
Cooperating for Victory: Defeating Germany and Japan

In August, 1943, William C. Bullitt submitted a lengthy memorandum to his old friend Franklin Roosevelt warning of an imminent "political catastrophe" in Europe. The United States and Great Britain had rightly judged Hitler's conquest of Europe to be "an intolerable menace to . . . their free institutions," Bullitt asserted, but "domination of Europe by Stalin's Communist dictatorship would be as great a threat." Unfortunately, the British and Americans needed Russia's help in the war against Germany if they were to keep their casualties within tolerable limits. The problem, therefore, was to find some way to prevent "the domination of Europe by the Moscow dictatorship without losing the participation of the Red Army in the war against the Nazi dictatorship."

Bullitt's argument reflected a central dilemma of American military strategy during World War II: victory over the Axis depended upon cooperation with the Soviet Union, yet defeat of Germany and Japan would mean a vast increase in Russian power in Europe and the Far East, a development which might well preclude realization of such vital postwar objectives as self-determination and the revival of multilateral trade. Bullitt's solution to this problem was to devise operations against Germany which would place Allied forces in a position to counteract Russian influence in Eastern Europe—an Anglo-American invasion of the Balkans would accomplish this, he believed—while at the same

time making further aid to the Soviet Union, both for wartime and for postwar purposes, contingent upon Moscow's acceptance of Washington's war aims. "War is an attempt to achieve political objectives by fighting," he reminded Roosevelt, "and political objectives must be kept in mind in planning operations."¹

F.D.R. did not have to be warned of risks of collaborating with Moscow. "I don't dispute your facts," he told Bullitt. "They are accurate. I don't dispute the logic of your reasoning." But the President made it clear that he did not intend to follow Bullitt's advice:

I just have a hunch that Stalin is not that kind of man. Harry [Hopkins] says he's not and that he doesn't want anything but security for his country, and I think that if I give him everything I possibly can and ask nothing from him in return, *noblesse oblige*, he won't try to annex anything and will work with me for a world of democracy and peace.

Bullitt retorted that Stalin was "a Caucasian bandit whose only thought when he got something for nothing was that the other fellow was an ass," but Roosevelt cut him off: "It's my responsibility and not yours; and I'm going to play my hunch."²

As was often the case with Roosevelt, his "hunch" was based on sound reasoning. No one could yet exclude the possibility that Stalin, if pressed too hard, might make a separate peace with Hitler. Even if the Russian dictator did agree to support American war aims, there could be no assurance that he would keep his promise. Furthermore, Roosevelt was extremely conscious of the limits of American power. United States troops could not counteract Russian moves in Eastern Europe without imposing unacceptable demands on the nation's manpower pool and productive facilities—already stretched to the limit by simultaneous operations against Germany and Japan.³ Such a maneuver would also

¹ Bullitt to Roosevelt, August 10, 1943, Roosevelt MSS, PSF: "Bullitt." See also Bullitt to Roosevelt, January 29 and May 12, 1943, *ibid.*

² Bullitt, "How We Won the War and Lost the Peace," *Life*, XXV (August 30, 1948), 94. Bullitt is vague about the precise date when this conversation took place, but there is no doubt that it substantially reflects Roosevelt's position.

³ The United States could have considerably increased the size of its armed forces, but only at the expense of vital war production. On this point, see Matloff, *Strategic Planning, 1943-44*, pp. 115-16. Greenfield, *American Strategy in World War II*, pp. 6-7, 75-76; and Richard M. Leighton, "OVERLORD Revisited: An Interpretation of

endanger prospects for Soviet assistance in the Far East, which American military leaders badly wanted. Finally, the President felt certain that public opinion would not tolerate keeping United States forces overseas after the war, a clear necessity if Soviet influence was to be contained.⁴ Roosevelt therefore rejected Bullitt's suggestion that he reorient military strategy in accordance with postwar political objectives. Instead he concentrated on achieving total victory over the Axis, trusting that a mutual desire to avoid further conflict would compel Russians and Americans to coexist peacefully after the war.

Roosevelt failed to see, however, how his strategy for winning the war might undermine his effort to build trust between Washington and Moscow. F.D.R. sought to defeat the Axis through the maximum possible use of American industrial power, but with the minimum possible expenditure of American lives.⁵ Such a policy precluded launching military operations when chances for success were not high. Yet to the Russians, who did not enjoy the luxury of deciding where and how they would fight Germany, a "blood sacrifice" in the form of an early second front seemed the acid test of Anglo-American intentions. Roosevelt led the Russians to expect such a front in Europe in 1942, but then endorsed a British proposal to invade North Africa, thereby delaying the full cross-channel attack until 1944. At the time, each decision appeared to be in the best interests of the anti-Axis coalition, but the two-year gap between promise and performance convinced the Russians that their capitalist comrades had decided to let them carry the main burden of the war. The resulting atmosphere of suspicion was hardly conducive to

American Strategy in the European War, 1942-1944," *American Historical Review*, LXVIII (July, 1963), 928, 937, both emphasize the limitations which logistical considerations imposed on United States strategic planning.

⁴ On this point, see William R. Emerson, "F.D.R.," in Ernest R. May, ed., *The Ultimate Decision*, pp. 168-72.

⁵ Kent Roberts Greenfield argues that Roosevelt believed "that the role of America was from first to last to serve as 'the arsenal of Democracy,' and that its proper contribution to victory was to confront its enemies with a rapidly growing weight of material power that they could not hope to match; then to use it to crush them with a minimum expenditure of American lives." (*American Strategy in World War II*, p. 74.) See also Kolko, *The Politics of War*, pp. 14, 20; Burns, *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom*, pp. 86, 546; and Richard M. Leighton and Robert W. Coakley, *Global Logistics and Strategy, 1940-1943*, pp. 137-40.

Roosevelt's "grand design" for placing postwar Soviet-American relations on a firm basis of mutual understanding.

I

In planning initial military operations against the Axis, Roosevelt had two basic requirements. Despite the fact that Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor had brought the United States into the war, he insisted on taking the offensive against Hitler. Almost a year earlier, British and American military chiefs had decided that should their two countries become involved in war with both Germany and Japan, their principal effort would be directed toward defeating Germany first. Roosevelt fully supported this strategy, because only through it could he ensure attainment of one of his major political objectives—the survival of Great Britain. The President's second requirement followed logically from the first: that American troops should engage the Germans as soon as possible. Acutely sensitive to public opinion, F.D.R. feared that if action against the Nazis was delayed, domestic pressure to pay the Japanese back for Pearl Harbor would become irresistible. It was "very important to morale," he told Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall late in 1941, "to give this country a feeling that they are in the war, [and] to give the Germans the reverse effect, to have American troops somewhere in active fighting across the Atlantic."⁶

At the ARCADIA conference in Washington at the end of 1941, Winston Churchill proposed an Anglo-American invasion of North Africa as a first step in "closing the ring" on Germany, to be followed in 1943 by landings on the European continent itself. Roosevelt expressed interest in this idea, especially when the Prime Minister suggested that Vichy authorities might be persuaded to "invite" Allied troops into areas under their control with little or no resistance. American military officials re-

⁶ Marshall memorandum of conversation with Roosevelt, December 23, 1941, quoted in Maurice Matloff and Edwin L. Snell, *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1941-42*, p. 105. See also Stimson to Hopkins, August 4, 1943, *FR: Washington and Quebec*, p. 445; and Greenfield, *American Strategy in World War II*, p. 59. For the "Germany first" decision, see Louis Morton, "Germany First: The Basic Concept of Allied Strategy in World War II," in Kent Roberts Greenfield, ed., *Command Decisions*, pp. 11-47.

sponded skeptically, however, arguing that the North African project relied too much on tenuous lines of communication and would make only an indirect contribution to victory. Moreover, the Americans darkly suspected the British of being "motivated more largely by political than by sound strategic purposes." General Marshall and his advisers favored more forthright methods: "We've got to go to Europe and fight," General Dwight D. Eisenhower, deputy chief of the Army's War Plans Division, wrote early in 1942, "we've got to begin slugging with air at West Europe; to be followed by a land attack as soon as possible."⁷

One of the main reasons why American strategists wanted an early invasion of Europe was their desire to help Russia. The Red Army's staunch resistance to Hitler had strongly reinforced the logic of the "Germany first" decision. "We would be guilty of one of the grossest military blunders of all history," Eisenhower observed, "if Germany should be permitted to eliminate an Allied army of 8,000,000 men." Eisenhower believed that two things would be necessary to keep the Soviet Union in the war: direct lend-lease aid, and "the early initiation of operations that will draw off from the Russian front sizable portions of the German Army, both air and ground." An invasion of France launched from Great Britain seemed the most practical way to accomplish this objective. In addition to relieving Russia, it would strike the Germans in the most direct manner possible, permitting maximum utilization of shipping and air power without endangering the security of the British Isles. General Marshall endorsed Eisenhower's conclusions, and by the end of March, 1942, had won Roosevelt's tentative approval of them. "Your people and mine demand the establishment of a front to draw off

