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War Against Allies

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War against Allies

Senior Project submitted to
The Division of Social Studies
Of Bard College
By
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Annandale-on-Hudson,

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Abstract

The end of the Second World War was brought about by the combined efforts of the Grand Alliance between President Franklin D. Roosevelt of the United States, Prime Minister Winston Churchill of Great Britain and Marshal Joseph Stalin of the Soviet Union. Even though the Allies of the Second World War were one of the few examples of successful alliance throughout history, the alliance was not formed simply for the greater good of humanity but one of necessity. Beneath the atmosphere of cooperation, each leader aimed to satisfy the war aims of their own but despite their differences. However, none was allowed or willing to set aside the differences as national interests were at stake. My work will examine the interactions between the leaders of the three nations and how they fight among themselves to get their way while at the same time trying to win against a common foe. Before the three successfully defeated their enemy or even fought one, they waged their own war on the table to protect their national interests against their own allies.

Table of Contents

Prelude.....	1
Chapter I.....	4
Chapter II.....	23
Chapter III.....	42
Epilogue.....	67
References.....	73

Prelude

On the 28th of June, 1919, the First World War ended and Treaty of Versailles was signed. The treaty was thought to bring an end to the era of war while the aggressor, Germany had their Carthaginian peace as a price of its crime. This 'peace' treaty ironically was the cause of the Second World War just a few decades later. It was not long until Germany was not able to take the punishment quietly any longer. During the difficult times in Germany, a young Austrian, Adolf Hitler, quickly ascended into a position of power. Beginning in 1933, the fuhrer of Nazi Germany mobilized Germany for war, breaking the silence and the treaty. By 1936, Nazi Germany formed an Alliance with Fascist Italy lead by Benito Mussolini as war torn Europe watched in terror. By 1938, Hitler was also joined by the Japanese Empire. By 1939, The Red Tsar of the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin signed a nonaggression pact with Hitler. The future was looking Grim for both Europe and the Pacific.

Far removed from the conflict, war was not the concern of an average American. Initially, the United States' primary concerns were their economy. In 1933, Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected president due to his promise to solve the social and economic problems of the Great Depression left behind by President Harding before him. Be that as it may, the president, however, was not ignorant to Hitler's growing power. The evolution of American involvement in World War II began with Roosevelt's genuine concern about the German expansion to him figuring out a better way to maintain world peace.

His first interactions with the notorious Fuhrer were even before Prime Minister Winston Churchill began writing Roosevelt their first of the many letters. As early as 1938, Roosevelt even tried to no avail to discourage Hitler from attacking the Rhineland which was a part of the prelude to the Second World War. As the conflict raged on, Roosevelt was not able to become

overly involved as the United States prioritized its neutral status. The American aid policy to Great Britain prior to the Lend-Lease Acts was simply an agreement to trade arms with one another.

After the fall of France, Churchill needed more support from the United States as Great Britain was too low on cash to make any purchase.¹ The escalation in the degree of involvement was caused by necessity. Lend-Lease was then created along with its controversy among the public. By the time Churchill was desperate to travel to the United States in August, 1941; Great Britain had already been bombarded by the German Luftwaffe during the Blitzkrieg. France was defeated, Spain was having a civil war, Italy joined Hitler and Great Britain barely survived the bombing. At that point, it was clear that Hitler could no longer be stopped by Europe alone without support. Fortunately, by the time Churchill arrived, Stalin and Hitler, two of the most powerful nations already broke their relations and fought one another. With Russia highly likely to cooperate in fighting the Germans, there finally was hope for those who aimed to survive against Hitler.

Over the course of the Second World War, three ideological enemies clashed among one another just to make sure they survive the Axis atrocities. The turn of events brought the three unlikely nations together out of sheer desperation. The anti-Bolshevik British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, an anti-imperialist American President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Red Tsar of the Communist, Premier Joseph Stalin of the Soviet Union was to somehow jointly complete the prime objective of defeating Hitler. The three had their own ideas of effective strategies and different conditions for them to work, the compromises had to be made and some sacrifices were necessary. And through years of in fighting on the tables, and The Second World War was won on the field of battle. Beneath the atmosphere of cooperation in the eyes of the

¹ Harriman, Averell W., *Special Envoy to Churchill and Stalin, 1941-1946*, p. 56

public was the battle of wits, deception and manipulation to get one another to follow the strategy that benefitted one's nation alone.

Though the three aimed to see the demise of Hitler, their reasons were different. Churchill aimed to ensure the survival of Great Britain as well as her oversea territories. Therefore his basic strategies were aiming towards reestablishing controls of these regions as well as fighting Hitler resulting in a less direct approach to defeat him. Roosevelt aimed to ultimately be rid of old peacekeeping systems that never seemed to work namely the sphere of influence and the balance of power. His strategies were aimed towards minimizing the capturing of unnecessary territories that would complicate their eventual liberation in preparation for his postwar peace plans, the United Nations. Stalin cared little for much else but the future of Russia. His strategies were aimed only towards ending the war quickly and establishing an effective sphere of influence to act as a buffer zone to protect Soviet Russia from future attacks.

The three polar opposites were to somehow work together against enemies who shared similar ideologies with one another. As history had proven, through incredible amount of loss of both lives and properties, the Allies emerged victorious in a seemingly hopeless situation as they were on the losing side when it began. War was won thanks to the architects of victory waging war among themselves during the war in which they would continue to do for peace.

Chapter I: The Herald

Being an ocean apart from the conflict, the most immediate concern for the United States was not in Europe during the period between in 1939 but the economy. The United States suffered some economic losses after the First World War, prompting President Warren G. Harding to push for the call for normalcy removing high wartime taxes in 1920 thus, stimulated economy by leaving more money in the hands of the people which encouraged spending. So began the prosperous period known as the Roaring Twenties. Unfortunately, as explosive as the economy was rose, the American economy fell to pieces in a heartbeat. The economic bubble began forming in the early 1920s until it busted when the productions became so massive that no amount of consumption can ever match it, leading up to the economic decline in 1929.

For once, the nation united under the struggle which everybody shared. Every political faction set aside their differences for the time being and demanded that the President must do anything that was necessary to fix the problems. Franklin Delano Roosevelt won his first presidential election in 1932. Roosevelt spent his first few months in office coming up with answers to fix the economic mess that the United States was in. His relief, recovery and reform program was known as the New Deal was considered highly progressive during its time. Even then some of his ideas were also much more progressive even by New Deal standard and some of the American public was not ready for them.² This skepticism resulted in the president himself becoming a subject of many controversies to the eyes of the public, the notion which soon became somewhat significant when the United States became involved in the conflict overseas during his third term and the president needed the public confidence.

² One of them being the Social Security program which remained controversial even to this day

While there were many issues present in the domestic front, the sparks of conflict had been present in Europe ever since the earliest days of Roosevelt's presidency. The rise of Hitler did not escape the president's attention. His first interactions with the notorious Fuhrer were even before Prime Minister Churchill began writing Roosevelt their first of the many letters. As early as 1938, Roosevelt was already communicating with Hitler concerning his idea of invading the Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia which Hitler assured that the future of the region also depended on the will of its government, a promise that history proved to be false. Despite being a great distance from the conflict, the growing war potential of Nazi Germany had always been President Roosevelt's concern.

The British prime minister had been in contact with the president of the United States from as early as 1939. They have written each other over 1900 letters and telegrams over the span of the six years spent in contact with one another.³ Despite the criticism regarding neutrality, Roosevelt felt that the coming war in Europe would not only have been a war of military conquest but also one of ideologies. The president knew that his actions might have jeopardized the neutral status of the United States but he still felt that it was necessary to aid Great Britain against Germany. He saw the possibility of the world being dominated by the mighty Axis powers had Great Britain been defeated and the United States remained unprepared both mentally and materially. He felt that American intervention was necessary to end the conflict and strive towards the future of peace.⁴

While the president was concerned about the crisis in Europe and many Americans were more or less sympathetic towards the Europeans, they also had more immediate concerns at the time. As mentioned earlier, an average American person was much more concerned about

³ Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence, Vol. I*, p. 3

⁴ Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 72

whether or not they or their family would starve. Additionally, most people who were alive during the Great depression were also alive during the First World War; some even fought and survived it. With the two reasons, the American public was leaning towards isolationism.⁵ The earlier public opinion preferred the government to spend their effort improving the domestic economy not fighting foreign enemies. One of Roosevelt's campaigning speeches was a promise that no Americans was going to war.

Despite his promise to the American people, Roosevelt still felt that funding Great Britain was necessary to prevent the possibility of war reaching the United States and by then the American people would truly be at war and would be unprepared at that.⁶ Strategic bombing by Nazi bombers almost defeated Great Britain during the Blitzkrieg. The United Kingdom required some substantial support or it would have fallen. On March 11, 1941, the United States took a first subtle yet significant step away from isolationism by passing the Lend Lease Act. The legislation allowed the United States to support the British war efforts without actually going against the Neutrality Acts. Ever since then, the United States had been supplying Great Britain with not only military equipment to fight against the Germans but also providing considerable amount logistical support to contribute to their war effort without American combatants actually being involved.

While the Roosevelt did not violate the Neutrality Act in words, he did in spirit because endorsing a side, let alone financially supporting it, was contradictory to the very concept of neutrality. The result of passing the Lend-Lease Acts also subjected Roosevelt to the skepticism of the American people in which he replied with his famous fire on the neighbor's house analogy as in he was simply lending the supplies to a nation struggling in war much similarly to an act of

⁵ McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia, 1941-46*, p. 3

⁶ Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 82

a neighbor lending a gardening hose to put out the fire before it reaches his own house.

Roosevelt's analogy faced the counterargument from his Republican oppositions that Lend-Lease was, realistically, more of a situation of lending a chewing gum to someone meaning that the supplies being sent over to Great Britain were not likely to be returned.⁷

In addition to supporting Great Britain, Roosevelt also expressed his disapproval towards the Axis by hindering their finance. In effect, this action made the United States the enemy of the Axis which moved the United States even further away from neutrality. The United States began freezing the assets of Germany and Italy on June 14, 1941 and then froze Japanese assets on July 26, 1941 in the US territories.⁸ On August 14th, 1941, Roosevelt and Churchill announced the Atlantic Charter, the document containing the passages declaring the cooperation between the United States and Great Britain in which Roosevelt and Churchill signed. As a result, Roosevelt led the United States away from isolationism even further. The action, as one would expect, was not well-received as the president himself became subjected to numerous criticisms from his political opponents as well as the already skeptical public.

The making of the Atlantic Charter itself involved many conflicting opinions regarding each nation's interests. Even though, it signified the cooperation between the United States and Great Britain along with other allied nations, the document contained their mutual principles and the agreements on the post war situations. The principles were no territorial gains were to be sought any Allied members; all people had a right to self-determination; getting rid of trade barriers and advocating for freedom of the seas, making way for a global economy; aggressor nations were to be disarmed and remained so afterwards. The document went through many revisions until the final document was issued on August 14, 1941.

⁷ Burns, *Roosevelt, The Soldier of Freedom*, p. 26, Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 74

⁸ Divine, *The Reluctant Belligerent*, p. 121

As far as the public were concerned, this level of American involvement in the war was about the limit. The United States, through Roosevelt, was supplying another nation fighting their own war⁹ and was hindering the economy of their enemies. As an isolationist nation, these actions were way over the line but in order to end the conflict before it was too late, Roosevelt felt they must move on. In addition to hindering Japan's finance, the president also placed an oil embargo on them despite his advisors' protest.¹⁰ Japan was constantly short on resources which was the very reason why they invaded China along with the Indochina regions in the first place. Their assets being frozen in the United States along with the American presence in the West Pacific region directly threatened their survival. The United States was freed from its position of ambiguity by the bombing of Pearl Harbor by Imperial Japan on December 7th, 1941.

The bombing of Pearl Harbor was meant to discourage the American presence in Southeast Asia but it had the opposite effect because that brought to light the notion that they were capable of attacking the United States to the public. The American people thought that the span of an ocean on each side would have provided sufficient natural protection from the war so that they would be able to work on fixing their economy peacefully. The American public was devastated and shocked by the loss at the naval base in Pearl Harbor. It did not take long for their collective grief to turn into rage, uniting the entire nation against the aggressor.¹¹ The public opinion demanded that Japan pays for her crime. Earlier in the year, Nazi Germany also betrayed Stalin by launching operation Barbarossa invading Soviet Russia on June 22, 1941 despite the non-aggression pact they signed. The United States and the Soviet Union joined the ranks of Great Britain in the Second World War in this fashion.

⁹ Larrabee, *Roosevelt, Commander in Chief*, p. 82

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 91-92

¹¹ McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia, 1941-46*, p. 5

Despite what the United States Government claimed, Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor was not unprovoked. Roosevelt expected the attack to happen and intended to not prevent it.¹² While declaring the United States neutral, Roosevelt had been actively supplying enemies of Germany. When Stalin and Hitler became enemies after operation Barbarossa, Roosevelt began supplying Stalin whom only a month earlier was his enemy.¹³ Hitler also realized that to be the case but he deemed those actions as mere annoyances and not real threats. As Roosevelt learned through the decoder "Magic" that Germany assured Japan that it would go to war with the United States if Japan "became engaged in war with the United States..."¹⁴ Roosevelt then turned to apply some pressure on Japan by not only froze their assets in the United States but also imposed an oil embargo on Japan.¹⁵

By necessity, Japan took the bait as a chance of survival.¹⁶ On December 8, 1941, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7; the United States declared war on Japan with Roosevelt giving his "Day of Infamy" speech to the public. Initially, there was an issue that the United States were at war with only Japan but not the Axis. Therefore, the United States still was not able to engage in war with Nazi Germany but Hitler fixed it before it actually became an issue. By the time of the attack on Pearl Harbor, whether or the United States wanted to join the war was not up for the question anymore, Hitler already saw American equipment on the fields, confirming their wish to enter the conflict. Additionally, Hitler believed that by helping Japan defeat the United States quickly the Japanese would, in return, help Germany beat Stalin in a pincer attack from his flank and through China.

