to tap the telephone' (FO.371/44667).
- 50 Marshall to Winant for WSC, WAR-88381, from war dept., 131628z, [Dec] 13, 1945 (*ibid.*, and RG.165, Records of war dept. General and Special Staffs, G-2, US Mil. Attaché, London, 'PRIME-POTUS communications'; and Winant's files, RG.84, box 28, 'London conf. files, 1945').

- 51 Brig. Gen. R B Lovett to Winant, 'Establishment of secret overseas radio telephone service,' Mar 29, 1945 (NA, RG.84, box 33, 'London conf. files, 1945'). One transcript would be sent by 8:30 A.M. next morning to the Secretary of General Staff, ETOUSA and to the conversation partners, and all notes and electrical recordings would then be destroyed.
- 52 Phone conversations, Sep 30, 1943, between Devers, Bradley, and others (Eisenhower Libr., Raymond Barker papers, box 1); on Aug 14, 1943 (with Somervell at Québec conf.), and on Aug 25, 1944 (NA, RG.160, Records of Army Service Forces, Phone Calls, 1943). In RG.165, Records of War Dept. General and Special Staffs, a file 'Docs Nos. 3-38 incl. Long Distance Telephone Conversation Apr 11 and 29, 1945' has been withdrawn by the NSA.
- 53 Eben A Ayers diary, Apr 25, 1945 (Truman Libr., Ayers papers).
- 54 Excerpt of conversation, Truman-WSC, Apr 25, 1945 (Truman Libr., Naval Aide files, box 6, Berlin Conference, Meetings of Heads of State); the original was filed in 'MR. 370 Germany,' indicating that transcripts might be found in Truman's Map Room files (but they were not). See Leahy, *I Was There*, 359-363. The 11-page transcript is published in FRUS, 1945, iii, 762.
- 55 Sir Burke Trend to Harold Wilson; with attached Memo by Intelligence Coordinator, TOP SECRET [Feb 1969]: 'Irving is a young and prolific British historian, with known Fascist leanings. He has published other books on the war which are critical of British leadership and tend to show the Germans in a good light.' And: 'There are various grounds for suspecting, but no real proof, that Hochhuth's and Irving's activities are part of a long-term Soviet "disinformation" operation against the West' (PREM.13/2644).

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WSC and FDR are used as abbreviations for Churchill and Roosevelt. People with military or honorific titles are accorded the one current in this volume.

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