⁷ Undated memorandum by Major General Stanley D. Embick, quoted in Matloff and Snell, *Strategic Planning, 1941-42*, p. 104; Eisenhower desk diary note, January 22, 1942, *Eisenhower Papers*, I, 66. For the British proposal, see Churchill, *The Grand Alliance*, pp. 545-55. The ARCADIA discussions are covered in Matloff and Snell, chapter 5; and *FR: Casablanca*, pp. 3-415. Suspicion of British motives was widespread among American military officials at this time. General Marshall later recalled: "On one occasion our people brought in an objection to something the British wanted. I didn't see anything wrong with the British proposal, but our planners . . . explained that there was an ulterior purpose in this thing. . . . Later [Sir Charles] Portal [Chief of the Royal Air Force] said that he had drafted the proposal and that it was taken from a memorandum of ours. And it was a fact; he showed it to me. . . . Our own paragraph was the key of our objection." (Marshall interview with Forrest C. Pogue, October 29, 1956, quoted in Pogue, *Marshall: Ordeal and Hope*, p. 264.)

pressure on the Russians," F.D.R. wrote Churchill early in April, "and these people are wise enough to see that Russians are today killing more Germans and destroying more equipment than you and I put together."⁸

But ROUND-UP, the American plan for invading France, had one great liability: it could not take place until the spring of 1943, the earliest date at which the necessary military build-up in Great Britain would be complete. Roosevelt felt that he could not wait this long. "I am becoming more and more interested in the establishment of a new front this summer," he informed Churchill in March, 1942. F.D.R. knew that from the strictly military point of view it made sense to delay landings in France until 1943, but as president he had to take into account political considerations as well: "The necessities of the case call for action in 1942—not 1943," he told his military advisers. "I regard it as essential that active operations be conducted in 1942." General Marshall later recalled that he learned an important lesson from this incident: "The leader in a democracy has to keep the people entertained. . . . The people demand action. We couldn't wait to be completely ready."⁹

Aside from his desire to maintain domestic support for the "Germany first" strategy, Roosevelt had an additional political reason for wanting to avoid delay. Late in May, 1942, Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov had come to Washington to discuss the question of a second front. The Russians hoped to hold out, Molotov said, but "it was only right to look at the darker side of the picture." Hitler might be able to defeat the Red Army unless the Anglo-Americans could begin offensive action soon to draw off forty German divisions. The Soviet government wanted "a straight answer": could it expect a second front by the end of the year? Over Marshall's objections, Roosevelt authorized Molotov to inform Sta-

⁸ Eisenhower memorandum, July 17, 1942, *Eisenhower Papers*, I, 389; Eisenhower to Marshall, February 28, 1942, *ibid.*, p. 151; Roosevelt to Churchill, April 3, 1942, quoted in Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, p. 274. On the reasoning behind plans for the cross-channel attack, see Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, p. 45; Matloff and Snell, *Strategic Planning, 1941-42*, pp. 177-79, 181-85; Pogue, *Marshall: Ordeal and Hope*, p. 305; and Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, pp. 519-20.

⁹ Roosevelt to Churchill, March 9, 1942, quoted in Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, p. 518; Roosevelt memorandum of May 6, 1942, quoted in Gordon Harrison, *Cross-Channel Attack*, p. 24; Marshall interview with Forrest Pogue, November 13, 1956, quoted in Pogue, *Marshall: Ordeal and Hope*, p. 330. See also Harry Hopkins to Roosevelt, March 14, 1942, quoted in Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, p. 519.

lin that the United States and Great Britain would attack the Germans somewhere in Europe before the end of 1942.¹⁰

Like his military chiefs, F.D.R. was seriously concerned about the Red Army's capacity to repel another German summer offensive, and hoped to encourage the Russians by promising that help was on the way. Furthermore, Molotov had just signed the Anglo-Soviet treaty of friendship without pressing for endorsement of Russian boundary claims in Eastern Europe. In return for this concession to American sensibilities, Moscow clearly expected assurances about the second front. It is unclear how literally Stalin interpreted Roosevelt's promise. Churchill warned Molotov that, while the Western allies would do their best, they would not engage in suicidal operations simply to meet the President's timetable. Stalin himself admitted to American ambassador William H. Standley in July that wanting a second front and actually having one were two different things. But the second-front pledge was widely publicized inside the Soviet Union, leading Standley to comment that if it was not fulfilled, "these people will be so deluded in their belief in our sincerity of purpose . . . that inestimable harm will be done to the cause of the United Nations."¹¹

Faced with the President's call for action before the end of the year, War Department strategists began pushing SLEDGEHAMMER, an operation involving quick landings on the French coast in the fall of 1942. Although logistical limitations made success doubtful, Eisenhower favored taking the risk because even a failure would at least convince the Russians "that we are trying to assist." But SLEDGEHAMMER soon encountered the unyielding opposition of the British. The terrible memory of World War I made Churchill and his generals even more determined than Roosevelt to keep casualties down. With this in mind, they favored striking at Germany through a series of amphibious landings around the

¹⁰ Roosevelt-Molotov conversation, May, 1942, *FR: 1942*, III, 577, 582-83; Pogue, *Marshall: Ordeal and Hope*, pp. 326-27. The public communiqué issued after the Molotov visit announced that "in the course of the conversations full understanding was reached with regard to the urgent tasks of creating a Second Front in Europe in 1942." (White House press release, June 11, 1942, *FR: 1942*, III, 594.)

¹¹ Divine, *Roosevelt and World War II*, pp. 88-89; Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, p. 297; Standley to Hull, June 22 and July 22, 1942, *FR: 1942*, III, 598, 612. For the relationship of the second front to Soviet boundary claims, see chapter 1.

periphery of Hitler's Europe, together with a tight naval blockade and heavy aerial bombardment. The British supported an eventual invasion of the European continent, but hoped to postpone it until other measures had severely weakened German resistance. Painfully aware that the SLEDGEHAMMER landings, if they took place, would involve mostly British troops, the Prime Minister and his Chiefs of Staff decided in July, 1942, to veto the operation.¹²

American military planners reacted violently to this news. Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson warned Roosevelt that Churchill had a chronic addiction to "half-baked" diversionary schemes, and solemnly advised the President to read up on the disastrous World War I Dardanelles campaign. The Joint Chiefs of Staff recommended that if the British repudiated SLEDGEHAMMER, the United States should abandon its "Germany first" strategy and assume the offensive against Japan. But the President refused to consider this drastic proposal. Placing Anglo-American unity above all else, he ordered the Joint Chiefs to accept Churchill's alternative plan for engaging the Germans in 1942: an autumn invasion of North Africa. Eisenhower, who would command the North African operation, viewed the demise of SLEDGEHAMMER bitterly:

The whole thing seems to me to be absurdly simple. I believe in direct methods, possibly because I am too simple-minded to be an intriguer or to attempt to be clever. However, I am no longer in the places where these great questions have to be settled. My only job is to carry out my directives as well as I can.¹³

Pleased by the President's decision, Churchill volunteered to fly to Moscow in August to tell Stalin that there would be no second front in

¹² Eisenhower memorandum, July 17, 1942, *Eisenhower Papers*, I, 389. See also Greenfield, *American Strategy in World War II*, p. 58; Matloff and Snell, *Strategic Planning, 1941-42*, pp. 278-84; Harrison, *Cross-Channel Attack*, pp. 26-32. Samuel Eliot Morison, *Strategy and Compromise*, chapter 4, presents the traditional interpretation of the conflict between British and American strategic concepts, a view now modified somewhat by Leighton, "OVERLORD Revisited," pp. 921-23; and Greenfield, *American Strategy in World War II*, chapter 2. For British reservations regarding SLEDGEHAMMER, see Pogue, *Marshall: Ordeal and Hope*, pp. 315-18; Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, pp. 282-83; and McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia*, p. 174.

¹³ Pogue, *Marshall: Ordeal and Hope*, pp. 340-42; Matloff and Snell, *Strategic Planning, 1941-42*, pp. 268-70; Leo Meyer, "The Decision to Invade North Africa," in Greenfield, ed., *Command Decisions*, pp. 182-88; Eisenhower to Fox Conner, August 21, 1942, *Eisenhower Papers*, I, 485.