¹² Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 334

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 218-219

¹⁴ Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins, an Intimate History*, p. 440

¹⁵ Divine, *The Reluctant Belligerent*, p. 121

¹⁶ Fleming, *The New Dealers' War*, p. 47-48

With all considered, Hitler and Mussolini declared war on the United States.¹⁷ Roosevelt then sent a telegram to Churchill on December 8, 1941 informing him that they were all “in the same boat,” which the prime minister replied the day after.¹⁸ The help that the United States was providing Great Britain and the Soviet Union no longer needed to be indirect or subtle because the unprovoked attack on the Hawaiian naval base provided just enough justification to bypass the Neutrality act and be directly involved in war without further angering the public. Not long after receiving words from Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill, arrived December 22, 1941, to Washington for the First Washington Conference to discuss their joint plans.

Unlike the two leaders who were in contact for a two years prior to their meeting, it took a while for the British Chiefs of Staffs (the BCOS) and the American Chiefs of Staffs (the JCS) to warm up to one another. Aside from fundamental differences within their chains of command and negative attitudes for one another, the war aims for both sides were quite different and, worse yet, they conflicted. The United States had a special disdain for imperialism and their global influence and Great Britain aimed to maintain its empire. The two party had a minor clash when they were discussing the Pacific theatre as the United States could not have cared any less if Great Britain lost Malaya, Burma or India, their aim was to build up a position strong enough to push Japan back to their isles.

Another issue within the United States was that Roosevelt lacked the experience of working with his military personnel because he spent his entire presidency leading up to that moment addressing domestic policies not at all related to the military. Unlike the Churchill, who, combined with his patronizing personality, was very much involved in all levels of planning with

¹⁷ Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 352

¹⁸ Churchill, *The Second World War III: The Grand Alliance*, p. 608-609, Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 340

his chiefs, Roosevelt was the type who focuses on the bigger picture and let his subordinates work out the details, limiting his connection with them on multiple levels.¹⁹

The lack of connection also instilled doubts among his staffs. The American Chief of Staff George C. Marshall was worried about the president being too influenced by a seasoned politician such as Churchill and Roosevelt, as a result of that distrust, believed that Marshall simply had no faith in his judgment when they came to a disagreement. The two was not able to fully appreciate one another's points of view led to the two thinking very differently over time. Roosevelt resembled Churchill because their mutual political awareness while Marshall was thinking in terms of effective strategies. As Marshall was assuming that Roosevelt was simply following Churchill's advices and not his while Roosevelt was bothered by Marshall's lack of faith in him, their differences grew.

Though never agreeing with one another, the two, nevertheless, had mutual respect for one another. They complimented each other well as they were both experts of what they do, they played their role well. After all, they managed to appeal to the public and win a war at the same time. That, however, was the end result of the Second World War. As of 1941, the mutual distrust between Marshall and Roosevelt as well as their lack of connection led them to agree on broad principles but mostly disagreed on the specifics in 1942. However, for the Allied effort in the Pacific in 1941, no specifics were discussed; therefore the disaster was caused purely by the lack of the specifics being discussed between the United States and Great Britain.

Prior to his arrival for the First Washington Conference, Churchill sent three messages from the Duke of York containing three main ideas to be discussed in the conference. First, the matter concerned with the occupation of North African and Middle Eastern regions from Dakar

¹⁹ Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins, an Intimate History*, p. 446

to Turkey possibly with the help of de Gaulle and the Free French.²⁰ Second, idea concerned with the control over Southeast Asia and the third was the “Europe First” Strategy.²¹ The tactic to test the United States to choose their priority gave Churchill a desirable result because on the contrary to the general public, Roosevelt as well as Marshall recognized Hitler to be the main problem. Churchill was then relieved that at least, Roosevelt and his chiefs of staff can be reasoned with. As a result, the two parties shared the same views that the main problem stemmed from Nazi Germany and thus, they decided that the continental invasion of Europe would be the ultimate goal of the Allies without much of a discussion. However, nothing consolidated or permanent came out of this conference.²²

As it turned out, the Allies only came up with a broad objective which was to somehow focus on the European continent to defeat Hitler but did not plan for any actual operation. As the situation in the Pacific became dire, the Allies suddenly forgot that Europe was their joint priority. Since no details were agreed upon, Marshall and Roosevelt did not really have any problem agreeing with one another. The problem stemmed from the lack of cooperation between the United States and Great Britain. They operated separately despite the established joint command in the Pacific holding on to their own priorities.

After issuing the Atlantic Charter, the Joint Chiefs of Staffs moved on to discuss the methods in which the armies would be commanded as a single unit, a unified command. During ARCADIA, Marshall came up with ABDA (American-British-Dutch-Australian Command) which gave complete command to one man: General Sir Archibald Wavell. Marshall based the idea of ABDA command on the similar strategy from the First World War which the French, British and American was commanded by Marshal Ferdinand Foch of France. The command line

²⁰ Churchill, *The Second World War II: Their Finest Hours*, p. 476

²¹ Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence, Vol. I*, p. 298 - 309

²² Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 386

was successful but Foch himself did not actually exert as much authority over armies of different nations which were the problem which became painfully relevant in the near future. Despite that, at the moment of the proposal, ABDA seemed promising to the American Chiefs of Staff, even Secretary of War. Stimson was on board with the idea. Marshall then went to try to sell the plans to the British team.²³

Some argument ensued between Marshall and Churchill but the latter conceded and ordered his war cabinet to cooperate with Marshall regarding the matter and also personally informed Wavell of his new task. After the unified military command under one commander was established, the direct command line from administrative personnel to military formed quite easily. In fact, Roosevelt spearheaded this idea himself. The Combined Chiefs of Staff (CCS) was then created to allow both the BCOS and JCS to command troops as a single unit but the problem was that the area of operations would be in the European theatre, the idea of the troops sending messages to both sides simultaneously could have easily been influenced solely by the BCOS²⁴ without the JCS²⁵ being involved. The new proposal by the president was for the theatre commander report directly to Washington and from there, the report would be directed to the BCOS stationed in London. The situation then would be in reverse, in this scenario, the United States would be the one directing the situation. Despite the disagreement, the British and their prime minister ended up accepting the changes. Churchill had accepted at this point that Great Britain was no longer alone and compromises must be made if the units were to move as one. He then moved on to the final issue of the ARCADIA conference, the main reason to get United States involved: supplies and its distribution.²⁶

²³ Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins, an Intimate History*, p. 455-458

²⁴ British Chiefs of Staffs

²⁵ American Chiefs of Staffs

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 469

The ARCADIA conference ended in this manner. Despite the British Army Chief of Staff Sir Alan Brooke's protest, ABDA was created.²⁷ Wavell helplessly accepted his new position of the new supreme commander of ABDA apparently in charge of fixing the situations not in Europe but rather the vast expanse of Southwest Pacific region. So began a new short episode of the Second World War, the utter failure of ABDA as both the Americans and the British attended to their own priorities while neither side even tried to cooperate with the other.²⁸

In the end, the Allied defeat in the Pacific theatre was due partly to, as it must be credited, the cold efficiency of the Japanese troops but for the most part it was simply due to the ineffectiveness of ABDA to facilitate an actual cooperative environment and the apparent differences in national interests among the Allies. The failures in the Pacific were due to the apparent conflict in national interests between Great Britain in Singapore and of the United States in the Philippines. The conflict in the interests alone would not have been so disastrous had the situation in the Pacific not been so dire that the Allies were forced to take some actions before they were able to work out the details among themselves regarding their top priority in the Pacific. As a result, the combined chiefs of staff shifted their attention away from the Far East theatre and discuss what the shared priority should be.²⁹

Late March, 1942, Marshall, who had to confront the two heads of state along with the entirety of the combined chiefs of staff regarding the matter, felt very much unprepared for the upcoming meeting because despite his disagreeing with the details of the strategy, he was still responsible for its overarching idea. However, one thing was certain; Marshall only had Europe in his mind as a priority from the very beginning.³⁰ With renewed conviction, Marshall seized

²⁷ Roberts, *Masters and Commanders: How Four Titans Won the War in the West, 1941-1945*, p. 81

²⁸ Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 412

²⁹ Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence, Vol. I*, p. 409-411

³⁰ Larrabee, *Roosevelt, Commander in Chief*, p. 135

the opportunity to use the failures in the Pacific to bring up the Europe First policy which seemed to be forgotten by every party that agreed upon it.³¹

While Marshall did not have much to say Southeast Asia, he did intend to bring up the prospect of the cross-channel invasion being the end goal of the war and therefore, the priority in which he had been advocating for from the very beginning. Marshall's basic strategy was to set the cross channel invasion to be the end goal which should have begun early due to the difficulty in logistics, not allowing the wholesale transportation of the troops, the problem that had been extremely relevant throughout every decisive battle.³² He then assigned Lieutenant General Dwight D. Eisenhower to work out the details towards that goal. Eisenhower then responded with a question for the entire chiefs of staffs to answer. He wanted the chiefs of staffs to collectively decide which theatre to give priority to, Pacific or Europe as at this stage, Marshall, along with the personnel from the War Department had reduced the level of priorities regarding Middle East and Africa from mandatory to highly desirable.³³

The first step towards bringing the matter up in the Allied meeting was to make sure his own team was on the same page. The first proposal was to be made to the president himself. As mentioned earlier, Marshall and Roosevelt tended to agree on the principles but disagree on the details. Marshall had the right idea of focusing on Europe but his proposal of BOLERO³⁴ being a priority did not resonate with Roosevelt. The president was more interested by GYMNAST.³⁵ At one occasion, Marshall strongly stated to Roosevelt that if BOLERO were not to be given full attention, the operation would have been better off not considered at all. Realizing GYMNAST would come up later, for the moment the president relented and let Marshall work out the details.

³¹ Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day*, p. 62

³² Roberts, *Masters and Commanders: How Four Titans Won the War in the West, 1941-1945*, p. 129-130

³³ Beitzell, *The Uneasy Alliance*, p. 33

³⁴ Code name of the United States military troop buildup in Great Britain to set up for the cross-channel operation

³⁵ Code name of the North African operation

April 4, 1942, Marshall and Hopkins left Washington for London to sell Churchill the plan for the cross-channel invasion.³⁶

In 1942, the view of the Americans and the British regarding the cross-channel operation differed greatly. The Americans was more optimistic about fighting the Germans. They believed the cross-channel operation would be the most direct way to end the war and no matter what the difficulty might have been, they could be overcome. And by that logic, with Russia's survival at stake, an emergency version of the cross-channel invasion can be arranged to make sure Russia survived Hitler's attacks. Marshall argued that the emergency cross-channel invasion would have forced Hitler to halt his offensive on Russia in order to defend the occupied France from the Allies. The argument was, however, later agreed upon in principle but ultimately shut down. The British disagreed. Churchill and British Field Marshal Sir Alan Brooke thought that the cross-channel invasion should be the final stage of war and not a diversion. Their many defeats at the hands of Germany were sobering reminders of their efficiency.

Long before the United States joined the conflict. Great Britain started fighting Nazi Germany as early as September 1, 1939. The British Army was there when France fell in 1940. For the British, if the combined might of Great Britain and France was not enough to stop Hitler on the ground, then the Allies would not be able to even be a distraction for Hitler at the cross-channel where sizable German troops were already installed. The British also realized that the American also never had any experience bearing the brunt of war on their own soil. By that logic, the American Chiefs of Staffs would not have understood or appreciated the burden that the British had to bear during the Blitz.

The counter argument for Marshall's proposal from the British was that the German troops were already present on French soil in a number significant enough to sabotage any kind

³⁶ Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins, an Intimate History*, p. 519-521

of landing without Hitler's forces in Russia even flinching, let alone turn around. In addition to the realistic analysis, another reason Great Britain was not ready to bring the fight to Hitler was the psychological effects from their defeat by Germany. As of 1942 and even 1943, Great Britain was in no physical or psychological to fight Hitler directly even as a diversion. The force would simply be defeated, troops slaughtered or captured, ending in a complete waste of time, troops, funding and possibly more importantly, the already low morale.³⁷

Great Britain also had a more immediate concern which was to keep their empire intact. Having lost Singapore and Burma during the Pacific campaign, the British were losing their territories. Their next immediate concern was India, not only as an imperial interest but also as a strategic position vital to the future of the Allies.³⁸ Had India fell to Japan, the British argued, and then Japan and Germany would have been able to assist one another directly. Had Russia fell, the future of the Allies would have looked bleak at best because the Allies would lose the biggest combat troops to hold back Germany. Their vast expanse of land, containing an abundance of natural resources, would fall right into the enemy's' hands. With India and Russia in possession, Germany and Japan would be able to distribute the newly obtained resources which would have taken away the one of the few advantages the Allies, with the supplies from the United States, actually had.³⁹ Churchill, agreed on principle of the idea of the cross-channel invasion because he did agree with its eventual execution but nothing specific was promised. Marshall and Hopkins also did not pursue it further.⁴⁰

Adding to the confusion was Roosevelt's attitude towards British influence over India. An average American disliked the idea of imperialism, especially when the British was involved,

³⁷ Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence, Vol. I*, p. 458

³⁸ Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins, an Intimate History*, p. 536

³⁹ Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day*, p. 69

⁴⁰ Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins, an Intimate History*, p. 540

the president himself on personal level, was no exception. Especially, as the supposed leader of the democratic world, Roosevelt could not and personally would not support or even condone the practice of imperialism. It also would have somewhat jeopardized his position in this war against tyranny because imperialism was, after all, one of the original form of tyranny.⁴¹ Roosevelt argued for the right to self-determination of the Indian people living on their own soil as a way to appeal, not so much to the public, but his political opponents who could have regarded his inaction as mere ignorance or worse yet, a support for imperialism.

Churchill expressed that imperialism was a concept in which the Americans knew little about yet have strong opinions on.⁴² He argued that it was of little relevance, what he personally felt about the practice, India was undeniably a British responsibility and to make sudden changes during the time of war was not wise. The political situation in India was complicated as the people are divided and the biggest groups were the Hindu population who were more or less in power and favored self-determination and the Muslim population was another group who only had the somewhat equal status due to the British rule. Despite Churchill's attitude, India launched her own anti-British movement called quit India the very same day Churchill sent his reply to Roosevelt on April 12, 1942.⁴³

Despite the lengthy exchanges, the Allied priorities still had not been established, 1942 came to be the year when the United States and Great Britain tried in multiple occasions to get the other side to agree to their point of view which even among themselves are obscure. After the meeting in London in early April, 1942, the situation was as follows: the general British attitude regarded SLEDGEHAMMER⁴⁴ as suicidal.⁴⁵ The American War Department led by Marshall

⁴¹ Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence, Vol. I*, p. 373

⁴² Churchill, *The Second World War IV: The Hinge of Fate*, p. 209

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 221

⁴⁴ Code name of the emergency cross-channel operation for the purpose of divergence

was headstrong about cross-channel invasion and was not open to any other idea that would not directly contribute to the cross-channel invasion.⁴⁶ The president had a scheme of his own.