Europe in 1942. "It was like carrying a large lump of ice to the North Pole," he later wrote. Russian cinema audiences enthusiastically cheered films of the Prime Minister's visit, erroneously interpreting his two-fingered "victory" sign as a promise of a second front. Stalin took the news with bitterness, but eventually managed to work up some enthusiasm for the North African operation as the next best thing. "May God prosper this undertaking," he remarked to Churchill with un-Marxian emphasis.¹⁴

Whether or not Stalin really expected a European second front in 1942, he did manage to reap considerable propaganda advantages from his allies' failure to fulfill Roosevelt's pledge. Wendell Willkie remarked while visiting Moscow in September that the American people might have to "prod" their generals a bit to get the second front under way, a comment which provoked Roosevelt into making cutting remarks about unnamed "typewriter strategists." In an October newspaper interview, Stalin observed that the second front still occupied a "primary place" in Soviet military planning, and that without it, lend-lease assistance to Russia was "of little effect." The Soviet leader called pointedly for "complete and timely fulfillment by Allies of their obligations." On the eve of the North African landings, Joseph E. Davies told reporters that the Russian leaders had shown remarkable tolerance and forbearance in their requests for a second front. Roosevelt obliquely responded to these criticisms in a press conference on November 10: "If you had all the luck on your side and the other fellow made all the mistakes," F.D.R. observed, one might be able to throw a military plan together on the spur of the moment and have it work. "But after all, where hundreds of thousands of lives are involved; we do try to conduct war operations by what is known as a reasonable chance of success."¹⁵

Roosevelt's decision to invade North Africa demonstrated the degree to which both military and political considerations influenced American

¹⁴ Churchill's classic account of this conference is in *The Hinge of Fate*, pp. 411-37. See also Harriman to Roosevelt, August 13, 1942, *FR: 1942*, III, 620; and Standley to Hull, August 25, 1942, *ibid.*, 634.

¹⁵ Undated report by Ambassador Standley on Willkie's trip, *FR: 1942*, III, 647; Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, pp. 634-35; Stalin interview with Henry Cassidy, *Pravda*, October 5, 1942, quoted in *FR: 1942*, III, 461; *New York Times*, November 8, 1942; *FDR: Public Papers*, XI, 462-63. See also Loy Henderson to Hull, October 15, 1942, *FR: 1942*, III, 464-66.

strategy. On strictly military grounds, a cross-channel attack in the spring of 1943 seemed to offer the quickest way to victory. But, for political reasons, F.D.R. could not delay action that long: domestic support for the "Germany first" strategy might wane, while the Russians, if no help came by the end of the year, might seek a separate peace. Roosevelt could not get a second front in Europe in 1942 without alienating the British, however, so he settled for a compromise—North Africa. The President later explained to a press conference:

We did agree to start a second front of sorts [in 1942], and when it came down to the point, it seemed best to start it at a place called Algiers. . . . That was done. Now, . . . you can write pages and pages on what you mean by a second front. . . . No . . . two people in this room will agree. . . . At least, action was taken.¹⁶

But Roosevelt failed to take into account the political impact which the North African decision would have on his own plan for postwar cooperation with the Soviet Union.

II

The invasion of North Africa, as American military leaders feared, precluded establishment of a second front in Europe in 1943. Temporary but unexpected resistance by the Vichy French, together with German tenacity, prevented the operation from going as quickly as had been hoped. Not until May, 1943, did the Germans give up in Tunisia. Moreover, Roosevelt and Churchill decided at Casablanca to follow the North African victory with an attack on Sicily, in an effort to knock Italy out of the war. This made landings in France impossible in 1943, although the final decision to put off the invasion was not made until later that year. In retrospect, it seems clear that postponement of the cross-channel attack saved the British and Americans from a major military disaster.¹⁷ But the delay severely strained the alliance with the Soviet Union, leaving the Russians to feel, with considerable justification, that they had been left to do most of the fighting against Germany.

¹⁶ Press conference of February 23, 1943, Roosevelt MSS, PPF 1-P, Vol. XXI.

¹⁷ Harrison, *Cross-Channel Attack*, pp. 38-45, 89; Matloff, *Strategic Planning, 1943-44*, p. 131; Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, p. 71; Morison, *Strategy and. Com. promise*, pp. 46-47.

The absence of a second front brought Soviet-American relations to a low point in the summer of 1943, leading some observers to consider the possibility that Stalin might yet conclude a separate peace with Germany. Joseph E. Davies reported from Moscow in May that many Soviet leaders believed their Anglo-American allies wanted "a weakened Russia at the peace table and a Red Army that is bled white." He warned: "If Great Britain and the United States fail to 'deliver' on the western front in Europe this summer, it will have far reaching effects upon the Soviets that will be effective both on their attitude in the prosecution of this war and in their participation in the reconstruction of the peace." Davies mentioned the existence of "an appeasement group" in the Soviet Union, and thought it possible that the Russians might content themselves with simply liberating their own territory, without trying to bring about the total defeat of Germany. State Department Russian expert Charles E. Bohlen noted in June that while there was no evidence that the Russians would try to deal with Hitler, the possibility could not be ruled out for the simple reason that "a dictatorship responsive . . . to the views of one man is of necessity unpredictable."¹⁸

In July, 1943, the Soviet government announced formation of a "Free Germany" Committee, composed of German exiles in Russia, a move which Ambassador Standley interpreted as evidence that Moscow intended to follow "an independent policy" in Central and Eastern Europe. State Department officials saw even more ominous implications in the Russian action: Stalin, they feared, was clearing the way for negotiations with a pro-Soviet government in Germany should Hitler be overthrown. Assistant Secretary of State Breckinridge Long noted in his diary that "if Russia should pull out of the war it would leave us in a terrible situation in Europe and would make it infinitely more difficult for us to conquer Japan." As late as October, 1943, Roosevelt was still sufficiently concerned about Stalin's intentions to ask Standley: "What do you think, Bill, will he make a separate peace with Hitler?"¹⁹

¹⁸ Davies to Roosevelt, May 29, 1943, Roosevelt MSS, PSF 18: "Russia"; Bohlen memorandum of June 24, 1943, FR: 1943, III, 668n. See also Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, p. 734; and Feis, *Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin*, pp. 134-35.

¹⁹ Standley to Hull, July 22 and 23, 1943, FR: 1943, III, 552-54; Hull to Standley, July 30, 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 557-58; James C. Dunn to Major General George V. Strong, August 11, 1943, cited in Matloff, *Strategic Planning, 1943-44*, p. 286n; Long Diary, August 9, 1943, Israel, ed., *Long Diary*, p. 320; Standley and Ageton, *Admiral Ambassador to Russia*, p. 498. For other expressions of concern about a separate peace

But the prospect of a new Nazi-Soviet Pact, though worrisome, grew increasingly remote as the military situation on the eastern front improved. Gradually it became clear that the Red Army's victory at Stalin-grad in the winter of 1942-43 had marked a decisive turning point. After smashing German resistance in massive battles around Kursk, Orel, and Kharkov in the summer of 1943, the Russians began an advance on a broad front which within two years would carry them to Berlin. Anglo-American efforts in the Mediterranean seemed paltry by comparison—Stalin had complained publicly in February, 1943, that "the Red Army alone is bearing the whole weight of the war."²⁰ The chief danger now seemed to be not that the Russians would stop fighting but that they would regard their victories as having earned them the right to demand a dominant role in shaping the peace settlement.

General Marshall warned Roosevelt in March that if the Russians got to Germany before the Western allies, "a most unfortunate diplomatic situation" would follow. By August he was speculating whether "in the event of an overwhelming Russian success, . . . the Germans [would] be likely to facilitate our entry into the country to repel the Russians." Secretary of War Stimson observed that further delay in launching the cross-channel attack would have dangerous implications, for "Stalin won't have much of an opinion of people who have done that and we will not be able to share much of the postwar world with him." Ambassador Standley, writing from Moscow on August 10, noted that the absence of a second front gave the Russians a definite political advantage:

It . . . prepares the ground for a strong stand in the field of foreign policy. To the extent that people believe that the Soviet Union carried the major burden of winning the war and that the United States and Great Britain withheld assistance which they could have given, they will be more inclined

see William C. Bullitt to Roosevelt, August 10, 1943, Roosevelt MSS, PSE: "Bullitt"; William D. Leahy, *I Was There*, p. 185; Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, p. 734; and FR: 1943, III, 246, 621-23, 667-68, 674, 682, 684-87, 690, 695-99, and 708-9. For retrospective assessments of the validity of these fears, see Snell, *Illusion and Necessity*, pp. 125-26; Feis, *Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin*, p. 143; and McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia*, p. 324.

²⁰ Stalin "order of the day," issued on the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Red Army, February 23, 1943, FR: 1943, III, 506-8. Churchill summarizes developments on the eastern front in 1943 with his customary succinctness in *Closing the Ring*, pp. 221-23.

to support a claim that the Soviet Union should have the greatest voice in determining the peace.

Moreover, unless the British and Americans extended significant military assistance to the Russians in the struggle against Germany, they could hardly expect much help from Stalin in the war against Japan. A strategic estimate prepared late in the summer of 1943 concluded that "the most important factor the United States has to consider in relation to Russia is the prosecution of the war in the Pacific." If the Far Eastern conflict had to be carried on without Russia's help, "the difficulties will be immeasurably increased and operations might become abortive."²¹

The Joint Chiefs of Staff summarized the relationship between strategy and politics in a memorandum prepared in September, 1943. The end of the war, they recognized, would place the Soviet Union in a dominant position throughout Eastern and Central Europe, giving it the power to impose whatever territorial settlements it wanted. But the United States still depended on Russian assistance to win the war against Germany—a separate Russo-German peace would make large-scale Anglo-American military operations on the European continent impossible. Furthermore, Russian help would be needed against Japan.²² Although the Joint Chiefs drew no conclusions from their analysis, its implications were clear: the price of military aid from the Soviet Union against Germany and Japan would be a significant expansion of Russian influence after the war.

But President Roosevelt showed little inclination to let such postwar considerations affect his plans for operations against Germany. F.D.R. did mention to the Joint Chiefs on two occasions in 1943 the need to beat the Russians to Berlin, but after his cordial meeting with Stalin at Teheran in December said nothing more about this. When General Ei-

²¹ Marshall memorandum of conversation with Roosevelt, March 30, 1943, quoted in Matloff, *Strategic Planning, 1943-44*, pp. 68-69; Combined Chiefs of Staff minutes, meeting of August 20, 1943, Quebec, FR: *Washington and Quebec*, p. 911; Stimson Diary, May 17, 1943, quoted in Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, *On Active Service in Peace and War*, p. 527; Standley to Hull, August 10, 1943, FR: 1943, III, 562; General James H. Burns to Harry Hopkins, August 10, 1943, FR: *Washington and Quebec*, pp. 624-27. See also Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, pp. 748-49.

²² JCS 506, "Instructions Concerning Duty as Military Observer at American-British-Soviet Conference," September 18, 1943, cited in Matloff, *Strategic Planning, 1943-44*, pp. 292-93.

senhower concluded in March, 1945, that the German capital was "no longer a particularly important objective," Roosevelt registered no complaints. The President made no effort to accelerate plans for the 1944 cross-channel attack, now code-named OVERLORD, in hopes of establishing a counterweight to growing Soviet influence in Europe. Instead he carefully delayed the invasion until Anglo-American forces had accumulated sufficient resources to ensure its success without seriously hampering operations under way in other theaters, particularly the Pacific.²³

If any postwar consideration shaped Washington's strategy, it was the desire to minimize overseas political responsibilities after Germany's surrender. Throughout the summer and fall of 1943 Churchill, though never explicitly repudiating plans for OVERLORD, continually pushed for additional operations in the Mediterranean and the Balkans. War Department planners regarded the Prime Minister's motives as blatantly political: he hoped, they believed, to let Russia defeat Germany while Britain used American resources to prop up the remains of its empire. The Joint Chiefs defended OVERLORD as a purely military operation which would bring all anti-Axis forces together in the most efficient manner possible for the sole purpose of defeating Germany, without involving the United States in complicated postwar political entanglements. Roosevelt agreed, commenting that it was "unwise to plan military strategy based on a gamble as to political results."²⁴

²³ Combined Chiefs of Staff minutes, meeting with Roosevelt and Churchill, Quebec, August 23, 1943, quoted in Matloff, *Strategic Planning, 1943-44*, p. 226; Joint Chiefs of Staff minutes, meeting with Roosevelt, en route to Teheran, November 19, 1943, *FR: Tehran*, p. 255; Eisenhower to Marshall, March 30, 1945, *Eisenhower Papers*, IV, 2561. Gabriel Kolko argues that American strategists did seek to counteract growing Soviet influence in Europe by establishing a military presence there as soon as possible. But his view does not explain the decision to invade North Africa, which delayed the entry of United States troops into Western and Central Europe by at least a year. Moreover, much of his argument rests upon the existence of RANKIN (C), a contingency plan for a quick descent on the continent in the event of a German collapse. Kolko maintains that this plan was "entirely politically conceived," but offers no firm evidence for this conclusion. A summary of RANKIN prepared for the Combined Chiefs of Staff in August, 1943, noted specifically that the plan was to be carried out in cooperation with the Russians. (Kolko, *The Politics of War*, chapter 1, especially pp. 28-30; memorandum by Sir Frederick Morgan, "Digest of Operation 'Rankin,'" August 14, 1943, *FR: Washington and Quebec*, p. 1018. See also Matloff, *Strategic Planning, 1943-44*, pp. 225-27; William M. Franklin, "Zonal Boundaries and Access to Berlin," *World Politics*, XVI [October, 1963], 5-7; and Sir Frederick Morgan, *Overture to Overlord*, pp. 57, 104-22.)

²⁴ Joint Chiefs of Staff minutes, meeting with Roosevelt, August 10, 1943, quoted

Still, in view of the North African experience, Stimson and his associates could not help worrying that F.D.R.'s "impulsive nature" might cause him to yield again to Churchill's blandishments. Shortly before the Teheran Conference, Roosevelt assured his concerned Secretary of War that he "wouldn't touch the Balkans." Stimson replied: "Well, you can't even talk about them . . . without frightening people. . . . Remember, no more Balkans." These fears proved groundless. American military chiefs, still deeply suspicious of British political designs, had exaggerated Churchill's opposition to OVERLORD. Moreover, at Teheran Stalin came out firmly in favor of the cross-channel attack, insisting that a commander be appointed quickly, "otherwise nothing would come out of the operation." Impressed, Roosevelt resolved any doubts he may have had, endorsed unequivocally the 1944 landings in France, and named General Eisenhower supreme commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces. "I thank the Lord Stalin was there," Stimson wrote in his diary; "he saved the day."²⁵

The successful invasion of Normandy in June, 1944, justified to American strategists their emphasis on military considerations and, at least for the time being, relieved Stalin's doubts regarding the willingness of his allies to fight the Germans on a large scale. Congratulating Roosevelt and Churchill, the Russian dictator proclaimed that "the history of warfare knows no other like undertaking from the point of view of its scale, its vast conception, and its masterly execution." For the moment, as Churchill noted, "harmony was complete."²⁶

Delivery of the second front in Europe placed the Western allies in a favorable position to press for Russian creation of a second front in the Far East, where for three years the United States and Great Britain had been fighting Japan without the help of the Soviet Union. The Pacific

in Matloff, *Strategic Planning, 1943-44*, p. 215. See also *ibid.*, pp. 173-75, 178-79; Stimson to Roosevelt, August 10, 1943, Stimson Diary, Stimson MSS; and Emerson, "F.D.R.," pp. 168-72. American military planners almost certainly misjudged British motives in advocating further operations in the Mediterranean and the Balkans. On this point, see John Ehrman, *Grand Strategy*, V, 111-18; Leighton, "OVERLORD Revisited," p. 922; and Greenfield, *American Strategy in World War II*, pp. 41-45.

²⁵ Stimson Diary, October 29, November 4, December 5, 1943, Stimson MSS; minutes, 2d plenary meeting, November 29, 1943, *FR: Tehran*, p. 535; Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, pp. 206-8. See also Harrison, *Cross-Channel Attack*, pp. 118-26; and Matloff, *Strategic Planning, 1943-44*, pp. 356-69.

²⁶ Stalin to Churchill, June 11, 1944, quoted in Churchill, *Triumph and Tragedy*, p. 8.

war seemed likely to drag on for some time after the fighting ended in Europe, and threatened to take a heavy toll in American casualties. Supply difficulties, together with Chiang Kai-shek's reluctance to fight, had dashed hopes of employing Chinese manpower in the struggle against Japan. A Soviet attack through Manchuria would provide a valuable substitute, containing Japanese armies on the mainland of Asia while American forces invaded the home islands. The atomic bomb remained a purely hypothetical weapon at this time, known to only a few top military leaders, with no assurance that it would work. Hence, United States officials received with great pleasure Stalin's promise, given at the Moscow Foreign Ministers' Conference in October, 1943, to enter the war against Japan after Germany's surrender.²⁷

At the Teheran Conference in December, however, Stalin made it clear that he would expect political compensation for furnishing military assistance in the Far East. The Soviet leader did not specify his exact requirements, but acknowledged that Roosevelt's suggestion of a Pacific warm-water port under international control "would not be bad." One year later, in December, 1944, Stalin became more precise. Pulling out a map of the Far East, he indicated to Ambassador Harriman that the Soviet Union would want the Kurile Islands and lower Sakhalin, leases at Port Arthur and Dairen, control of the Chinese Eastern and South Manchurian railroads, and recognition of the independence from China of Outer Mongolia. At the Yalta Conference in February, 1945, Roosevelt agreed substantially to these demands and undertook to secure Chiang Kai-shek's approval of them. In return, Stalin promised to go to war against Japan within "two or three months" after Germany's defeat, and to conclude a pact of "friendship and alliance" with Chiang's Nationalist government in China.²⁸

²⁷ Louis Morton, "Soviet Intervention in the War with Japan," *Foreign Affairs*, XL (July, 1962), 653-57; Ernest R. May, "The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Far Eastern War, 1941-1945," *Pacific Historical Review*, XXIV (May, 1955), 153-63; Matloff, *Strategic Planning, 1943-44*, pp. 292-93, 433-37, 500-1, 536; and Hull, *Memoirs*, II, 1309-11.

²⁸ Roosevelt-Churchill-Stalin meeting, November 30, 1943, *FR: Tehran*, pp. 567-68; Harriman to Roosevelt, December 15, 1944, *FR: Yalta*, pp. 378-79; "Agreement Regarding Entry of the Soviet Union into the War Against Japan," February 11, 1945, *ibid.*, p. 984. The Yalta Far Eastern agreement differed from Stalin's original demands by providing for internationalization of the port of Dairen and joint Sino-Soviet operation of the Manchurian railroads. (George A. Lensen, "Yalta and the Far East," in John L. Snell, ed., *The Meaning of Yalta*, p. 152.)