Roosevelt also aimed for the second front like Marshal but was leaning towards North Africa like Churchill and the American public call for some kind of action for the American forces. His later scheme aimed to satisfy all three criteria by utilizing both Marshall's enthusiasm for the potential of ROUNDUP⁴⁷ or SLEDGEHAMMER and the British's inability and unwillingness to facilitate such mission.

As the debates continued, what had to be done were not and could not have been slowed down because time was of the essence. The Lend Lease Act was in full effect but the difficulties regarding logistics whether it was the limited capability for transportation, the natural hazards or the supply destruction by the enemies, had always been present. As a result, only small portions of supplies actually reached their destinations. In order to properly fulfill its role as the Allied arsenal, the United States must start delivering them early, often and in large quantities but even then it proved to be inadequate. The United States agreed to send supplies to Russia through Murmansk, the Northern Norwegian region. The pathway would include a disembark from United States across the Atlantic to make a stop in Scotland then circle around through Arctic ocean to Murmansk.⁴⁸

Churchill argued that the amount of supply exceeded the amount that the Murmansk port and his own sea transportation capacities could have handled. As a result, Churchill had to unload some supplies before sending the convoys to the Arctic. The action greatly concerned both Roosevelt and Stalin. Churchill then wanted to renegotiate the promised amount of supplies

⁴⁵ Churchill, *The Second World War IV: The Hinge of Fate*, p. 348-350

⁴⁶ Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day*, p. 95

⁴⁷ Code name of the cross-channel operation from Great Britain to France

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 76

with Roosevelt to he would not have to do what he had to. Roosevelt feared that by lowering the supply heading to Russia, Stalin would have had negative feelings toward their relationship. Therefore, the president made no changes and expected Churchill to fix it on his end. The president also warned Churchill about the consequences the off-loading actions would have had on the Russians and the future of the Alliance.⁴⁹

By doing exactly what he promised Stalin, he pushed all the responsibility on Churchill. Therefore, when Stalin did not receive what they asked for, the blame was completely placed on Churchill. In this case, Churchill was not even the one being at fault as his ships really were not able to carry the supplies; he simply had to do it because Roosevelt refused to risk upsetting Stalin. This was not to be the only time; the United States went out of their way to point out that some mistakes were entirely due to the British actions not the Allies. While the first few months of shipping were quite effective, Hitler finally caught on around March of 1942. Regardless of the predecessor of the supposed operation JUPITER⁵⁰ not being as successful as Churchill imagined it to be, which proved Brooke to be right, the idea still lingered in his mind.⁵¹ They then shifted their attention back to finding the next actions for the Allied efforts which would either be the cross-channel invasion or the invasion of French occupied North Africa and the Middle East.

One of the alternatives aside from mainland France was that of the Caribbean and the North African regions. The Allied leaders recognized the importance of the strategic point of the archipelago of Malta which was a British territory located between Sicily, Tunis, Gibraltar and Alexandria. Malta was another garrison in Churchill's mind that would have been able to stop the Axis. The invasion of Africa would have defeated the notorious German General Erwin

⁴⁹ Churchill, *The Second World War IV: The Hinge of Fate*, p. 258

⁵⁰ Code name of the Arctic convoys during the Second World War

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 476

Rommel from getting supplies from Italy and once Rommel was defeated, gaining a foothold in North Africa would provide an excellent supply line as well as air power for the counteroffensive on Sicily and Italy or as Churchill would call it “the soft underbelly of the Axis” later on. The African operation was becoming more and more of a reality than its previous state which was pretty much to be postponed indefinitely.⁵²

Though the president had given much attention to the development regarding Africa, he could not have denied the fact that average Americans could not have cared any less. The United States, they felt, still had a major score to settle with Japan. This was especially true for the inhabitants of the American West Coast who were understandably scared by the possibility of an invasion. The defeats of the American forces in the Philippines did not help the matter in the slightest. Their request for the reinforcement gave Marshall, who personally disliked readjusting troops he already allocated, quite a headache for he could have done nothing else but to pull some ships from the fleet he assembled for BOLERO and send them over.⁵³

This episode actually did not last long as Japan, once again, made the situation less complicated for the Americans. Their great fleet returned to engage the Americans in the Battle of Midway for the purpose of claiming the outpost on the Midway Island. Despite having the smaller fleet, the Americans utilized some unconventional strategies which turned out to be effective. Japanese forces suffered little but the exchange did not prove fruitful. Therefore, despite relatively small casualties, Japan retreated. The successful defense greatly relieved the inhabitants of the Coast areas allowing Marshall to seize the opportunity to pull back his ships to where they were meant to be.⁵⁴ The success of the Battle of Midway also raised convinced the

⁵² Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day*, p. 79

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 80

⁵⁴ Churchill, *The Second World War IV: The Hinge of Fate*, p. 253-254

United States that Japanese expansion not only reached its limits but this was already beyond their capacity, allowing Roosevelt and his war cabinet to focus on Europe.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 480-481

Chapter II: Cutthroat

To recapitulate, our current development took us to the period of time right after the Battle of Midway on June 3, 1942 which was the invasion of the Midway Island by the Japanese fleet to remove the United States as a threat. American Chief of Staff, George C. Marshall was still adamant, even after failing to succeed in 1942, on his position to build up forces in the British Isles for his plan of the cross-channel invasion in 1943. His subordinate Lieutenant General Dwight D. Eisenhower was sent to supervise the Allied operation over in London since June 23, 1942. Marshall was well aware that an emergency cross-channel invasion was dangerous but he preferred the Allies to only focus on BOLERO⁵⁶ for fear that Churchill might divert the attention of the Allies enough that the invasion of Northern France be indefinitely postponed or ultimately canceled.⁵⁷ While Marshall, Eisenhower and the JCS⁵⁸ were optimistic about the potential success of the operation, the British had the opposite attitude.

Having fought against the formidable German troops since the time of the First World War, the British were much more aware of their might.⁵⁹ Neither Brooke nor Churchill was convinced that Marshall's operation could have succeeded. Despite the pressure from Russia for the Allies to create a diversion on the second front, Churchill as well as the British chiefs of staff (BCOS) was certain that the Allies would not have been able to facilitate the operation in 1942 because there was no way to build up forces significant enough to even give the Germans a nudge in that small period of time. The British was not at all against operation BOLERO but they did have problems with operation SLEDGEHAMMER.⁶⁰ They also realize that, eventually, they

⁵⁶ Code name of the United States military troop buildup in Great Britain to set up for the cross-channel operation

⁵⁷ Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 480-485

⁵⁸ American Joint Chiefs of Staff

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 1940-1943, p. 140

⁶⁰ Code name of the emergency cross-channel operation for the purpose of divergence

would have to cross that channel but they were looking for something more of a solid version of operation ROUNDUP, not a suicide mission like SLEDGEHAMMER.

Churchill had constantly and subtly been proposing that the Allies change focus to establishing a position in French-occupied North Africa to open up the second front through Italy instead of mainland France while think of another way to support Russia for the mean time. While realized the importance of BOLERO, Roosevelt shared the interest in operating in North Africa with Churchill because it allowed for an early opportunity for the American troops to be in battle⁶¹ to appeal to the American public who wanted their troops to be in combat.⁶² After the Battle of Midway, the United States managed to prevent the Japanese from advancing on their position, allowing them to return their focus to the Atlantic theatre.⁶³

The Japanese attacked Midway; the opinion in terms of the future Allied effort became truly divided especially among the Americans. Among the American military, many high ranking officers such as Admiral Ernest King were more interested in the Pacific. At this stage, only Marshall was actually focusing on building up forces for the cross-channel invasion in the future, the appeal in which became less and less popular over time. The British were not able to pay attention to either of them and stood firm on their opinion. Churchill, as well as Roosevelt, who was also quite eager for action, was fixated on the future of North Africa and the Middle East.⁶⁴

North Africa, much like any other Allied plans, was riddled with complications. Aside from the German and Italian presence in the Region obtained not too long prior to the Second

⁶¹ Churchill, *The Second World War IV: The Hinge of Fate*, p. 348-350

⁶² American troops were not ready to successfully operate a cross-channel operation meaning that a successful one would take some preparations and 1942 would have passed without any action. North Africa, on the other hand, provided an answer to the public

⁶³ Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 481

⁶⁴ Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence, Vol. I*, p. 513

World War, the majority of Northern African continent was occupied by the supposedly fallen French. While the French was defeated by Germany and a puppet government, the Vichy French, was installed under Hitler's command to govern France, the French still had some degree of independence in their territories North Africa. The Vichy French controlled the regions from Morocco, Algeria to Tunis. Despite their surrender to Hitler, there were still some elements of resistance among the French ranks such as Charles de Gaulle of the Free French, who was based in the UK after the fall of France. Among the Vichy forces in Africa, the likes of General Henri Giraud and Admiral Francois Darlan with his naval fleet shared their hatred for Hitler's regime. Despite their pledge not to take up arms against Hitler, the disdain for Hitler's rule among these French commanders had the potential of being highly beneficial to the Allied cause.

The most obvious problem regarding French cooperation with the Allies was their grudges for the British due partly to their eternal rivalries, but more importantly to their latest squabbles. Not long after the French surrendered to Germany, the British Navy scuttled a great number of French fleet, to prevent future uses of that fleet by the Germans during operation CATAPULT on July 3, 1940.⁶⁵ Adding to the mix, the British just took control of Madagascar, the area previously under French control in May 1942, the incident which added even more animosity. Additionally, another problem regarding the French was also their own personal political ambitions, further complicating the situation.⁶⁶

While the African and France question remained unanswered, Russia made her move, reaching out to Great Britain and the United States directly. Stalin planned to dispatch his Foreign Minister, Vyacheslav Molotov, to negotiate new policies for opening up a second front on Hitler to ease off the pressure on Russia. Stalin felt that, while the Soviets were fortunate

⁶⁵ Churchill, *The Second World War II: Their Finest Hours*, p. 236

⁶⁶ Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day*, p. 80

enough to survive a winter against the Fuhrer through the desperate Scorched Earth policy, they would not survive a summer German offensive unless their western allies did something.

Another objective was to gain recognition for their newly acquired three Baltic states, namely Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. Stalin knew how Roosevelt felt about territorial expansion while the British would be more accepting and this knowledge could be instrumental to the success of the negotiation.

Before Molotov departed, Roosevelt wanted to establish some kind of a relationship or at least an influence on Stalin before he negotiates with the British. Roosevelt had no intention of acknowledging the future occupation of the Balkans by the Russians. Roosevelt was aware that Churchill planned to sign a separate twenty year long treaty which will include the passages regarding the Baltic States with the Russians and he wanted to stop that from happening.⁶⁷ However, he lost to Churchill's initiative and Stalin's scheme. Not only did, the prime minister's word reach Stalin first, Stalin also had some alternate schemes of his own and it involved starting the tour in London. Wasting no time, Molotov took off right away to Great Britain to conduct the negotiations arriving in London on May 20, 1942.

Upon Molotov's landing in London, Hitler's advance on the Russian Front had worsened. Since May 17, 1942, Soviet troops began to lose their position to the panzers troops in the Second Battle of Kharkov. The situation put the prospect of the second front automatically on the top priority list for Stalin. Stalin then planned to use the recognition of the Baltic territories⁶⁸ as a tool for this negotiation. Stalin realized that the United States would object out right while Britain would be willing to negotiate the matter in exchange for help from Russia.

⁶⁷ The idea treaty originated from the time Anthony Eden, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs traveling to Moscow when Stalin demanded that the British cooperate with the Soviet Union against Germany back in 1940. Churchill, *The Second World War IV: The Hinge of Faith*, p. 326-327, Beitzell, *The Uneasy Alliance*, p. 8-9

⁶⁸ The recognition of the Baltic states was the main message in the twenty year treaty Roosevelt was worried about

Also realizing that no matter how lenient the British was likely going to be on the territorial expansion, they could not have accepted the Soviet control of new territories if Poland was included as it would utterly destroy any air of legitimacy of their war position.⁶⁹ The Soviet came with two requests from the Allies, if none can be answered, the future of their Alliance could have been in jeopardy. Therefore, invoking Poland would have forced the British to refuse the request for recognition meaning that they in some sense owed it to Russia as a ally to provide something for Russia to work with. Stalin had hoped that the British would do something about the second front, but if Churchill failed to fulfill this obligation, Russia would at least gain an edge in future dealings of the Allies. To strengthen his argument, Molotov then emphasized the importance of Russia's survival even further by stating the facts already obvious to the British.⁷⁰

In addition to the mention of the Curzon line in Poland, Molotov also painted a dramatic picture of the state the allies would be in, had the Soviet Union fall. Despite his strong view, shared by the entirety of British staffs, against any cross-channel invasion, Churchill did promise Molotov that he would arrange something to help Stalin when Molotov stops by London before flying back to Russia. Molotov had, more or less, succeeded in the plea of help all the while establishing the position for Russia as a party that did not receive the help it deserves despite being the only one actually suffering in the millions in terms of life loss, holding the line against Nazi Germany. This knowledge, Stalin believed, would provide at least some psychological advantages in their future negotiations with the Allies. Having negotiated somewhat successfully, with Great Britain, Molotov departed for the United States on May 29, 1942.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Great Britain, as well as France declared war on Germany because their invasion of Poland

⁷⁰ Churchill, *The Second World War IV: The Hinge of Fate*, p. 332-335

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 341

As Molotov then left London for Washington, Churchill cabled Roosevelt to inform that while he did not make any tangible promise to Molotov, he did promise some kind of response to the Russian requests. While relaying the message, Churchill expressed apparent interest in bringing back GYMNAST,⁷² signaling his lack of enthusiasm for SLEDGEHAMMER as a divergent plan, the knowledge in which Roosevelt exploited soon after. Upon learning that no postwar treaty was signed, Roosevelt was relieved.

To Roosevelt, the summary of the current situation was that the British did not make any real promise to the Russians, no concrete relationship between Russia and Great Britain was established and Churchill was still not in the position to allow for a cross-channel invasion. These are the materials that Roosevelt intended to use for his future dealings with the Allies. Molotov knew that mentioning the territories to the Americans was to be avoided at all cost so he only intended to discuss the second front with the Allies. For the sake of future relationship, Roosevelt omitted mentioning what Molotov was actively avoiding to hear. However, he did mention his idea of post war peace organization which would be controlled by the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and China, introducing the United Nations to Stalin, which was well received by the Red Tsar.⁷³

Molotov once again proceeded to use the postwar picture for persuasion but it proved to be unnecessary. Roosevelt knew that the British would not have supported operation ROUNDUP⁷⁴, much less, SLEDGEHAMMER and Marshall's enthusiasm would never have let the opportunity to bring up the operation to the otherwise unenthusiastic president pass. The president recognized the importance of BOLERO but it was not his priority. What he cared about was BOLERO but not SLEDGEHAMMER. He was more interested in GYMNAST and he

⁷² The original code name of the North African operation

⁷³ Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 499

⁷⁴ Code name of the cross-channel operation from Great Britain to France

realized knew Churchill also did. Therefore, Roosevelt stated that the Western Allies expected the second front that year.⁷⁵ He then allowed Marshall and Molotov discuss the details of the eventual plan while being assured that Churchill, once again, would bring GYMNAST back into the picture.

The discussion between Molotov and the American staffs consequently was largely the details of the Lend-Lease arrangement which involves a few concerns about the logistics. These concerns consisted of the actual concern for their ability to transport the supplies to Russia and the other was the British demands for the supplies. However, when it came to Molotov, Roosevelt placed emphasis the fact that the British was not willing to go with the cross-channel operation in 1942. Without considering the true intention, Roosevelt, in effect, was blaming Churchill for the Allies not being able to help Stalin, and thus created a sense of distrust between them.⁷⁶

Roosevelt not expressing any issue from the American point of view on cross-channel, essentially forced Churchill to be the one having to let Russia know that it was they alone who had a problem with the cross-channel invasion. The blame would have been largely on Great Britain in the eye of the Russians and by default. This would also force Churchill to bring up GYMNAST, as the alternate plan, to the Allies so that Roosevelt would not have to personally override Marshall when the time comes. To apply even more pressure on Britain and establish a good impression on Russia, the president, who never fully supported BOLERO, told Molotov that the United States was 1) expecting to establish a second front, 2) would provide more supplies to Russia despite the British protest and lastly, against Marshall's advice, 3) moved the timing of ROUNDUP up to August 1942, just two months away from the time, Molotov was

⁷⁵ Divine, *Roosevelt and World War II*, p. 90

⁷⁶ Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins, an Intimate History*, p. 575

there.⁷⁷ Churchill, as expected, panicked and was forced to tell the Russians that Great Britain could not promise anything.⁷⁸

Churchill, as the one who told the president to not forget about GYMNAST, was spellbound by the front that the president, who apparently was advocating for operation SLEDGEHAMMER to be in full swing, put up. To him, the president needed convincing to be able to recognize the importance of GYMNAST. The prime minister was even more convinced of the by Roosevelt's commitment to the cross-channel operation after he sent Lord Louis Mountbatten, British Chief of Combined Operations, to the United States discussing the details on it, possibly as a pretense.

The true intention was most likely to see the details and the scale of production in order to gauge what the president was actually planning to do. The Americans were accelerating their production of landing crafts, which would be instrumental for the beach landings which contributed to convincing Churchill. It turned out that, despite the accelerated production actually for the eventual amphibious operation, Roosevelt never let the prospect of GYMNAST escape his mind. Though unbeknownst to the British, the entirety of the American staffs was well-aware of their president's apparent interest in North Africa and even they were convinced that the president came to acknowledge the importance of SLEDGEHAMMER. To Marshall, everything seemed to be in favor of the cross-channel operation until he realized he had been played by the president. Roosevelt brought up North Africa as a second front to Marshall and his staffs on June 17, 1942, the date in which Churchill, Brooke and Ismay left London to visit the United States.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins, an Intimate History*, p. 576-577

⁷⁸ Churchill, *The Second World War III: The Grand Alliance*, p. 342

⁷⁹ Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day*, p. 90-92

At this stage, the military staffs on both sides were equally concerned about the special love for sideshows, their leaders apparently shared. Even Brooke at this point was more in favor of at least some aspects of SLEDGEHAMMER, which was the building up of forces to prepare for the eventual invasion. He would rather spend the effort building up the forces than making small and, to him, inconsequential actions just to distract Hitler or the public in either country. However, fate brought GYMNAST into the picture. During the meeting between the two nations on June 21, 1942, the British position in Tobruk, Libya, which previously were thought to be impregnable, had surrendered and 33,000 troops became war prisoners.⁸⁰ Initially, General Arnold believed that the equipment were enough in the Middle East for Tobruk but the incident proved him wrong.⁸¹ After recovering the brief moment of shock, Roosevelt and even Marshall agreed to send supplies and tanks to assist the British troops right away which Churchill and Brooke, who witnessed too many defeats in the span of a few years, were genuinely thankful for even until the later years of war in 1945.⁸²

This entire event with the meeting with Molotov and the fall of Tobruk produced several positive results for Roosevelt. Firstly, due to the failure to recognize the Russian occupation of the Baltic States by the British, a certain level of distrust was created between Churchill and Stalin which would make the signing of any new treaties just between the two less likely. Secondly, elements of GYMNAST were brought back into the picture through a few mentions. Lastly, the generous deployment of troops to assist the British cause at Tobruk strengthened the relationship with Great Britain. The American public wanted action, the Russians wanted a second front, the British were not able to facilitate a cross-channel invasion and they would be

⁸⁰ Churchill, *The Second World War IV: The Hinge of Fate*, p. 417-418

⁸¹ Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence, Vol. I*, p. 3

⁸² Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence, Vol. II*, p. 574

the ones to help Roosevelt convince Marshall to give in. Whether or not the turn of the events was Roosevelt's intention, it did manage to answer all of the criteria mentioned above for him.

Throughout the rest of the day's meetings, event in Tobruk immediately shifted most of the attention of the entirety of the British staffs, regardless of their previous views, to North Africa and Middle East. GYMNAST was mentioned in words for the first time since the Atlantic Charter. Even Brooke and other military personnel who initially were reluctant to the plausibility of GYMNAST became convinced of its importance shortly after. Defeated and exhausted, Marshall was utterly defeated. Operation SLEDGEHAMMER was alive but on its very last dying breath.⁸³ Arriving in London on June 23, Eisenhower, while aware that there were conflicting opinions among the higher ups regarding their war effort, he was not specifically given any new instructions. Therefore, other than establishing some general setting up, he largely stuck to SLEDGEHAMMER like Marshall instructed him to. Sincere and straightforward, General Eisenhower quickly became well-liked among the British Generals and the prime minister himself alike.⁸⁴

Following the defeat at Tobruk, the British Eighth Army was pushed back into Egypt back to El Alamein, their Mediterranean Fleet retreated to the Suez Canal, all the while, Germany's assault on Russia continued towards Volga and Caucasia. After a few skirmishes and major losses of convoys in the Atlantic, British troops managed to stabilize the situations in the Middle East by setting up their garrison behind the Qattara Depression which was ideal for defense as it narrowed the path of the attacking forces eliminating their advantage in number. The German assault also slowed down on its own as Rommel's troops were too deep into the

⁸³ Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day*, p. 97-98

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 99

continent meaning that the supply lines were stretched far too thin to allow them to attack as efficiently.⁸⁵

As if the end of SLEDGEHAMMER was not obvious, within two weeks after the arrival of Eisenhower, Churchill remarked informally that Great Britain is no longer considering the cross-channel operation in 1942. Upon learning about it, Marshall, Stimson, along with Admiral Ernest King, stormed Roosevelt's office to discuss the matter on July 15 and the tensions were high. In addition to pretty much the same argument between Roosevelt and Marshall, this time the argument ended with the president's decision to, once again, send Hopkins, Marshall as well as King over to London to talk it out with Churchill himself. Marshall then departed the United States on July 16, 1942 in order to sell his unlikely plan one last time to the person least likely to buy it.⁸⁶

Despite his prime interest in the Pacific, King chose to support Marshall. While Marshall and King traveled to England to once again hard sell SLEDGEHAMMER, Hopkins went for an entirely different purpose. Hopkins, representing the president, pretty much went to the British to know that Roosevelt agrees with GYMNAST. Arriving on the same day (July 18) King, Marshall and Eisenhower revised the plan to make it sound as appealing to the British as they can and later tried to no avail to convince the British of its plausibility. Churchill was also at the end of his wits as he did not disagree with BOLERO, he simply was against SLEDGEHAMMER because it would be costly and would fail completely. As Marshall cabled Roosevelt about the failure of the negotiation, he did not even sound disappointed as he already expected the outcome.⁸⁷ With the shared objective decided, Churchill then worked on informing Stalin of the

⁸⁵ Churchill, *The Second World War IV: The Hinge of Fate*, p. 357

⁸⁶ Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins, an Intimate History*, p. 603-606

⁸⁷ Churchill, *The Second World War IV: The Hinge of Fate*, p. 348-350

changes in strategies as well as restructuring the commanding positions in the Middle East⁸⁸ to prepare for TORCH⁸⁹.

Churchill did somehow secure permission from King George to fly on this dangerous trip to Russia. Churchill's perilous trip was then planned departing from London and under the shroud of night, hopping off of French occupied Gibraltar to Cairo, where he completely changed the command structure of the entire British forces, then with Stalin's approval, to Russia. General Harold Alexander assumed Auchinleck's position as the supreme commander of both North Africa and Middle East theatre. Lieutenant General Bernard Law Montgomery was summoned to Cairo to command the British First Army.⁹⁰

After the positions are organized, Churchill traveled, finally, to Moscow along with Averell Harriman who, like Hopkins, served directly under the President himself representing his will. Right after arrival on August 10, 1942, Churchill once again went right to the point informing Stalin, whom he met for the very first time, all the the very same reasons that defeated Marshal explaining why he was not able to support Russia with the cross-channel invasion along with explaining further why Churchill had to pulled some convoys heading for Russia for the Middle East. Churchill then tried to tell Stalin his plans of directly bombing Germany to get his attention and then, out of the blue, mentioned TORCH.⁹¹ The Red Tsar, as it turned out, took the news surprisingly well on the spot and continued to discuss the details of TORCH with Churchill.

Unfortunately, Stalin's calm demeanor from earlier was simply a guise to buy time and extract information from Churchill. Apparently, Stalin, to the point of paranoia, never trusted and

⁸⁸ Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence, Vol. II*, p. 48-49

⁸⁹ New code name of the North African operation given by Churchill

⁹⁰ Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day*, p. 122

⁹¹ Churchill, *The Second World War IV: The Hinge of Fate*, p. 478

never came to trust his Western Allies. Argument ensued and tensions were high but the two eventually reconciled in the evening. Churchill then left after the unpleasant episode in Russia having succeeded in establishing a relationship between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union, on August 15, 1942.⁹²

Back in Washington, both Stimson and especially Marshall was still not able to absorb the development leading up to TORCH. Marshall accepted his defeat for ROUNDUP and SLEDGEHAMMER but neglecting to at least build up forces for the future offensive in favor of the Middle East was not even remotely wise to him. He would rather not have any military action for the United States. Shattering his hope, Roosevelt, upon learning of Marshall's attitude, declared that TORCH would be carried out at the earliest date possible.⁹³

Eisenhower was assigned to execute TORCH and the first thing he did was to restructure his own chain of command to have an equal amount of commanding officers from both Great Britain and the United States. Eisenhower only had two exceptions in this adjustment: his deputy and his chief of staff had to be Americans. He picked Major General Mark W. Clark to be his deputy that would take over his role should something happen to him and Brigadier General Walter Bedell Smith from Department of War to be his chief of staff. On August 17, 1942, the arrangement came into effect. With chain of command established, the Allies had to decide the details for the landings of TORCH which had to be done as discreet as possible.⁹⁴

There were four potential beaches thought to be potential landing spots: Bone, Algiers, Oran and Casablanca. Due to the fact that the Allies did not have enough forces to manage all of the landings and the failure to secure more vessels from the Pacific Theatre did not allow for the execution of all landings. The Allies led by Eisenhower had to choose to at least not land on one

⁹² Churchill, *The Second World War IV: The Hinge of Fate*, p. 500-501

⁹³ Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day*, p. 121

⁹⁴ Ibid.

or two of them. Having yet to establish the authority he later would, Eisenhower only managed to provide his opinion on the matter as a basis for his Combined Chiefs to work on but not commanding it. With much discussion, the conclusion was that the combined forces were to somehow land on Casablanca, Oran and Algiers before Germany and Italy does.⁹⁵

Securing the French's support was also one of the most pressing concerns to the degree that even the TORCH landings had to be done with an all American troops to prevent the Anglo-French animosity from complicating the situation. Roosevelt contacted the U.S. consul general, Robert D. Murphy to report to Washington in early September. Like Hopkins and Harriman, Murphy was one of the agents who reported directly to the president and his position was nothing short of a perfect cover for his real purpose. He was within the French ranks as early as December of 1940 and had been establishing connections with powerful figures, the likes of General Maxime Weygand, in France and North Africa ever since. Unfortunately, the removal of Weygand by the Nazis in November, 1941 essentially ended the progress Murphy had made and never recovered ever since.⁹⁶ With TORCH at the horizon, if there was any time for Murphy to make a move within the Vichy ranks, this would be it.

Adding to the confusion was the fact that the American public branded Vichy France as a collaborationist of Hitler and was against the idea of the Allies cooperating with them despite Secretary of State Cordell Hull's Vichy Policy. Even then, Murphy continued to strongly advised Roosevelt to not let the public interfere with working with Vichy France which the president then obliged. Upon meeting Roosevelt and Hopkins, Murphy proposed to let him make use of his North African contacts to assist in TORCH from within the French ranks. Despite Marshall's protest, Roosevelt accepted Murphy's plan with a condition that the operation be kept a secret

⁹⁵ Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day*, p. 125

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 129-130

form Secretary Hull. Murphy's mission was to try his best to find a Vichy figure who would have supported the Allies and also would have been willing to step down after the ordeal was over in order to later make way for De Gaulle, representing the Free French, in to power for the eye of the public. Murphy, under the guise of Lieutenant Colonel McGowan⁹⁷ to fool the Axis' intelligence departed for London to report to Eisenhower as a latest addition to operation TORCH.