The Yalta Far Eastern agreement was a classic example of Roosevelt's failure to coordinate military strategy with his postwar political objectives. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, speaking strictly in military terms, advised that Soviet entry into the Japanese war would reduce American casualties and hasten Tokyo's surrender. But Roosevelt failed to consult with his civilian advisers regarding the political consequences of this strategy. The State Department knew nothing of Stalin's demands because Ambassador Harriman had communicated them directly to Roosevelt through Navy Department channels. Working independently, State Department experts had prepared two papers advising against the outright transfer of lower Sakhalin and the Kuriles to the Soviet Union, but these were unaccountably left out of the briefing book prepared for the President's use at Yalta. Ironically, the Joint Chiefs had some time earlier concluded that if Stalin entered the Japanese war, he would do so only when convinced that Japan could be defeated at small cost to himself. Nothing which the United States could promise would affect his timing one way or another.²⁹ But the Joint Chiefs did not regard it as part of their job to furnish advice on nonmilitary matters, and apparently never passed this prescient conclusion on to the President.

Roosevelt's second-front diplomacy, in both Europe and the Far East, reflected his over-all strategy of seeking victory over the Axis as quickly as possible with the minimum possible loss of American lives. Despite the Soviet Union's minor role in the war against Japan, this strategy paid off handsomely in Europe. For three years, from June of 1941 to June of 1944, the Soviet Union carried the main burden of the fight against Hitler. On the day Anglo-American forces established the long-awaited second front in Normandy, the Red Army was still confronting more than 250 German and satellite divisions along the thousand-mile eastern front. British and American troops, in France and Italy, faced less than 90 enemy divisions. Partly because of Russian military successes, the United States Army got through the war with less than half

²⁹ Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., *Roosevelt and the Russians: The Yalta Conference*, pp. 95-96; *FR: Yalta*, pp. 378n, 379-83, 385-88; Matloff, *Strategic Planning, 1943-44*, p. 206; JCS memorandum, "U.S.S.R. Capabilities and Intentions in the Far East," November 18, 1943, *FR: Tehran*, p. 242. See also Morton, "Soviet Intervention in the War with Japan," p. 662. Harriman later argued that Roosevelt agreed to Stalin's territorial demands in order "to limit Soviet expansion in the East and to gain Soviet support for the Nationalist Government of China." ("Our Wartime Relations with the Soviet Union," *Department of State Bulletin*, XXV [September 3, 1951], 373.)

the number of divisions prewar plans had indicated would be necessary for victory. Casualty figures reflect with particular vividness the disproportionate amount of fighting which went on in the east. A conservative estimate places Soviet war deaths—civilian and military—at approximately 16 million. Total Anglo-American losses in all theaters came to less than a million.³⁰

But Roosevelt's reluctance to incur heavy American casualties could not help but undermine his plans for postwar cooperation with the USSR. The long delay in establishing the second front confirmed Soviet fears that their capitalist allies had deliberately let communist Russia bear the brunt of the fighting. As a result, the suspicion with which Stalin had always viewed his Anglo-American associates intensified considerably. Convinced that they had won the war, the Russians showed little inclination to compromise on major postwar objectives which the West found unacceptable. Roosevelt probably felt that he had no other choice—the American people would not have supported sacrificial operations to meet the Russian timetable for a second front. Given ideological differences, it seems likely that the Russians would still have distrusted their allies, even if the Anglo-Americans had hurled their forces against Hitler's Europe in 1942. But by promising such a maneuver in 1942, and then delaying it until 1944, Roosevelt needlessly aggravated Soviet hostility toward the West, thereby imperiling his own hopes for the postwar world.³¹

III

Second-front strategy was not the only limitation on the effectiveness of Roosevelt's plans to build a cordial relationship with the Soviet Union.

³⁰ On June 6, 1944, Hitler had available on the eastern front, in Finland, and the Balkans 199 German divisions and 63 Finnish, Rumanian, Hungarian, and Bulgarian divisions. On the same day there were 61 German divisions available in France and the Low Countries, plus 25 German and 4 Italian divisions in Italy. (Harrison, *Cross-Channel Attack*, Appendix G.) Estimates of casualties are from Gordon Wright, *The Ordeal of Total War, 1939-1945*, pp. 263-65. For the American manpower situation, see Maurice Marloff, "The 90-Division Gamble," in Greenfield, ed., *Command Decisions*, pp. 365-81.

³¹ On this point, see Burns, *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom*, p. 374.

The success of a policy depends not simply upon its proclamation at the top but also on the manner in which it is executed at lower levels. Virtually without exception, subordinate officials responsible for dealing with the Russians from day to day became convinced that the President's openhanded policy was unwise. Moscow felt no obligation to reciprocate American generosity, they argued; the only way to ensure cooperation was to handle negotiations on a strict *quid pro quo* basis. As a result, these officials carried out Roosevelt's program grudgingly, making every effort behind the scenes to get it revised.

There can be no doubt that the Russians were difficult to deal with. Language problems alone meant that negotiations took at least twice as long as with the British. Americans serving in Russia found the officially sanctioned suspicion of foreigners oppressive, and puzzled over the rapidity with which Stalin and his top associates could shift from cordiality to bitter vindictiveness, and back again. Soviet administrative practices made negotiations even more frustrating—no Russian official could agree to anything, it seemed, without consulting Stalin himself. The Russians kept far fewer records than the British or the Americans, but pride kept them from admitting this. Instead they would turn aside Anglo-American requests for information with elaborate but hardly believable excuses—in one case General John R. Deane, head of the American military mission in Moscow, was asked to delay a visit to the front for a few days because "Marshal Vasielievsky would have kidney trouble until July 20." Requests for action would inevitably be countered with blunt references to the nonexistence of the second front. The sluggishness of the state bureaucracy infuriated the impatient Americans, who attached great importance to administrative efficiency. "I was in a high dudgeon much of the time," Deane later recalled.³²

Soviet attitudes toward lend-lease were particularly galling. Representatives from Moscow would arrive in the United States with long lists of demands, made without regard to American priorities or supply capabilities.

³² John R. Deane, *The Strange Alliance*, pp. 20-21, 34-35, 49-50, 91-92, 98-99, 111, 203. For other accounts of the difficulties of dealing with the Russians, see Kennan, *Memoirs*, pp. 560-65; Standley and Ageton, *Admiral Ambassador to Russia, passim*; and Philip E. Mosely, "Some Soviet Techniques of Negotiation," in Raymond Dennett and Joseph E. Johnson, eds., *Negotiating with the Russians*, pp. 271-303. The other essays in this volume also provide valuable insights into the difficulties of dealing with the Russians, based on firsthand experience.

ties. Secretary of Agriculture Claude R. Wickard's experience with a group of Russian food commissioners was typical: "They simply walked in, all of them sober-faced, never cracked a smile, smart as they could be. . . . They said, 'Here is what we want.' And they'd just sit there. There wasn't much negotiation to it. It was simply a demand. . . . Sometimes we got the idea that they were just darn, downright stubborn." At the direction of President Roosevelt, lend-lease authorities made no effort to evaluate Soviet needs, or to determine the uses to which the Russians put the equipment they received. Despite this generous attitude, accorded to no other ally, lend-lease aid did not seem to make the Russians any easier to deal with. Stalin continued to berate his allies over the absence of a second front, while ignoring Western requests for an exchange of military information. Furthermore, the Soviet government showed few signs of appreciation for the aid it had received, a tendency which provoked Ambassador Standley into complaining publicly about Russian ingratitude at a Moscow press conference in March, 1943.³³

Despite adverse reaction in Washington to Standley's criticism of an ally in wartime, American military officials had come to feel by this time that the United States could safely attach conditions to future lend-lease shipments without impairing the over-all war effort. The War Department's Operations Division had asserted in January, 1943, that lend-lease should be continued only if Moscow adopted a more cooperative attitude: "The time is appropriate for us to start some straight-from-the-shoulder talk with Mr. Joseph Stalin." When the Third Lend-Lease Protocol came up for negotiation in the spring of 1943, the Pentagon supported insertion of a provision giving American military attachés in Russia the same travel rights and access to information as Soviet representatives had in the United States. Early in 1944, Ambassador Harriman and General Deane reported from Moscow that the Russians

³³ Wickard interview with Dean Albertson, in Albertson, *Roosevelt's Farmer: Claude R. Wickard in the New Deal*, p. 267; Standley press conference statement, March 8, 1943, *FR: 1943*, III, 631-32. See also Matloff, *Strategic Planning, 1943-44*, p. 281; Deane, *The Strange Alliance*, pp. 89-91, 98-99, 102; Leighton and Coakley, *Global Logistics, 1940-43*, pp. 551-52; Standley and Ageton, *Admiral Ambassador to Russia*, pp. 331-49; and George C. Herring, Jr., "Lend-Lease to Russia and the Origins of the Cold War, 1944-1945," *Journal of American History*, LVI (June, 1969), 94-96.

were misusing American equipment, and that closer scrutiny should be exercised over USSR aid requests. General Marshall suggested to President Roosevelt in March, 1944, the possibility of using lend-lease as a "trump card" to ensure Soviet military cooperation with Allied plans for the invasion of France. But the White House consistently blocked all of these attempts to employ lend-lease as a bargaining device. When the Joint Chiefs of Staff raised the question of how lend-lease termination should be handled after the war, Roosevelt curtly told them that he would make the necessary arrangements himself.³⁴

Aside from lend-lease, military cooperation between the United States and the USSR had not been close during the early years of the war. But during the last half of 1943, as serious planning for the second front in Europe got under way, the need arose for some coordination of strategy with Moscow. Moreover, the Russians had not yet formally committed themselves to enter the war against Japan. With these problems in mind, President Roosevelt decided to reorganize the American diplomatic staff in Moscow—Harriman replaced Standley as ambassador, while the Joint Chiefs of Staff sent Deane to the Soviet capital as their representative. The main goal of the Harriman-Deane mission was to improve diplomatic and military contacts with the Russians.³⁵ As such, it would provide a good test of what kind of relations could be expected with the Soviet Union after the war.