In London, while discussing TORCH with Eisenhower, Murphy brought up the point that potential French retaliation could be neutralized without fighting if Eisenhower let him establish those contacts. Though Eisenhower was skeptical, the two did come up with three potential candidates to lead the North African French which are General Henri Honore Giraud, Admiral Darlan and General Auguste Nogues, French Commander-in-Chief, Casablanca. The decisions eventually came down to only Darlan and Giraud as Nogues promised the Allies nothing but all out resistance.⁹⁸ The decisions were made easier when Giraud can be reached easier through one of Murphy's contact, M. Jacques Lemaigre-Dubreuil.⁹⁹

Through the contact, Murphy and Clark was sent to Messelmoun, a beach near Algiers, on October 21 to negotiate with Giraud's contact, Major General Charles Mast, the French cooperation only in principle but not in details. Mast's suggestions for the strategies were largely in line with the Allies, except for an extra landing on Southern France which the Allies was not able to oblige. Giraud also requested that he was to have the title of the Supreme Commander of the Allied Force.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ In order to avoid Nazi intelligence from knowing Murphy's movements, Marshall had Murphy dressed up as a military personnel known as Lieutenant Colonel McGowan. Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day*, p. 132

⁹⁸ Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day*, p. 133

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 135

¹⁰⁰ Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence, Vol. I*, p. 634

While, Murphy and Clark was on their mission to Africa, Roosevelt and Churchill worked together on a draft to be sent to Petain and his government to inform them that the Allied presence in North Africa was not meant to threaten the Vichy government. The message contained some warnings of the danger that the Hitler, at his end of patience, would attack French controlled North Africa. The letter stated that while the Allies understood that France was not in the state to take up arms against Germany or Italy, the least they can do was to not resist the Allied landings. Thinking that Roosevelt was much too kind in his wordings, Churchill suggested that he left out all the unnecessary friendly remarks out of the message. The message was to be sent out much later.¹⁰¹

It did not take long for Giraud to be impatient. On October 28, Murphy reported to Eisenhower that Giraud demanded that he be put in charge of TORCH within forty eight hours and troops also had to be sent to Southern France as well as TORCH be delayed from November 7 to November 21. Though Murphy felt that the compromise was necessary, Roosevelt and Eisenhower have had enough and instructed Murphy to ignore the bluff and do the best he can to talk Giraud into cooperation because TORCH was already in motion as they spoke. November 5, 1942, Eisenhower, Clark and the staffs departed London to Gibraltar. The pre-TORCH period, known to be one of the most frustrating periods throughout the war, then came to an end.¹⁰² The first event that kick started the turn of the tide for the Allies was the very first Allied victory at El Alamein by Lieutenant General Montgomery under the supervision of General Alexander of Great Britain. Though he was replacing Auchinleck, Montgomery as well as his commander acknowledged the brilliance of the original strategy Auchinleck came up with and stuck to it.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins, an Intimate History*, p. 647-648

¹⁰² Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day*, p. 147

¹⁰³ Churchill, *The Second World War IV: The Hinge of Fate*, p. 595

As for Rommel, as of August 28,¹⁰⁴ his troops were exhausted, low on supplies and he, himself was sick with several illness and barely was able to function, let alone command. However Hitler did not really give him much of an option but to press on.¹⁰⁵ As expected, Rommel was driven back to his original line in Libya on September 7. Though the loss were not so different on either side, the fact that British held the line to the point of driving Rommel back counted as the first significant victory which greatly boosting the morale of the Allies. After several failed counter offensives and heavy losses, Montgomery eventually defeated Rommel forcing him to retreat to Tunisia on November 2, 1942.¹⁰⁶

The landings for TORCH proceeded shortly after and one of the only real problems the landing troops faced was the strong waves on the Moroccan shores preventing Patton's troops from landing. French resistance was comparatively less concerning. Despite the formidable number of troops the Vichy French possessed, their war gears were very much outdated. Since the occupation of France by Nazi Germany, Hitler never fully trusted the Vichy government and therefore only minimally allowed for their military presence against the Allies. In terms of war technologies, French tanks were simply outdated, their anti-air capabilities around Morocco were minimal at best and their air support was non-existent allowing full control of the sky for the Allies.

The US Navy under the leadership of Major General Lucian Truscott managed to land in Morocco on November 10, 1942, and managed to capture an airfield shortly after. By the time that the troops claimed the airfield near Mehdia, the resistance in Algeria had been stopped by a ceasefire order and the landing met with resistance from Rommel's troops which remained

¹⁰⁴ Two days before Rommel attacked El Alamein

¹⁰⁵ Burns, *Roosevelt, The Soldier of Freedom*, p. 26, Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 74

¹⁰⁶ Churchill, *The Second World War IV: The Hinge of Fate*, p. 603

present yet inconsequential until April 1943.¹⁰⁷ While the Algerian battle ended in a ceasefire and minimal casualties, the resistance would have been much fiercer, had some work not been done from the inside.¹⁰⁸

November 7, the French resistance groups, upon being given the signal by Murphy, staged a coup d'état, disabling the French XIX Corps. With the troops neutralized, the landing immediately succeeded. However, to the Allies' surprise, Darlan also happened to be there to see his son, Alain, who was stricken with polio.¹⁰⁹ Upon meeting with Murphy and Clark, Darlan issued a ceasefire on November 8. Darlan was more or less supportive of the Allied cause but was disappointed that the Allies picked Giraud over him. He was not wrong, Giraud proved to be the wrong choice as Darlan was still around, he was not well received at all among the Vichy ranks. This fact made the Allies arrangement of making him commander complicated but once again the turns of events simplified the answer. Admiral Francois Darlan was assassinated on a Thursday afternoon, Christmas Eve, 1942 allowing Giraud to somewhat lead the leaderless crowd.¹¹⁰

As of November 19, 1942, with Egypt and Malta¹¹¹ stabilized, Morocco, Algeria and Tunis came into the fold and Hitler's Battle of Stalingrad was also halted by the Red Army. As German troops being pushed back, Roosevelt and Churchill seized the opportunity to hit Hitler while morale is low. In early 1943, American and British air force began the Combined Bomber Offensive on Germany to destroy their economy as well as their morale by destroying their

¹⁰⁷ Rommel was being pushed back from the failed attack on El Alamein back into Libya until the British reclaimed Tobruk, Derna and, Benghazi, all in November and finally to their last stand at Mareth line, Tunisia in December. Afrika Corps held their last position at the battle for Longstop Hill until April without presenting any real threat towards the Allies

¹⁰⁸ Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day*, p. 179

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 182-183

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 212

¹¹¹ Operation PEDESTAL: The British arranged a costly operation to get the much needed supplies to Malta in August 1942

civilian living spaces. Being stopped in both North Africa and Russia, November of 1942 marked the beginning Hitler's downfall and death's shadow being casted upon Italy while the strategic of the Allies, for once, became solid enough to have a fighting chance against the Axis powers. Their next step for the Allies was to plan to press on the offensive on the continent.

Chapter III: Alpha Strike

From the beginning of the month of November, 1942 to the first half of January, 1943, with the exception of mainland France being occupied by Hitler, the Allies managed to turn the tide in their favor. Great Britain, having won the Second Battle of El Alamein, reestablished her position in Egypt on November 2 as well as recaptured Tobruk, Derna as well as Benghazi in Libya by the 20th. For the rest of November, the British devoted their troops to pursue the defeated Rommel into Tunisia. On the very last day of the year, the British won a major naval victory against Germany in the Battle of Barents Sea. The United States began operation TORCH, and the generals managed to land on the beachheads of Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia on November 8 with minimal resistance at Oran, Tunisia which fell only within two days. The American troops at Oran then joined the British on their pursuit of Rommel who was continually pushed further and further into Tunisia finally defeating Rommel at the Battle for Longstop Hill on April 7, 1943.

On the 12th, the United States battled Japan in the Battle of Guadalcanal and even though the losses were great, the United States turned Guadalcanal over to United States and reclaimed Buna, New Guinea on January 2, 1943. November 22, Soviet troops managed to completely surround German troops in the Battle of Stalingrad. On January 10, 1943, the Soviet Union began their counter offensive on Germany until the very last German troops commanded by Field Marshal Friedrich Paulus, surrendered in Stalingrad on January 31, 1943. After his victory at Stalingrad, Stalin gained permanent advantage over Hitler. Therefore his main concerns were about his own Allies.¹¹²

¹¹² Burns, *Roosevelt, The Soldier of Freedom*, p. 26, Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 310

Taking the advantage of Germany's dwindling momentum, Roosevelt as well as Churchill agreed to intensify the aerial bombings on Germany's and Italy's mainland and airfields to not only hinder enemy air power but also hurt their morale. The notable bombing efforts during the period between November, 1942 and January, 1943 were the US Air Force bombing of Naples, Italy in December and the Royal Air Force bombing of Berlin, Germany in January.

The idea of a conference had been around ever since one of the first TORCH landings. On November 26, 1942 Roosevelt suggested the idea of a conference between the military personnel from the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union which Churchill disagreed. Churchill believed a conference without the agreement on a joint direction would achieve little, especially if the military meeting was to take place in Moscow. As a result, Roosevelt and Churchill planned for the Casablanca Conference in mid-January, 1943. During the period of continuous victories, the Allies called for a conference between the leaders of the Allies which aimed to include not only the Big Three but also the French who was instrumental to the success of TORCH.

The holding of the conference was aimed towards discussing the next action for the Allies to take and what roles should each of them fulfill. On December 3, 1942, Churchill sent Stalin a telegram of the proposal for the joint conference just to receive a response containing his refusal on December 6. Stalin claimed that the military situation at Stalingrad was at the most critical stage and required his presence at all times,¹¹³ which was a valid statement, considering that Stalin really did command his own troops from his headquarters.¹¹⁴ Stalin also mentioned that the Western Allies should also open up the second front to help him.

¹¹³ Churchill, *The Second World War IV: The Hinge of Fate*, p. 666

¹¹⁴ Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day*, p. 216

Before sending his telegram to Stalin, Churchill proposed the idea of the meeting just between the United States and Great Britain before meeting the Big Three, which, to some degree, signified that he thought Stalin was to some degree separated from him and Roosevelt at least geographically. Churchill was thinking in the mindset of Western Allies being one entity and Soviet being another as they operated independently for the most part. Therefore, he wanted to make sure Great Britain and the United States was on the same page, or rather, for him to learn what Roosevelt was thinking before meeting the Russians. Roosevelt strongly opposed the idea because he was wary that Stalin would be suspicious if the two were to meet without him. The president tried his hardest not to upset the already paranoid Stalin over something unnecessary. After all, he had been trying to earn their trust for as long as they have been in contact sometimes at a cost of discrediting Churchill.

Whenever Russia becomes involved, Roosevelt would be somewhat distant from Churchill to not cause an imbalance between the Allies. The ultimate Allied victory would largely depend on not only Russia's survival but also cooperation. Stalin was especially paranoid about his status among the Allies because, like Churchill, he also viewed that the Western Allies were a single entity and Russia was an outsider. To secure the future cohesion of the Allies, Roosevelt was willing to accommodate Stalin over Churchill to give Stalin the impression that he was not leaning towards Great Britain. Once Stalin informed Churchill that he was not able to attend the conference, Roosevelt and Churchill tried to plan a meeting around the fact that Stalin was not able to leave Moscow until March.¹¹⁵ Roosevelt, for some time, was even considering moving the meeting to March just for Stalin to be at a conference but ultimately gave up.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Burns, *Roosevelt, The Soldier of Freedom*, p. 26, Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 315

¹¹⁶ Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day*, p. 215

After Churchill and Roosevelt picked Casablanca as their meeting spot, Eisenhower picked a hotel in Anfa, south of Casablanca, only a mile away from the Atlantic. President Roosevelt, Marshall, King and Lieutenant General Henry Arnold represented the United States. Churchill, General Sir Alan Brooke, Admiral Sir Dudley Pound and Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles R. Portal represented Great Britain. The conference was also joined by representatives of the Free French Charles De Gaulle as well as General Henri Giraud, the newly appointed Vichy French commander-in-chief.¹¹⁷ The final decisions were settled on December 29, 1942 and the conference took place there on January 14, 1943.

Unlike Great Britain, who already had the invasion of Italy from North Africa in mind, the American representatives actually were quite divided.¹¹⁸ Marshall was thinking in terms of further European operations, King felt that the United States had done enough in Europe and should return their focus to the Pacific while Arnold was more concerned about establishing his Air force as an independent organization than actually winning the war. Due to the wide array of interests for United States, the president was not able to pick any of the priorities as a prime one but elected to “wait and see” what Churchill had to say.¹¹⁹

Before the conference, the military chiefs planned to meet, on January 13, 1943 before Roosevelt arrives the day after. King and Marshall¹²⁰ decided to come up with some kind of common plan to propose to the British. Marshall concluded that the plan for the United States should be focused on Europe and not the Mediterranean, but invests more into the Pacific at the same time.¹²¹ Then came time of the meeting when King opened with what he discussed with

¹¹⁷ Both were there mainly for publicity purposes and not strategic as they took no part in the planning

¹¹⁸ Burns, *Roosevelt, The Soldier of Freedom*, p. 26, Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 312

¹¹⁹ Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day*, p. 220

¹²⁰ Arnold had a rank of Lieutenant General under Marshall and thus, followed Marshall's lead for the most part

¹²¹ King was content because the allocation for Europe and Pacific was 70% and 30% respectively, a significant improvement from the former 15%, Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day*, p. 227

Marshall. Brooke then expressed his concerns for the 30% of American resources being devoted to the Pacific effort, especially in the territories of the British Empire such as Burma or India. Churchill feared that the already unstable British holds in those territories that if the United States were to gain those positions, their hold on them would forever be lost. Therefore, Churchill much preferred those positions be reclaimed by the British Empire. After a few meetings between the combined Chiefs of Staff, nothing was settled. Roosevelt arrives at Casablanca on the afternoon of January 14, 1943.

There were three priorities regarding the future of the Western Allies 1) preparing for the invasion of Northern France 2) exploiting the momentum in North Africa and 3) containing Japan.¹²² The priorities just lined up differently. The United States was the only one holding Japan back. Thus, supporting their troops in the Pacific became one of the priorities. The British priority was to use their success in North Africa to its maximum capacity. After much discussion, the Western Allies finally found the compromise. The British, who had a difficult time arguing for their mission to attack Sicily after Tunisia fell, managed to gain American support by letting American continued their effort in the Pacific, all the while continuing the build up of military forces for the second front at Northern France. No allocation of resources was changed.¹²³ Churchill and Roosevelt accepted the arrangement. The Allies were one step closer to closing the ring on Germany.

On January 23, the Allies summarized their strategies as follows: 1) Take Sicily to establish the pathway to Italy from Mediterranean and give Russia the long promised second front as a diversion 2) From the British Isles, keep the pressure on Germany, utilizing intensified bombing while building up forces for the cross-channel invasion 3) For the United States: hold

¹²² Along with increased bombings of Germany and supplying Russia which the two easily agreed upon

¹²³ The original 85% Europe and 15% Pacific

Japan back using minimal resources to not affect the European theatre 4) For Great Britain: while invading Sicily, must also continue delivering supplies by Arctic convoys to Russia.¹²⁴ Neither side got what they aimed for but the end results were at the very least satisfactory in terms of military strategies.¹²⁵

The Casablanca Conference ended well in terms of future strategies for the Allies and to the eyes of the World, Churchill and Roosevelt apparently helped reforge French unity joining De Gaulle's Free French with the Vichy forces under Giraud. Another development that came out of the conference was Roosevelt's off-hand mention of the Allies fighting the Axis until they accepted unconditional surrender. Though casually uttered, the statement had some effects on the Allies due to its poorly defined meaning not really being understood. Roosevelt thought that by including unconditional surrender of the Axis as an Allied war aim, it would force Russia to keep fighting Hitler without signing any separate treaty with them.¹²⁶ The president also believed that Russia would also be forced into fighting Japan who at the moment were not at war with Russia.

Churchill thought it to be unnecessary, while also being aware that such condition might be a slight hindrance. Churchill thought that by declaring such condition, it would undermine the effort of the local resistance groups such as Germany as well as motivate the inhabitants of the nation to unite with their oppressors and fight against the outsider.¹²⁷ Stalin, contrary to Roosevelt's beliefs, would have seen it as an opportunity to gain territories. By not being allowed to accept surrender, the Red Army can sweep everything in their way on their way to Germany all the while occupying areas without a halt. Ultimately however, what the leaders

¹²⁴ Richardson, *The Secret History of World War II*, p. 78 (Telegram from Roosevelt and Churchill to Stalin on January 27, 1943)

¹²⁵ Churchill, *The Second World War IV: The Hinge of Fate*, p. 692

¹²⁶ Burns, *Roosevelt, The Soldier of Freedom*, p. 26, Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 323-324

¹²⁷ Fleming, *The New Dealers' War*, p. 174-175

thought about the statements was largely inconsequential. The statement implied that the Allied effort finally progressed to the step in which they no longer had to worry about losing to the Axis but rather to the point where they designed their victory. On January 24, 1942, the Casablanca conference was over and each personnel returned to assume their responsibilities.

As mentioned earlier, the Allies had gained momentum ever since the British victory at El Alamein. As of the emergence of Tehran Conference on November 28, 1943, the future was looking bright for the Allies. The Guadalcanal Campaign beginning in November 12, 1942 concluded as the first major American victory in the Pacific on February 9, 1943 when the American Navy declares Guadalcanal secured. Following Montgomery's penetration through the Mareth Line on March 28, 1942, the American troops from the initial TORCH landing at Oran, Tunisia on November 8, 1942 finally joined up with Montgomery's Eighth Army pursuing Rommel's unit¹²⁸ from Egypt to the Mareth Line in Tunisia on April 7, 1943. Rommel retreated to an airfield in Enfidha, Tunisia and eventually retreated Tunisia completely on May 7, 1943.

Beginning in November 29, 1943, Stalin managed to stop Hitler who just weeks earlier were unstoppable, at Stalingrad. Ever since then, Stalin's troops continued to advance westward reclaiming territories lost during the days he utilized the scorched earth policy just to survive. Finally, the Western Allies managed to use the second front to support Russia. On June 9, the Allies landed in Sicily along with political Turmoil in Italy resulting in Mussolini being arrested on July 26 and Italy surrendered the Allies on September 8, 1943. Hitler was forced to reallocate troops to take Italy and reinstall Mussolini on September 11, weakening their forces combating Stalin at Kharkov spelling Hitler's doom on the Eastern front. By the time of the Tehran Conference, Stalin's troops not only managed to win back their Russian territories including

¹²⁸ Rommel himself left North Africa on March 9, 1943 never to be returned, in order to offer a vain effort to talk some sense into Hitler, leaving his command to General Hans-Jürgen von Arnim

Caucasus, Stalingrad, Kursk, and Kharkov but also managed to reach Kiev, Ukraine in early November.

In addition to major victories on land, the Allies also had been successful in naval warfare as well as in strategic bombing. British victory at the Battle of the Barents Sea on the very last day of 1942 turned the table. Even though the British Navy suffered heavy convoy losses in the Atlantic in mid-March, 1943, they made their return during “Black May,” just two months afterwards. The “Wolf Pack,” a U-boat fleet commanded by German Admiral Karl Donitz accumulated heavy losses during April due to technological advancements. On May 22, 1943, Donitz’s Wolf Pack retreated from North Atlantic. As for the Allied strategic bombing, the combined might of the US Air Force and British Royal Air Force managed to apply heavy pressure on Germany especially after the POINTBLANK directive¹²⁹ had been issued on June 14, 1943 aimed to destroy any potential air power of the Axis in order to secure complete air superiority for the Allies in the future.

Because the military effort was going well, the prospect of the post-war world came into question. Ever since as early as the Casablanca conference, Roosevelt, despite not having decided the future strategies for United States, he was certain that the Mediterranean should not have been one. The president was beginning to agree with Marshall that Churchill’s decisions were merely for diversion. Despite his decision to support TORCH in 1942, which was partly to appeal to the public and partly to observe French politics, even Roosevelt have had enough of Churchill procrastinating to help the Stalin establish the second front.

Though fully aware that Churchill did not trust Stalin, Roosevelt ignored and at times even dismissed Churchill. Roosevelt even tried, unsuccessfully, to arrange a meeting with just

¹²⁹ A modified version of the Casablanca directive which the Combined Chiefs of Staff agreed upon at the Casablanca Conference which was meant to cripple German economy and morale

Stalin and him in May 1943 for a chance to earn Stalin's trust. Roosevelt was less concerned about what Churchill aimed to achieve from buying time than the fact that it postponed the cross-channel invasion which Stalin expected to happen since 1942 but, to his disappointment, appeared to be postponed until 1944.¹³⁰ Stalin asked for an attack on Germany, not the roundabout second front like attacking Sicily. As a result, Roosevelt was much more anxious to meet Stalin than meeting Churchill in order to ensure his future cooperation.¹³¹

March 1943, British Foreign Secretary Eden came to Washington to meet the president on Churchill's behalf. Though the conversation was mostly inconclusive, Roosevelt did show his attitude about the post-war world. He illustrated his vision of the post-war world to Eden of having four great nations, being the Big Three and China, policing the peace of the world together. Related to this idea was the plan to create the United Nations which would include Russia's cooperation. Though not mentioned, Roosevelt felt that if any nation would have a problem with his postwar plans, it would be the British. Roosevelt had a special distrust for the British. He felt as if the British spheres of influence, whether in Asia, Africa or in Europe would always be sources of unrest especially to Russia which could not help but to be paranoid from being under attack for the last twenty five years.¹³²

Additionally, Roosevelt simply came to not trust Churchill in general around the time he advocated for further Mediterranean operations in 1943. He felt that the prime minister had questionable motives, ranging from his refusal to properly deliver supplies to Russia, to his obsession with the Mediterranean, his idea of restoring France as a military power and above all else was his apparent distrust for the Soviet Union. From his observation, Roosevelt sensed the Russia-Britain rivalries on the horizon and he aimed to prevent it from happening.

¹³⁰ Richardson, *The Secret History of World War II*, p. 78 (Telegram from Stalin to Roosevelt on June 11, 1943)

¹³¹ Burns, *Roosevelt, The Soldier of Freedom*, p. 26, Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 366

¹³² Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 499

In addition to his cold logical way of thinking, much like any other dictator, Stalin was obsessed with his own safety.¹³³ Therefore, he was not capable of trusting someone based on words without anything to show for. To Roosevelt, Churchill could be dealt with more easily than Stalin, who was distrustful towards both Churchill and Roosevelt. Therefore, Roosevelt's policies were focused around the hope to secure Stalin's cooperation for the post-war future by signaling both Churchill and Stalin that the United States was to not take the British side. These, until the very moment of his death, were the president's utmost priorities.

Unfortunately, his endeavors to earn Stalin's trust did not prove fruitful. Stalin had little regard for what he can offer the Allies when he made his demands. He was the only one fighting Hitler and his people already lost so many lives when the Western Allies could not even give him a second front. He asked for the second-front in 1942 but the support only came through two years late.

If anything, he was in this alliance only for the survival of the Soviet Union and his so-called allies did nothing to aid him while he was doing the leg work to prevent them from certain doom. If anything, he felt that he had every right to be upset and suspicious of the Allies and nothing the Allies could have done would have earned his trust. During the fall of Italy, Stalin was upset that the Allies did not even consult him about her surrender. Stalin already had bad feelings towards the Allies from the delayed second front except for Italy.¹³⁴ Therefore, the action of having Italy surrender for shock value damaged the relationship even more.

Around the time of the Third Washington (TRIDENT) Conference in May 1943, Roosevelt finally supported Marshall in opposing further operations in the Mediterranean unless Churchill can do it without slowing down the military buildup in Great Britain. As a result,

¹³³ Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace*, p. 58

¹³⁴ Richardson, *The Secret History of World War II*, p. 78 (Telegram from Stalin to Churchill on June 24, 1943)

during the Quebec Conference (QUADRANT) in August of 1943, Churchill, for the first time, mentioned a possible date for the cross-channel operation, codenamed “OVERLORD”, to be in May 1944.¹³⁵ Stalin was somewhat relieved that what he asked for a year ago was to finally come to fruition even though it would be within a year later. With the enormous increase in momentum for the Allies and the questions for the future finally coming into the picture, the Big Three finally agreed to meet up to describe their endgame at the Tehran Conference.

From the very beginning of the meeting, Churchill and Roosevelt already began growing distant. Arriving on November 28, 1943, Roosevelt met Molotov upon his arrival. Molotov then told the president that there was a Nazi plot to assassinate one of the Big Three and the fact that the American Legation was located further away from the British Legation and Russian Embassy might have made traveling dangerous. Stalin then invited Roosevelt to stay in a villa near the Russian Embassy which Roosevelt accepted. Churchill initially viewed the arrangement with optimism that it was arranged for the security purposes but he would soon learn its true nature as Stalin was able to listen in on all FDR’s conversations.

Throughout the entire conference, Roosevelt did not spend any time meeting exclusively with Churchill but spent a great amount of time with only Stalin and despite the prime minister’s efforts, Roosevelt did not budge. Churchill then conceded and accepted that he was to deal with Stalin on his own. During those times Roosevelt discussed a few topics with Stalin ranging from the immediate concerns such as his idea to let bombers refuel in Russia after bombing Hitler to political matters such as the United Nations. Stalin showed obvious interest in strategic bombing of Germany and did not care much for the prospect of the United Nations especially after China was mentioned. Stalin came to this conference only for one purpose and that was to get a clear

¹³⁵ Churchill, *The Second World War V: Closing the Ring*, p. 608-609, Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 585

commitment for OVERLORD¹³⁶ from the Western Allies and to prevent the Allies from reinforcing Italy or landing troops in the Balkans. Then the conversation went back to the future of Germany to discuss with Stalin instead.

The next day, the Big Three met for the first time. Despite the increasing momentum, the Allies were not so hasty to only discuss the postwar future. Their main focus was still on the war at hand and how to end it.¹³⁷ After all the formalities were over, Stalin went straight to the point and asked who was to command OVERLORD and until that was decided, Stalin did not believe in the Western Allied commitment for the second front. Roosevelt had not decided the commander for the operation but was accidentally saved by Churchill who apparently was not aware that Stalin did not want to hear about his Mediterranean strategies. Churchill did not get to say much until Stalin interrupted stating that he was only here to talk about OVERLORD and he wanted a solid date, not a vague commitment. Churchill then tried again by mentioning the idea of bringing Turkey into war¹³⁸ only to be silenced by Stalin who made his point clear that he was not there to talk about diversions. Roosevelt then broke up the tension and asked that the Western Allies to reconvene the next day to come up with answers before meeting Stalin.¹³⁹ At this stage, Churchill realized that he was already alone; Roosevelt already sided with Stalin on operation OVERLORD. However, Churchill's suffering for the day was still not over.

Stalin hosted dinner for the Allies on the same day. As the dinner went on, it seemed like Stalin still had some animosity toward Churchill who (to Stalin) made OVERLORD difficult. The tension earlier brought out the bully in Stalin. He decided to give Churchill a test of will. Stalin mentioned the idea of shooting fifty to a hundred thousand Nazis just to lower their future

¹³⁶ Smith, *American Diplomacy during the Second World War: 1941-1945*, p. 72

¹³⁷ Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence, Vol. II*, p. 612

¹³⁸ Beitzell, *The Uneasy Alliance*, p. 77-78

¹³⁹ Burns, *Roosevelt, The Soldier of Freedom*, p. 26, Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 408, Churchill, *The Second World War V: Closing the Ring*, p. 608-609, Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 378

war capacity. Still bothered from the thought of Stalin and Roosevelt ganging up on him, Churchill took the casual remark seriously. Churchill then easily took the bait and replied that the British parliament including him will never condone acts such as mass execution and would rather be shot himself than being a part of it. In an effort to lessen the tension, Roosevelt tried to reduce the conversation to a joke by mentioning that forty nine thousand Nazis should have been enough. After some exchanges, Churchill stormed off only to be invited back in by Stalin who went out to see Churchill and told him that it was simply a joke. Left with no alternatives, Churchill rejoined the party. Churchill was mentally spent after dinner as not only Great Britain not being able to sell any of their plans that day and Roosevelt was largely siding with Stalin the confrontations were also overwhelming even for him. Roosevelt essentially sold Churchill out to please Stalin.