The Harriman-Deane operation began auspiciously enough, with Stalin's promise late in October, 1943, to enter the Far Eastern war upon the defeat of Germany. The Russians also quickly approved "in principle" proposals for a more effective exchange of weather information, better air transport facilities, and creation of a base in the Ukraine for the

³⁴ War Department Operations Division Policy Committee, "Weekly Strategic Resume," January 23, 1943, quoted in Matloff, *Strategic Planning, 1943-44*, p. 282; Marshall to Roosevelt, March 31, 1944, *ibid.*, p. 497. For the Washington reaction to Standley's statement, see Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, pp. 705-6; Israel, ed., *Long Diary*, p. 300; and Cox Daily Calendar, March 9, 1943, Cox MSS. Negotiations on the Third Lend-Lease Protocol are covered in Matloff, *Strategic Planning, 1943-44*, pp. 282-83; and *FR: 1943*, III, 737-81. See also Deane, *The Strange Alliance*, pp. 89-91; Richard M. Leighton and Robert W. Coakley, *Global Logistics and Strategy, 1943-1945*, pp. 671, 685-86; Matloff, *Strategic Planning, 1943-44*, p. 498; *FR: 1944*, IV, 1035-36, 1055-58; Herring, "Lend-Lease to Russia," pp. 95-97.

³⁵ Matloff, *Strategic Planning, 1943-44*, pp. 289-91; Deane, *The Strange Alliance*, pp. 47-48.

refueling, rearming, and repair of American bombers operating over Nazi-occupied Europe. But Deane soon discovered that agreement "in principle" meant little—negotiations on putting these proposals into effect did not begin until February, 1944, and then only after continuous pressure from the Americans. Military collaboration never worked well. The Russians showed great reluctance to let United States pilots fly over Soviet territory. German bombers quickly located the joint Russian-American air base and seriously damaged it. Although Moscow did arrange for the "escape" of a group of American airmen interned in the Soviet Union after bombing Japan, efforts to secure proper treatment for United States prisoners-of-war liberated by the advancing Red Army proved unavailing. Attempts to establish air bases in Siberia for use against Japan also failed.³⁶

By the end of 1944, Deane had developed serious reservations regarding the possibility of cooperation with Moscow. In a long letter to General Marshall, he complained:

I have sat at innumerable Russian banquets and become gradually nauseated by Russian food, vodka, and protestations of friendship. Each person high in public life proposes a toast a little sweeter than the preceding on Soviet-British-American friendship. It is amazing how these toasts go down past the tongues in the cheeks. After the banquets we send the Soviets another thousand airplanes, and they approve a visa that has been hanging fire for months. We then scratch our heads to see what other gifts we can send, and they scratch theirs to see what else they can ask for.

Unconditional aid to the Russians made sense when they were fighting for survival, Deane argued, but "they are no longer back on their heels; . . . if there's one thing they have plenty of, it's self-confidence. The situation has changed, but our policy has not." The Russians

simply cannot understand giving without taking, and as a result even our giving is viewed with suspicion. Gratitude cannot be banked in the Soviet

³⁶ Deane, *The Strange Alliance*, pp. 20–21, 47–48, 55, 59–63, 107–25, 182–201. See also, on shuttle-bombing, Matloff, *Strategic Planning, 1943–44*, pp. 498–500; and on prisoners-of-war, Stimson Diary, March 2 and 16, 1945, Stimson MSS. The Russians did make some effort to exchange "intelligence" information with the Americans. Deane tells of being informed in great secrecy by an NKVD agent that an American engineer working in the Baku oil fields had been overheard to describe Roosevelt as a "son of a bitch who should be taken out and shot." Deane "thanked them profusely and said I certainly would see that corrective action was taken." (*The Strange Alliance*, p. 59.)

Union. Each transaction is complete in itself without regard to past favors. The party of the second part is either a shrewd trader to be admired or a sucker to be despised. . . . In short, we are in the position of being at the same time the givers and the supplicants. This is neither dignified nor healthy for U.S. prestige.

Deane recommended allowing the Soviet Union only such aid as could be shown to be vital to the war effort. Everything else should be furnished on a *quid pro quo* basis. If American requests for cooperation were left unanswered after a reasonable length of time, the United States should act on its own, simply informing the Russians of what it was going to do. Deane's letter impressed Marshall and Secretary of War Stimson sufficiently for them to send it to President Roosevelt, with the information that Harriman also had endorsed its contents.³⁷

Other officials experienced in dealing with the Russians had already expressed similar judgments. Standley, Harriman's predecessor in Moscow, had warned Roosevelt in March, 1943, that the policy "of continuing to accede freely to their requests . . . seems to arouse suspicion of our motives in the Oriental Russian mind rather than to build confidence." William C. Bullitt, another former ambassador, urged Roosevelt early in 1943 to use "the old technique of the donkey, the carrot, and the club . . . to make Stalin move in the direction in which we want him to move." Bullitt's "carrot" was the prospect of American aid for Russian reconstruction; his "club" was the possibility of denying that aid and restricting lend-lease shipments. Bullitt had lost much of his influence by this time, but subordinate Foreign Service officers who had served with him in Moscow in the 1930s still occupied important positions in the State Department, from which they pressed for a tougher negotiating posture with the Russians. George F. Kennan had never considered the USSR a proper ally for the United States, and argued that aid should be sent to Russia only to the extent that it promoted American self-interest. Loy W. Henderson warned in the summer of 1943 that "if we show the slightest weakness and equivocation . . . the Soviet Government will at once bring tremendous pressure on us and in the end our relations will be more unfavorably affected than they would be if we display firmness at the outset."³⁸

³⁷ Stimson to Roosevelt, January 3, 1945, enclosing Deane to Marshall, December 2, 1944, *FR: Yalta*, pp. 447–49.

³⁸ Standley to Roosevelt, Hull, and Welles, March 10, 1943, *FR: 1943*, III, 510;

Harriman himself had gone to Moscow late in 1943 with a feeling of optimism regarding the possibilities of postwar Soviet-American cooperation. By the summer of 1944, however, the difficulties of dealing with the Russians on a day-to-day basis had convinced him that Roosevelt's policy of unconditional aid would have to be changed. Soviet authorities had "misinterpreted our generous attitude toward them as a sign of weakness," Harriman warned Harry Hopkins; "the time has come when we must make clear what we expect of them as the price of our good will." From now on, the Ambassador advised the State Department, the United States should cooperate with and support the Russians wherever possible, but if disagreements arose Washington should make it clear that it would not back down.³⁹

These criticisms of his Russian policy appear to have had an effect on the President. By early 1945 he seems to have accepted Harriman's view that economic aid for postwar Russian reconstruction should be withheld until Moscow adopted a more cooperative attitude in the political sphere.⁴⁰ Even more significantly, Roosevelt had decided by this time not to tell the Russians of the highly secret Anglo-American project to develop the atomic bomb.

During the summer of 1944, Dr. Vannevar Bush, director of the Office of Scientific Research and Development, and Dr. James B. Conant, president of Harvard University and chairman of the National Research Council, had become concerned that the Soviet Union's continued exclusion from the bomb project might damage postwar relations with that country. Bush warned Secretary of War Stimson that any American attempt to monopolize the bomb after the war would only stimulate a crash development program in the Soviet Union. Because the scientific principles applied in building the bomb were no secret, the Russians would almost surely succeed in this effort, touching off a dangerous armaments race. In September, Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter

Bullitt to Roosevelt, January 29, 1943, Roosevelt MSS, PSF: "Bullitt"; Kennan, *Memoirs*, pp. 57, 133-34; Henderson to Ray Atherton, June 11, 1943, *FR: 1943*, III, 544. For background on the training of Russian experts in the Foreign Service, see Kennan, *Memoirs*, pp. 61-62, 68-70, 84; and Maddux, "American Relations with the Soviet Union, 1933-1941," pp. 134-40.