Despite his lack of confidence in the feasibility of OVERLORD, Churchill gave up his will to resist.¹⁴⁰ He went alone to Stalin and assured the Red Tsar of his commitment in OVERLORD by mentioning that his Mediterranean plan might have caused some misunderstanding for the Russia but it would not affect OVERLORD. As the three meet later, Roosevelt allowed Churchill to inform Stalin of the date he picked which was sometime in May, 1944. Stalin was pleased about the date for OVERLORD then turned to Roosevelt to ask about the identity of its commander in which the president replied that he would give the answer within three or four days. November 30, 1943, the final meeting of the Tehran conference ended in that fashion.

Despite their conflict, Churchill and Stalin¹⁴¹ did agree on the idea that the United States should not worry about the Pacific for the moment. Churchill, in particular, was determined to

¹⁴⁰ Beitzell, *The Uneasy Alliance*, p. 380

¹⁴¹ Thanks to the Soviet-Japanese Pact, Russia and Japan was not a war with one another

convince Roosevelt to not go through with operation BUCCANEER in the Andaman seas. After some exchanges between Churchill and Roosevelt from 4-5 of December, Roosevelt, thoroughly annoyed by Churchill, finally gave in on December 5 and decided not to send troops over to the Andaman despite Mountbatten's demands for more troops which worked into Stalin's favor. Stalin suspect that Andaman's reinforcements would lead to China's reinforcement. On December 4, Roosevelt also picked Eisenhower¹⁴² as the commander for OVERLORD and brought the news to him personally in Tunis on December 7, 1943.¹⁴³

Despite being the first meeting of the Big Three, the Allies only managed to agree on a few topics from the Tehran conference. The major accomplishment was the establishment of the OVERLORD strategy which had been nothing more than a vague possibility since 1942. The Western Allies was finally able to fulfill the one commitment the Soviet Union asked of. Additionally, Stalin was also on board with the ideas of Allied bombers refueling in Russia to improve their efficiency in the strategic bombing of Germany.

Roosevelt and Stalin then met up privately afterwards. In an extra effort to please Stalin, Roosevelt also allowed Stalin a free hand in Poland as well as the rest of Eastern Europe. Stalin once claimed that he felt responsible for the fate of Poland and he intended to personally make amends and therefore, he would participate in Polish politics as well as move the border of Poland westward into Germany. The president did not seem to object the idea since he only asked for Stalin to understand his position as the American presidential election was coming up. Roosevelt explained that there were many Americans of Polish descent and he intended to win

¹⁴² Roosevelt originally planned to pick Marshall but his presence was needed in Washington. With much regret, Roosevelt had to pick his close second, Eisenhower, who was also extremely successful during TORCH

¹⁴³ Official announcement was actually on December 27, 1943 but the decision was made on the 7th, Richardson, *The Secret History of World War II*, p. 78 (Telegram from Roosevelt to Stalin on December 7, 1943)

their votes and therefore he was not supposed to answer Stalin on the matter.¹⁴⁴ Additionally, Roosevelt had the confidence that despite the rights to self-determination that he promoted, the Baltic States would still join the Soviet Union. Additionally, he also mentioned that this matter would not be something the United States would go to war over, ensuring Stalin his free hand in the future of Poland.¹⁴⁵ Stalin then suggested to the president that some propaganda work should be done.¹⁴⁶

Additionally, the three also agreed to postpone whatever ideas they did not agree upon to be discussed after Germany was defeated. Due to the condition that Stalin did not care for much else but OVERLORD, there were several topics being introduced but did not amount to much. One of them was the establishment of the United Nations to prevent war in the future which Stalin did not care much for especially when they were still fighting Germany. Another was the idea of using the Siberian airfields for the bombing of Japan in which Stalin refused.¹⁴⁷ The Allies ended up not agreeing to many agendas but at least the priority was fixed on OVERLORD. The war then resumed with Russia still on the offensive drive towards Germany. Great Britain continued their Arctic convoys to Russia while operating in the Mediterranean as a side project. The United States dedicated all resources to build up for D-Day on May 8, 1944.

Leading the charge for the Allies, Russian troops were unstoppable on their westward drive. By the end of 1943, the Red Army already reclaimed their positions and was liberating Ukraine and by January 4, the Red Army marched past Ukraine and entered Poland, reaching Warsaw at the end of July. Seeing Stalin's troops arriving near Warsaw, the Polish resistance group initiated the Second Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. To the Germans' surprise, at the most

¹⁴⁴ Smith, *American Diplomacy during the Second World War: 1941-1945*, p. 78

¹⁴⁵ Burns, *Roosevelt, The Soldier of Freedom*, p. 26, Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 408

¹⁴⁶ Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins, an Intimate History*, p. 796

¹⁴⁷ Burns, *Roosevelt, The Soldier of Freedom*, p. 26, Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 313

crucial moments of the resistance, Russia's westward invasion paused just outside of Warsaw without extending any help to the resistance, allowing the Nazis to annihilate the resistance group.

Stalin claimed that he was against interfering with internal affairs of Poland and the Allies should not support the Polish resistance group. Stalin also claimed that the counteroffensive was strong and the Red Army had to concentrate their efforts which prevented them to support the uprising anyway. Despite his claims, Stalin's true intention was likely to be letting the Germans exterminate the future resistance against his puppet government in Poland after the war. After the resistance was defeated, the Red Army easily claimed Warsaw on January 17, 1945 as well as liberated Auschwitz, in on the 26th all the while "liberated"¹⁴⁸ the rest of Eastern Europe. The Western Allies became increasingly concerned about Stalin's scheme.

The United States and Great Britain operated as a single unit in the Mediterranean, the European theatre as well as some effort in the Pacific at this stage. The Western Allies were responsible for the strategic bombing of Germany and Italy along with the areas which were yet to be liberated such as Holland, Greece and Belgium until the ground troops reached the area and liberate them. At long last, the long promised D-Day came on June 6, 1944, the combined forces of Canada, France and Britain landed on the beach at Normandy. France was the first to be liberated on August 25, 1944. With the landing secured, the Allies advanced eastward on a race to reach Berlin.

The most difficult battle for the Allies was the event known as the Battle of the Bulge beginning on December 16, 1944, a counteroffensive from Germany towards the American

¹⁴⁸ For every territory Stalin liberated he left some troops behind to "protect" them. The troops did not leave after the end of the Second World War

divisions near the Ardennes forest. The battle lasted a month, incurring heavy losses on both sides and ended in the Allied victory on January 16, 1945, less than a month away from Roosevelt's very last conference at Yalta. Around the time of Yalta conference, Russia had already reached Germany, but the Allies had not even reached the Rhine.

Throughout 1944, Stalin was swiftly advancing through Eastern Europe, leaving behind troops in every liberated territory. It was not long before the Western Allies learned of the consequences. Before the Big Three met at the Yalta conference, both Churchill and Roosevelt became increasingly concerned about the "liberations" of nations under Axis by Stalin. During the Tehran Conference, the future of Eastern Europe, Poland in particular, was briefly discussed but not pursued in great length, therefore leaving no restriction on how Stalin "liberate" them. As a result, Churchill proposed the idea of a meeting between the Big Three in June, 1944 and Roosevelt agreed that some agreements for Eastern Europe had to be established with Stalin. Therefore, Roosevelt contacted Stalin to propose the idea of the meeting between the three in Scotland in September.

Preferring not to be restricted by any agreements, Stalin refused to meet with the Allies with the same excuses he used before, which were his health and the fact that he had to command the Red Army at all times. The Red Tsar did offer to send over his Foreign Minister Molotov, who both Roosevelt and Churchill believed, would be even less receptive to their proposals than Stalin himself. Despite Stalin's response, Churchill refused to give in as he decided to travel to Moscow in person to negotiate and ended up staying there from October 9 to 18, 1944. Despite the prime minister's full effort, he only managed to secure future freedom for Greece and nothing else, not even a meeting in the near future.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁹ Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace*, p. 25

Stalin was not opposed to the idea of an eventual meeting of the Big Three but buying time worked into his favor because his army was performing well. Therefore, Stalin accepted that there would be a meeting but it was to be much later than what Churchill and Roosevelt proposed. The meeting was rescheduled to February 2, 1945 due to the request from the president for the meeting to take place after his inauguration date on January 20, 1945. Towards the end of 1944, Roosevelt's health was declining at an astonishing rate as he overexerted himself during the campaigns for his presidential election.¹⁵⁰ Therefore, he proposed the idea of the Big Three meeting somewhere closer to the United States. At Tehran, upon seeing Roosevelt's disability, Stalin promised to be the one traveling to see the president not the other way around.¹⁵¹ Unfortunately, Stalin did not stay true to his words because, out of sheer paranoia for his own safety, he ultimately refused to travel anywhere outside his own territory. The meeting being postponed to February 2 worked perfectly in Stalin's favor as he had more time to expand his influence over the more territories in Eastern Europe before Churchill and Roosevelt forced him to discuss the legitimacy of the practice with the Allies.

While it was true that the British fought alone from 1940 to 1941 almost to the brink of annihilation, Churchill was well aware that after 1942, Great Britain had not been contributing much to the Allied cause while both the United States and Soviet Russia were prime contributors since the very moment they joined the alliance. By that logic, in the later stages of the war, Roosevelt and Stalin cared much more about each other's opinions while Churchill's opinion mattered less. Therefore, if Churchill was to be heard at all, he had to get one side to speak for him. He then planned to strengthen the bond between the United States and Great Britain which he found to be somewhat lacking of late. Before the Yalta Conference, Churchill invited

¹⁵⁰ Fleming, *The New Dealers' War*, p. 461

¹⁵¹ Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace*, p. 27

Roosevelt to meet him at Malta for 2-3 days to discuss the stance for the Western Allies. Even though Roosevelt ultimately accepted Churchill's proposal, the meeting did not achieve as much as he planned it to.

As a response to Churchill's insistence for the president to bring his military leaders, Roosevelt only sent Marshall and the new Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius over. Moreover, instead of staying a few days, Roosevelt decided to stop by Malta only for one afternoon, much to the disappointment of Churchill, for the sole purpose of sightseeing before flying off to attend the Yalta Conference.¹⁵² Roosevelt did not want to risk doing anything that might cause suspicion in Stalin. Especially with the Pacific theatre unresolved, Roosevelt counted on Stalin's support against Japan as well as the United Nations.¹⁵³

Overall, Roosevelt had mixed feelings about Churchill. Even though, Roosevelt and American people in general had special disdain for Great Britain and her practice of imperialism¹⁵⁴ and there were some tensions in the past regarding the procrastination of OVERLORD, Churchill eventually fulfilled his role which Roosevelt was also grateful for. Unfortunately, Stalin's trust was not to be earned easily and as a result, Roosevelt was on good terms with Churchill when he can afford to but for the most part chose to accommodate to Stalin's paranoia to earn his trust because the future of the Allied effort as well as Roosevelt's version of post-war peace would rely on the cooperation of the mistrustful Red Tsar, not the Hero of Britain.

For the upcoming conference, Roosevelt's basic ideas for discussion was to first establish the communication line between the Red Army and Eisenhower's troops for the troops to operate more efficiently and then to see if he could talk Stalin into helping the United States fight Japan,

¹⁵² Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace*, p. 28

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 29

¹⁵⁴ Larrabee, *Roosevelt, Commander in Chief*, p. 436-437

and to discuss the United Nations as well as post-war Eastern Europe and Germany. Considering how strong Stalin's position was during the most recent war effort, it was apparent that there was not much Roosevelt could have done about their occupation of Eastern European regions since he missed the chance to approve of the landing in the Balkans that would have kept Stalin in check.¹⁵⁵ Roosevelt only hoped that Stalin would at least put on a guise of decency for the public regarding their "liberations" of Eastern Europe.

Roosevelt and Churchill flew in from Malta then arrived at the conference on February 3, 1945, but the first formal meeting took place on the evening of February 4. Stalin, who arrived a day earlier, took the initiative to see Churchill before the meeting took place. Churchill and his advisors informed Stalin about the current offensive strategy mainly from the Mediterranean front and Stalin shared the situation of the Red Army preparing for the final push at Germany's corridor. Before departing, Stalin mentioned a strategy in which Churchill proposed to Roosevelt but was rejected during their awkward meeting at Malta which made Churchill regret its occurrence. Had he waited until Yalta, Stalin would have backed him up when he presented it. After causing a bit of a stir, Stalin left Churchill to prepare for the first formal meeting, the day after.¹⁵⁶

After visiting Churchill, Stalin repeated the similar process with Roosevelt. At first, Stalin mentioned the progress of the Red Army was making up until then to the president.¹⁵⁷ The president then followed up by mentioning the need to establish communications between Eisenhower and the Soviet military command to improve the coordination in combat.¹⁵⁸ As a

¹⁵⁵ Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence, Vol. III*, p. 198

¹⁵⁶ Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace*, p. 71-72

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Stettinius, *Roosevelt and the Russians: The Yalta Conference*, p. 99

result, the only solid agreements the Western Allies managed to secure favorably were the ones not related to Eastern Europe.¹⁵⁹

The Big Three easily agreed on the ideas of 1) The attack on Berlin was to proceed as fast as possible, 2) Germany was to be divided in four sections among Allies, three belonging to the Grand Alliance and another fell to France 3) Russia agreed to support the United States against Japan after Germany was defeated in exchange for the return of their former territories lost to Japan during the Russo-Japanese War 4) Despite Stalin's past experience from the failure of the League of Nations, Roosevelt managed to convince Stalin to agree to the creation of the United Nations 5) With the exception of Eastern Europe, Stalin conceded to the Western Allies on the topic of free elections for the newly freed territories such as France, Belgium or Holland and so on.

Ultimately, Roosevelt and Churchill had to allow Stalin who already had influence over Eastern Europe to put the Polish Provisional Government into power, despite their support for the Polish Government in Exile in London¹⁶⁰ which involved the precision sensitive practice of strategic bombing.¹⁶¹ The idea would directly benefit the immediate military strategy and was therefore supported by Stalin. Roosevelt knew what Stalin wanted to hear, they got along incredibly well. Along with actively avoiding meeting Churchill, the president also frequently mentioned his anti-British and anti-German attitude to Stalin.¹⁶²

During the Yalta Conference from the beginning to the end, Stalin dominated the conversation. The reason for this apparent upper hand was due to the information which Russian

¹⁵⁹ Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace*, p. 206

¹⁶⁰ Butler, *My Dear Mr. Stalin*, p. 278, Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace*, p. 250-251, McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia, 1941-46*, p. 47

¹⁶¹ Churchill, *The Second World War V: Closing the Ring*, p. 608-609, Davis, *FDR: The War President, 1940-1943*, p. 340

¹⁶² Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace*, p. 74

intelligence,¹⁶³ the likes of Alger Hiss who was Roosevelt's key negotiator who turned out to be a Soviet spy,¹⁶⁴ gathered for Stalin. Even though the Americans were aware of the Russians' intentions and took precautions Stalin still managed to gain advantage through the information gained.¹⁶⁵ Stalin knew before the meeting what the priorities for the Allies would be and perhaps more importantly, he was aware of their divide.

Roosevelt informed Stalin that the Western Allies sole purpose of coming to the Yalta conference was due to their concern over Poland and Eastern Europe. Therefore, the Western Allies was obviously more prepared to debate the future of Eastern Europe.¹⁶⁶ In terms of military strategy, however, the Allies did not have a solid plan of their own due to their lack of correspondence in Malta. By assessing the gathered information, Stalin strategized the meeting to involve him exploiting the Red Army's position and the unpreparedness of the Allies leader at the summit to pressure the Western Allies to speed up their invasion on the western border of Germany all the while bide time in regarding the topics of the post-war Eastern Europe, especially Poland.

The Yalta Conference was when the Alliance began to fall apart further as the Big Three had less reasons to work together ever since the Tehran conference in 1943. Unlike the earlier stages where survival forced the three unlikely parties to form an alliance and through difficult compromises, the three managed to hold the alliance together into an uncertain future. As of the Tehran 1943, the tide had turned and the Big Three were already thinking about their place after the war ended.

¹⁶³ Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace*, p. 78-79

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 356

¹⁶⁵ Butler, *My Dear Mr. Stalin*, p. 280

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 291

Stalin cared about nothing more than the future safety of the Soviet Union. Stalin simply wanted to solve the recurring problems in Russia for the past 50 years which was being attacked by Germany by having the sphere of influence over Eastern Europe up to the western border of Poland to create a giant buffer zone against future attacks from Europe and for the case of Germany, Stalin especially wanted to punish them by demanding heavy reparations as well as crippling their economy enough so that they would never rise again.

Great Britain was mainly concerned about the future of their empire as well as the gigantic sphere of influence of Russia. Churchill aimed to recreate the system of the balance of power in Europe by restoring France to its former status as well as rebuilding itself through the rubble of destruction. Churchill even wanted Germany to rejoin the European community as a functioning nation but in order for the balance of power to work, powers do have to be balanced out which was not possible with the sphere of influence of Russia especially Poland which Churchill wanted to be the future buffer zone against Russia.

Roosevelt on the other hand wanted to do away with the old systems of peacekeeping which failed time again such as spheres of influence and the balance of power.¹⁶⁷ Roosevelt aimed to create a more nuance system which involved the idea of four policemen, namely the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union and China who would form peacekeeping force of the world through the system of the United Nations. And in order for such a system to work, nations must have their own autonomy and self-government meaning that the British Empire had to give up their former territories and Russia had to allow for free election in Eastern Europe as well. The three factions had vastly different views on the matter but the true deciding factors boiled down to the influence they had on one another at the end of the war which would affect the compromises they came up with.

¹⁶⁷ Smith, *American Diplomacy during the Second World War: 1941-1945*, p. 63

As a result, the only solid agreements the Western Allies managed to secure favorably were the ones not related to Eastern Europe. The Big Three easily agreed on the ideas of 1) The attack on Berlin was to proceed as fast as possible, 2) Germany was to be divided in four sections among Allies, three belonging to the Grand Alliance and another fell to France 3) Russia agreed to support the United States against Japan after Germany was defeated in exchange for the return of their former territories lost to Japan during the Russo-Japanese War 4) Despite Stalin's past experience from the failure League of Nations, Roosevelt managed to convince Stalin to agree to the creation of the United Nations 5) With the exception of Eastern Europe, Stalin conceded to the Western Allies on the topic of free elections for the newly freed territories such as France, Belgium or Holland and so on.

Unlike Churchill whose nation was on the same continent as Russia, Roosevelt's main concern was to keep the Alliance together and therefore, his concern for Poland as a buffer zone was secondary.¹⁶⁸ Ultimately, Roosevelt allowed Stalin who already had influence over Eastern Europe to put the Polish Provisional Government into power, despite their support for the Polish Government in Exile in London.¹⁶⁹ After the Yalta Conference, nothing was able to save Hitler from his demise. April 21, the Red Army reached Berlin. In the month of April alone, two of the three Axis leaders died in quick succession. Mussolini was executed on the 28th and Hitler committed suicide on the 30th of April. The Allies declared its victory in Europe on May 8, 1945. Nazi high ranking officers were captured and imprisoned shortly after until the Nuremberg Trials which took place on November 20, 1945. The Allies then divided Germany and Berlin as agreed upon on June 5.

¹⁶⁸ Divine, *Roosevelt and World War II*, p. 97

¹⁶⁹ Butler, *My Dear Mr. Stalin*, p. 310-311

The United States successfully tested an atomic bomb technology and successfully bombed Japan with it on August 6. August 8, 1945, the Soviet Union held up their end of the bargain declaring war on Japan only to see its end the next day when the second atomic bomb was dropped in Japan. Japan agreed to the unconditional surrender on August 14, 1945. The United Nations Charter was signed on June 26 and the United Nation was born on October 24, 1945, realizing Roosevelt's vision of the postwar future. By the end of 1945, Stalin was the only one of the Big Three left. Churchill lost the election and was replaced by Clement Attlee on July 26, 1945. Roosevelt, with deteriorating health since his presidential election, the youngest of the Big Three passed away at the age of 63, having been the only president serving the fourth term in the history of the United States.

Epilogue

April 12, 1945, the 32nd President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who managed to keep the condition of his health a secret from the public, died in office at the age of 63. After the end of Yalta Conference, amidst the grief of the American public, the Grand Alliance continued its path to victory without him. Despite being one of the architects of victories, Roosevelt did not live long enough to see it, as both the Il Duce and the Fuhrer managed to outlive him. The Allies declared victory in Europe on May 7, 1945 and by June 26, Germany was divided and the United Nations Charter was signed. Japan also surrendered fairly quickly after the European Axis was defeated. After American bombers dropped the two atomic bombs on Japan on August 6 and 9, 1945, the very same day, the Soviet Union declared war on Japan, Japan also surrendered to the Allies ultimately bringing the Second World War to an end.

The story of the Allies during the Second World War was a unique one due to the fact that it was one of the few times throughout the course of history that an alliance had been effective. Despite their differences, the Big Three agreed to work with one another while the Axis either hindered one another or simply operated independently. The Axis had very similar principles to one another, as the three powers shared an interest in territorial expansion, but the only benefit they gained from their alliance was a promise to not attack each other. Italy was for the most part a hindrance to Germany, while Japan and Germany simply did not communicate because both were focused on the war on their own area of interests.

Even though none of the principles of the Allies lined up with one another - Churchill aimed to retain the British Empire, Stalin aimed to secure the future safety of Russia and Roosevelt aimed for the United States to be involved at the global level after the war - they at

least shared a priority, which was to defeat Hitler. However, that only begs the question of why they fought Hitler and that lined up perfectly

The question of how they fought and won the war was a different story. Due to the fact that the Allies shared an immediate goal but not a long term goal, the Big Three often conflicted in their strategic discussions because they involved their national interests (the reason they fought Hitler to begin with). The initial concern for the Big Three was winning the war against Hitler and the three already had a difficult time agreeing to a joint strategy for a single objective. The case became much more severe after TORCH when the Allies managed to gain the upper hand and the Big Three were thinking about the postwar future. Still, the three managed to adhere to one another due to one shared objective: postwar peace.

The United States joined the Second World War initially to restore peace to Europe and stop the German expansion, and later aimed to advocate for the revised international peace organization which would allow the United States to be involved in deciding the future of the world. Great Britain was in the war because the balance of power in Europe failed to prevent the German aggression which reached as far as the British Isles; she was also concerned about losing the dominions over her colonies. The Soviet Union's concern remained the same from the beginning to the end, which was peace and security for Russia which was the reason for Stalin's establishment of the buffer states in Eastern Europe.

Though fully aware the weaknesses of the League of Nations, Roosevelt did believe in the idea of an international peace organization like Former President Woodrow Wilson, who implemented it. The idea of the United Nations was then created. The basic idea of the United Nations was an international body where members would settle their disputes peacefully and would collectively use force for peacekeeping if necessary. The reason for the creation of the

United Nations was that Roosevelt recognized that the old European systems for world order - namely the sphere of influence and the balance of power - simply never worked and it was time that the United States stepped in using an improved version of the international peace organization.

The topic most frequently discussed during the Yalta conference was how the voting and membership would work. The challenge, in creating an international body including both the superpowers like the Big Three and other smaller nations, was to find a common ground that would appeal to both bigger and smaller nations in which the three nations had their own versions of. Even though peace was the aim of the Big Three, they still aimed to gain as much advantage as they can in the Security Council because each believed their version to be the right one.

What Churchill had in mind about the arrangement of the United Nations was that Great Britain and, hopefully, France would become two of the five permanent members with veto rights. The other members that would support Great Britain would be the nations which the British held dominion which would be free in name but would still support Great Britain. Therefore Churchill was ambivalent about the voting systems, as he would like the smaller nations to be heard but also wanted to be protected by veto rights because he suspected that the newly independent nations might be more supportive of the United States than the British Empire.

Despite having helped design the United Nations, Great Britain was still clinging to the idea of both the balance of power and the sphere of influence as they still relied on their former colonies. Churchill believed that the British Empire, along with France, had to stick together in the council against both the United States and the Soviet Union. From the very beginning of the

Second World War, one of Great Britain's main war aims was to protect the overseas territories of her empire. Their strategies during the Second World War were focused more on their own overall success around the globe, rather than building up for the second front that was necessary to end the war. As a result, Great Britain usually clashed with the United States in terms of their tendency to focus on diversions.

Stalin, on the other hand, was skeptical of their Western Allies about the United Nations due to his vastly different views on the concept of Great Powers acting as the peacekeeping forces.¹⁷⁰ He believed that no nation would support him and therefore he was focusing on the veto rights for Russia. He especially disliked the fact that the smaller nations were also given the rights to speak up especially, when all the countries but two under his sphere of influence were not accepted as members.¹⁷¹ The Red Tsar felt, as he always did, that the Great Britain and the United States were ganging up on him with the United Nations especially when Churchill and Roosevelt proposed obvious proxies - namely France and China - to be included at the top of the Security Council. He only believed in the absolute veto power for Russia to even stand a chance in the United Nations.

Much like Churchill and Great Britain, Stalin became a part of the Allies to ensure the survival of his nation. The difference between the two, however, was the fact that Churchill cared about the sustainability of the post-war peace, but Stalin was only concerned about Russia not being taken advantage of. As a result, Stalin's post war aims were to cripple Germany to the point that it could no longer be a threat and to build a sphere of influence expanding from Russia to Poland to act as an enormous buffer zone. As soon as the Red Army gained momentum at Stalingrad, Stalin made sure that the sphere of influence between Russia and Germany was set up

¹⁷⁰ McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia, 1941-46*, p. 507

¹⁷¹ Roosevelt's counterargument was that he, by that logic, would be able to include all 50 states of America individually as members. Stalin relented.

by leaving behind his troops in the areas after he liberated them, even the ones beyond the Russian border..

As much as Roosevelt and Churchill disliked the fact that Stalin was skeptical of the United Nations and unwilling to give up Eastern Europe, they also realized that a plan for peace in their time cannot work without the Soviet Union being involved. Roosevelt going out of his way just to get through Stalin's paranoia, in the hope of him cooperating with the Allies both in trying to defeat Hitler and to establish the United Nations was the standing pattern throughout the Second World War. Roosevelt had felt that, for as long as the Soviet Union had been a part of the Allies, securing the support from Stalin would be the most difficult and yet also the most important task he had to do. Even though the United States was on better terms with Great Britain, the president chose to go out of his way to avoid interacting with Churchill in a vain attempt to convince Stalin that the Western Allies were not ganging up on him.

Even though Roosevelt continuously leaning towards Stalin's side, sometimes even at the expense of Churchill ever since the Tehran Conference, he managed to win the Allies the Second World War without the alliance being broken apart, it ultimately did not ease Stalin's paranoia in the slightest. Fortunately, however, despite the differences in their versions of the post-war future, the three did share a single common ground: somehow there will be peace. The compromise was then made between the Big Three. The Allies decided to accept the basic plans for the United Nations with a few compromises for Stalin. The United Nations was established on October 24, 1945. Stalin accepted China and France as permanent members in exchange for his sphere of influence remaining over Eastern Europe up to Poland.

Though they did not share ideologies, the Big Three managed to form an alliance and to work together until the end, due to them having a common enemy while the Axis powers failed

due to the fact that the nature of their ambitions did not allow for much cooperation, leading them to their ultimate defeat. As the tide of war turned in their favor, the Allies began to divide further as their need for one another had lessened. Skeptical of Stalin, Churchill aimed to get Roosevelt to side with him while Roosevelt was trying hardest to not even imply its possibility to avoid upsetting the skeptical Red Tsar. Intentionally or not, President Roosevelt managed to keep the Big Three working together as a single unit and jointly ended the conflict. Roosevelt managed to successfully gain support from the two bitterest enemies and established an international peace organization which, while did not prevent the Cold War from happening two years later, did lower the bloodshed and lives lost within a few decades that followed.

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