³⁹ Harriman to Hopkins, September 10, 1944, *FR: 1944*, IV, 989; and Hull, September 20, 1944, *ibid.*, p. 997. For Harriman's earlier feeling of optimism, see his messages to Roosevelt of July 5 and November 4, 1943, *FR: Tebran*, pp. 15, 152-55.

⁴⁰ On this point, see chapter 6.

sent Roosevelt a memorandum from the Danish physicist Niels Bohr which strongly advocated bringing the Russians in on the secret while they were still allies. Roosevelt seemed impressed enough with Bohr's argument to send the scientist to see Churchill, who gruffly dismissed the idea. Upon Bohr's return, however, the President intimated that, despite the Prime Minister's attitude, he would be willing to consider approaching Stalin on the subject.⁴¹

But when Churchill joined the President at Hyde Park following the Quebec Conference later that month, the two men signed a secret agreement explicitly rejecting the idea that "the world" should be told about the bomb before its use. The memorandum further stated: "Enquiries should be made regarding the activities of Professor Bohr and steps taken to ensure that he is responsible for no leakage of information particularly to the Russians." Stimson told Roosevelt on the last day of 1944 that, although troubled by the possible repercussions, he did not favor telling the Russians about the bomb "until we were sure to get a real *quid pro quo* from our frankness." Roosevelt apparently agreed, for this policy remained in force up to the time of his death.⁴²

It seems likely that the difficulties of dealing with Moscow on small matters, which Standley, Harriman, Deane, and other American officials in the Soviet Union complained so vigorously about, contributed at least in part to Roosevelt's decision to be less than candid with his Russian ally on the very big matter of the atomic bomb. The almost unanimous support for a *quid pro quo* policy from such experts "in the field" must have caused the President to wonder whether his plan to win Stalin's trust through a program of unconditional aid had not failed. And what-

⁴¹ Richard G. Hewlett and Oscar E. Anderson, Jr., *A History of the United States Atomic Energy Commission: The New World, 1939-1946*, pp. 325-28; Frankfurter to Roosevelt, September 8, 1944, in Max Freedman, ed., *Roosevelt and Frankfurter: Their Correspondence, 1928-1945*, pp. 728-36; Burns, *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom*, pp. 455-58.

⁴² Roosevelt-Churchill agreement of September 19, 1944, quoted in Margaret Gowling, *Britain and Atomic Energy, 1939-1945*, p. 447; Stimson Diary, December 31, 1944, Stimson MSS. Bush broached the subject to the Secretary of War again after the Yalta Conference early in 1945, but Stimson remained dubious: "I am inclined to tread softly and to hold off conferences on the subject until we have some much more tangible 'fruits of repentance' from the Russians." (*ibid.*, February 13, 1945.) There is evidence that, during the last month of his life, F.D.R. was reconsidering his decision not to tell the Russians about the bomb. See J. W. Pickersgill and D. W. Forster, *The Mackenzie King Record, 1944-1945*, pp. 326-27.

ever their effect on Roosevelt himself, it is clear that Harriman and his Moscow colleagues exerted a strong influence on the late President's successor when Harry S. Truman turned to them for advice on how to handle the Russians.⁴³

IV

Stalin's lack of trust in his Western allies manifested itself with particular vividness in connection with the surrender of Germany and its satellites. Despite the approach of victory, the Soviet leader seemed unable to free himself from the fear that his capitalist associates might yet make common cause with Germany in a joint crusade against Bolshevism. Even if London and Washington refused such a deal, Hitler might achieve a similar effect by letting Anglo-American troops advance into Germany while he devoted all his efforts to holding the Russians back. The reluctance of Roosevelt and Churchill to absorb heavy casualties probably made the second possibility seem especially real from Moscow's point of view. Accordingly, Stalin watched with a wary eye as Allied military successes brought attempts, first by Hitler's satellites, then by Germany itself, to end the war.

Stalin's fears surfaced initially in the summer of 1943, when Italy became the first member of the Axis to seek peace. Shortly after the fall of Mussolini in July, the famous Soviet author, Ilya Ehrenburg, cornered Associated Press correspondent Henry Cassidy in Moscow and, presumably acting on instructions, vigorously criticized the Americans and British for failing to consult the Russians on the Italian situation. The Soviets had understood the necessity of dealing with Admiral Darlan, Ehrenburg said, but negotiating with Badoglio was too much. Did this mean that London and Washington would deal with Goering when the time came? When Cassidy responded by bringing up Moscow's recent creation of the Free Germany Committee, Ehrenburg observed cynically that two could play at the game of negotiating with the enemy.⁴⁴

Western officials recognized clearly enough the importance of keeping Moscow informed. On the day after Mussolini fell, British Foreign Secre-

⁴³ See chapter 7.

⁴⁴ Standley to Roosevelt and Hull, July 30, 1943, *FR: 1943*, III, 555-56.

tary Anthony Eden reminded Ambassador John G. Winant that Russia would have to be consulted in dealing with the Italians. Winant needed no prompting. "When the tide turns and the Russian armies are able to advance," he pointed out to the State Department, "we might well want to influence their terms of capitulation and occupancy in Allied and enemy territory." Ambassador Standley, concerned by Ehrenburg's bitter remarks, also strongly recommended establishing some mechanism for advising the Russians of Italian developments. State Department officials agreed, and early in August asked Standley to tell the Russians that they would be kept fully abreast of events in Italy and that suggestions or inquiries from them would be welcome.⁴⁵

It soon became clear, however, that the Russians wanted more than just information—they wanted a role in running the occupation of Italy. Using a garbled British telegram on Italian surrender terms as an excuse, Stalin late in August complained that the information he had received on negotiations with Badoglio had been "absolutely inadequate." The Americans and British had been treating the Russians "as a passive third observer"; it was "impossible to tolerate such [a] situation any longer." The time had come, Stalin asserted, to establish a "military-political commission," composed of representatives from all three major allies, for the purpose of "considering the questions concerning the negotiations with the different Governments dissociating themselves from Germany."⁴⁶

Roosevelt and Churchill worried that creation of such a commission would introduce unnecessary complications into an already tangled military situation. Could the Russians not simply send a representative to Eisenhower's headquarters, the President asked early in September. Stalin replied brusquely that this would "by no means" substitute for the military-political commission, "which is necessary for directing on the spot

⁴⁵ Winant to Hull, July 26, 1943, *FR: 1943*, II, 335; Standley to Roosevelt and Hull, July 30, 1943, *FR: 1943*, III, 555-56; Hull to Winant, August 1, 1943, *FR: 1943*, II, 340; Hull to Standley, August 3, 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 344-45. See also the comments of the British ambassador to the Soviet Union, Sir Archibald Clark Kerr, on the importance of inter-Allied consultation, reported in Maxwell M. Hamilton to Hull, August 8, 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 347-48.

⁴⁶ Stalin to Roosevelt and Churchill, August 22 and 24, *FR: 1943*, II, 353-54, I, 783. For the matter of the garbled telegram, see Standley to Hull, August 25, 1943, *FR: 1943*, II, 354.

the negotiations with Italy. . . . Much time has passed, but nothing is done." Faced with this virtual ultimatum, the Anglo-American leaders reluctantly agreed to establish the commission, with headquarters to be located in Algiers.⁴⁷

The Western allies quickly demonstrated, however, that they envisaged a far narrower role for the commission than did the Russians. The group would receive full information on negotiations with defeated enemies, Roosevelt told Stalin, but it would not have plenary powers. In his instructions to General Eisenhower, the President emphasized that the commission would operate "under the Allied Commander in Chief." The Russians protested this interpretation, but Roosevelt held firm. Churchill concurred, arguing that "we cannot be put in a position where our two armies are doing all the fighting but Russians have a veto and must be consulted on any minor violation of the armistice terms." Stalin apparently attached considerable importance to the military-political commission, naming as his delegate Assistant Commissar of Foreign Affairs Andrei Vishinsky. Roosevelt indicated the significance with which he regarded the new agency by designating as United States representative Edwin C. Wilson, former ambassador to Panama.⁴⁸

American officials realized that the decision to minimize Moscow's role in the occupation of Italy might give the Russians a convenient excuse later on to restrict Anglo-American activities in Rumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary. But Roosevelt did not expect the Russians to allow their allies much influence in this area whatever happened in Italy. Eastern Europe would simply have to get used to Russian domination, he told Archbishop Francis Spellman in September, 1943. Early in October, he reminded Churchill that the occupation of Italy would "set the precedent for all such future activities in the war." When the Red Army entered Rumania early in 1944, the Joint Chiefs of Staff noted that it was

⁴⁷ Roosevelt to Stalin, September 6, 1943, *FR: 1943*, I, 784; Stalin to Roosevelt, September 8, 1943, *ibid.*, p. 785; Roosevelt to Stalin, September 10, 1943, *ibid.*

⁴⁸ Roosevelt to Stalin, September 10, 1943, *FR: 1943*, I, 785; Stalin to Roosevelt, September 12, 1943, *ibid.*, p. 786; Roosevelt to Eisenhower, September 22, 1943, *FR: 1943*, II, 374; Molotov to Hamilton, September 26, 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 377-78; Adolf A. Berle to Winant, September 28, 1943, *FR: 1943*, I, 790. Churchill's comment is quoted in an *aide-memoire* from the British Embassy to the State Department, October 11, 1943, *FR: 1943*, II, 385-86. See also Leo Pasvolovsky's minutes of a conference between Roosevelt, Hull, and other State Department officials, October 5, 1943, *FR: 1943*, I, 541.

"only natural and to be expected" that the Russians would handle the surrender negotiations, since only their forces were on the scene:

The present Rumanian situation is analogous to the Italian situation at the time of her surrender to the British and ourselves. Since Russian participation in Italian operations was impracticable, the western Allies handled the matter of Italian surrender . . . and Russian participation in the Italian situation has been limited to representation on the Allied Control Commission.

Secretary of State Hull noted on March 30 that, in view of the Italian precedent, it seemed logical to accord the Russians prime responsibility for working out armistice terms for Rumania, Hungary, and Bulgaria.⁴⁹

Subsequent State Department opposition to Churchill's suggestion that Moscow be given a dominant role in these three countries in return for recognition of British interests in Greece, Yugoslavia, and Hungary related not to armistice negotiations or military occupation but to the fear that specifically assigned areas of responsibility might harden into permanent spheres of influence. The distinction between wartime and postwar arrangements was a fine one, since provisional governments set up under military occupation would almost certainly influence political developments in the Balkans after Germany's surrender. Roosevelt hoped that these two matters could be kept separate, however, and acquiesced in Churchill's deal with the Russians on the condition that it not prejudice the final peace settlement.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Spellman memorandum of conversation with Roosevelt, September 3, 1943, printed in Gannon, *The Cardinal Spellman Story*, pp. 223-24; Roosevelt to Churchill, October 4, 1943, *FR: 1943*, II, 383; Leahy to Hull, March 28, 1944, *FR: 1944*, IV, 161; Hull to Lincoln MacVeagh, March 30, 1944, *ibid.*, p. 164. Several historians have viewed the Italian precedent as an explanation for subsequent Soviet behavior in Eastern Europe. See, for example, McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia*, p. 310; Kolko, *The Politics of War*, pp. 39, 50-52, 128, 130-31; and John Bagguley, "The World War and the Cold War," in David Horowitz, ed., *Containment and Revolution*, pp. 97-104. Given the long-standing Soviet determination to control Eastern Europe, however, it seems highly unlikely that the Russians would have given their Western allies any significant role in the occupation of former German satellites there, even if London and Washington had met Moscow's wishes with regard to Italy. For Soviet ambitions in Eastern Europe, see chapters 1 and 5.

⁵⁰ Churchill, *Triumph and Tragedy*, pp. 61-65, 196-97; Hull, *Memoirs*, II, 1452-53; Roosevelt to Harriman, enclosing a message to Stalin, October 4, 1944, *FR: Yalta*, pp. 6-7; Roosevelt to Churchill, October 4, 1944, *ibid.*, p. 7; Yalta Briefing Book Paper, "American Policy Toward Spheres of Influence," undated, *ibid.*, pp.

The one enemy whose surrender all three allies expected to receive together was, of course, Germany. As representatives from the collapsing Reich began making peace overtures early in 1945, Stalin's almost frantic reaction showed that, despite creation of the second front and all of Roosevelt's efforts at personal diplomacy, Russian-American relations still had not been placed on a basis of mutual trust. Even at this late date, the Soviet leader apparently still worried that his capitalist allies might make a deal with Hitler.

Early in March, 1945, Office of Strategic Services agents in Switzerland informed Washington that General Karl Wolff, a high-ranking S.S. officer, had arrived in Berne to discuss the possible surrender of German forces in northern Italy. American officials notified Moscow of this within two days. The Russians responded by requesting that Soviet officers be sent to observe the negotiations, but after due consideration the Joint Chiefs of Staff advised against accepting this proposal. This was purely a military surrender in the field, the Joint Chiefs argued, and the Russians would never have allowed American representatives to observe comparable discussions on the eastern front. To bring the Russians in would introduce "into what is almost entirely a military matter an unavoidable political element." President Roosevelt agreed, fearing that the presence of Soviet officers might affect the willingness of the Germans to surrender. On March 15, Ambassador Harriman informed the Russians that their representatives could sit in on the formal surrender negotiations at Allied Headquarters in Italy, but not on the preliminary talks at Berne.⁵¹

Moscow reacted immediately and violently. The Russians found the American attitude "utterly unexpected and incomprehensible," Molotov told Harriman, and demanded that negotiations with the Germans at Berne be broken off. Roosevelt responded that these talks were solely for the purpose of establishing contact—no surrender would be arranged without Soviet participation. Molotov retorted ominously that "it is not

103-6. Herbert Feis argues that by October, 1944, Roosevelt had privately come to agree with Churchill regarding the need for a division of spheres of influence in Eastern Europe. (*Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin*, p. 451.)

⁵¹ *FR*: 1945, III, 722-31. For background on the OSS operation in Switzerland and northern Italy, see Allen Dulles, *The Secret Surrender*.

a question of incorrect understanding of the objectives of this contact or misunderstanding—it is something worse." The Americans and the British had been negotiating with the German High Command "behind the back of the Soviet Government which has been carrying on the main burden of the war against Germany." Roosevelt replied directly to Stalin on March 24, assuring him that "in such a surrender of enemy forces in the field, there can be no political implications whatever and no violations of our agreed principle of unconditional surrender." Stalin's reply, on the 29th, charged that the Germans had already used the discussions with the Anglo-Americans to shift three additional divisions from northern Italy to the Russian front. Five days later he made the startling accusation that

the negotiations . . . have ended in an agreement with the Germans, on the basis of which the German commander on the Western front—Marshal Kesselring, has agreed to open the front and permit the Anglo-American troops to advance to the East, and the Anglo-Americans have promised in return to ease for the Germans the peace terms.

The Russians, Stalin concluded, would never have done such a thing. Roosevelt responded sharply on April 4: "Frankly I cannot avoid a feeling of bitter resentment toward your informers, whoever they are, for such vile misrepresentations of my actions or those of my trusted subordinates."⁵²

Negotiations with the Germans in Italy failed to bear fruit immediately, however, and quickly receded into the background as the other events of early April—the invasion of Germany, the Polish crisis, and Roosevelt's death—crowded in on policy-makers. But Soviet behavior had left American officials gravely worried. Admiral William D. Leahy, Chief of Staff to the Commander in Chief, saw in the Berne incident "a clear demonstration of the dangerous undesirability of having unnecessary allies in war." To Ambassador Harriman, the affair suggested that the Russians intended "to dominate all matters relating to Germany in ways not yet fully disclosed." Secretary of War Stimson noted that Moscow's "quarrelsome" reaction "indicated a spirit in Russia which bodes evil in the coming difficulties of the postwar scene." Soviet accusations of

⁵² *FR*: 1945, III, 731-46. General Marshall and Admiral Leahy drafted Roosevelt's April 4 reply. (Leahy, *I Was There*, pp. 391-92.)

Anglo-American collaboration with Germany revealed to Stimson "an astonishing situation in Stalin's mind and the minds of his staff."⁵³

The Berne episode also worried Roosevelt, but he was determined not to let it wreck the Soviet-American partnership. On the day he died, he drafted a telegram to Stalin noting that "the Berne incident . . . now appears to have faded into the past without having accomplished any useful purpose," and that "mutual distrust and minor misunderstandings" of this type should not be allowed to happen in the future. Before presenting this message to Stalin, Harriman wired from Moscow asking the President if he did not want to eliminate the word "minor" in describing the quarrel, which to Harriman hardly seemed "minor" at all. Roosevelt replied that the message should be delivered as written, "as it is my desire to consider the Berne misunderstanding a minor incident."⁵⁴

But, in a sense, Harriman was right. The balefully suspicious manner in which Stalin reacted to news of the Berne discussions revealed as nothing else had the failure of Roosevelt's wartime policy toward the Soviet Union. The President had sought to make Stalin trust him, feeling that only in this way could postwar Soviet-American cooperation be assured. To this end, he had furnished the Russians with lend-lease supplies on an unconditional basis, had twice traveled halfway around the world to meet with the Soviet leader, and had incurred considerable political risk at home in order to satisfy Moscow's postwar territorial demands.⁵⁵ Yet Roosevelt refused to pay the one price which might, but only might, have convinced Stalin of his sincerity—the massive American casualties which would have been necessary to establish an early second front. There were limits to how far even Roosevelt could go in trying to overcome Soviet suspicion. While the bankruptcy of his policy of openhandedness was not fully apparent at the time of his death, events such as Berne make it seem unlikely that Roosevelt, had he lived, would have continued it much longer.

⁵³ Leahy, *I Was There*, p. 336; Harriman to Stettinius, March 17, 1945, *FR: 1945*, III, 734; Stimson Diary, March 17 and April 4, 1945, Stimson MSS. See also DeLoach, *The Strange Alliance*, pp. 165–66.

⁵⁴ *FR: 1945*, III, 736–57. ⁵⁵ On this point, see chapter 5.