

WARREN F. KIMBALL

Churchill and Roosevelt

*The Complete Correspondence:
Volume 2, Alliance Forged November
1942-February 1944*



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Churchill & Roosevelt
The Complete Correspondence



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The Complete Correspondence

II. Alliance Forged

NOVEMBER 1942 – FEBRUARY 1944

EDITED WITH
COMMENTARY BY

Warren F. Kimball

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It is a matter of sacred tradition that, when an American statesman and a British statesman meet, the former will be plain, blunt, down to earth, ingenuous to a fault, while the latter will be sly, subtle, devious and eventually triumphant. In the cases of Roosevelt and Churchill, this formula became somewhat confused. If either of them could be called a student of Machiavelli, it was Roosevelt; if either was a bull in a china shop, it was Churchill.

Robert E. Sherwood, in *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History*

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THE NORTH AFRICAN INVASION AND THE DARLAN DEAL

The Anglo-American invasion of North Africa marked the high point of equal partnership between the two Allies, although the insistence of Roosevelt and Eisenhower that all Allied forces remain under the American commander foreshadowed changes to come. The Americans were eager to find a French leader who could command the loyalty of French troops in the area and who would give orders to cease all resistance to the Anglo-American invasion. De Gaulle could not play that role because he had condemned all supporters of the Vichy government, and French military leaders in Africa retaliated by calling de Gaulle a traitor to his oath of loyalty. Giraud was a possibility, but he proved unable to gain the necessary support among French officers. Thus Eisenhower, who commanded TORCH, turned to Admiral Darlan, the commander of Vichy French military forces. Darlan, who in mid-October had secretly suggested he would be willing to lead the Allied invasion of Africa, had long been a bitter and vocal opponent of British policies. Moreover, he had collaborated closely with the Germans during the two years after the French surrender and was considered by both British and American leaders to be a fascist and a Nazi sympathizer. However, Darlan's authority might bring a halt to the French resistance against the Allies, and Eisenhower agreed to appoint him High Commissioner—head of the civil government in French North Africa. Darlan's orders to cease fire were obeyed in Algeria and Morocco, but the French authorities in Tunisia cooperated with a German force sent to occupy that colony, and the disposition of the main body of the French fleet at Toulon in southern France remained in doubt. Convinced that he needed French administrators to govern the area, General Eisenhower, on the evening of November 13, informed the Combined Chiefs of Staff in London of his deal with Darlan (doc. 622, *Eisenhower Papers*, II, 707–10). The General argued that only Darlan could command the loyalty which French officials had given to Marshal Pétain, but which could now be challenged because of Hitler's decision to occupy southern France. Eisenhower further claimed that Giraud and Robert Murphy, Roosevelt's personal representative in French North Africa, would be able to control Darlan. Eisenhower's message, repeated to the Combined Chiefs of Staff and Roosevelt in the United States, convinced the President not to send instructions which would have forbidden working with any ex-Vichy official "to whom well founded objection might be taken" (*FRUS*, 1942, II, 437). Eisenhower's proposal was not new; he had made it a month earlier to General Marshall when TORCH planners learned that Darlan might be willing to cooperate with the invasion forces. (Pogue, *Ordeal and Hope*, p. 415.) The press release Eisenhower proposed began by stating that "it has become apparent that Darlan is the one French leader whom all elements in French North Africa will recognize," and went on to note that Allied policy was "to work with a self-constituted government in French North Africa which would assure a continuance of the existing French administration" (Eisenhower to ABFOR/AGWAR, #544, Nov. 14, 1942, Eisenhower papers, Official Cable File).

Churchill's reaction was unenthusiastic. He had already come under heavy criticism within the War Cabinet for permitting cooperation with Darlan, and public attacks soon were to follow. Nevertheless, since the British military leaders on the spot agreed with Eisenhower's choice, the Prime Minister reluctantly went along. Churchill expressed concern over the problems Darlan would cause with de Gaulle's Free French movement, and emphasized the temporary nature of the whole arrangement. The "disquieting" news in the MAGICS apparently refers to a decrypt of a message, sent to Tokyo by the Japanese Ambassador in Berlin, which reported that the Vichy government had accepted a German offer of military intervention in Tunisia (Hinsley, *British Intelligence*, II, 484). As things turned out, Eisenhower, working through Darlan, persuaded Vichy officials in Dakar to cooperate, but Tunisian authorities remained loyal to Vichy.

C-190

London [via U.S. Army]
Nov. 15, 1942, 1155 Z

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Most Secret.

General Eisenhower's number 527 on political arrangements in French North Africa.

We cannot say that our doubts or anxieties are removed by what is proposed or that the solution will be permanent or healthy. Nevertheless, in view of the dominating importance of speed and of the fact that the Allied Commander in Chief's opinion is so strong and ably expressed and that it is endorsed by our officers including Admiral Cunningham who were with him on the spot, we feel we have no choice but to accept General Eisenhower's arrangements for maintaining local and interim equilibrium and for securing the vital positions in Tunis.

We feel sure you will consult us on the long-term steps pursuing always the aim of uniting all Frenchmen who will fight Hitler.

Great care must be taken that we are not double-crossed. There were some disquieting evidences in our MAGICS two days ago. On the other hand we have these men in our power and should be vigilant lest they escape from us.

We do not see any need to publish the press release contained in General Eisenhower's number 544 or anything like it at present, pending further developments in Tunis and Dakar, and hope our views may be met.

To save time we are repeating this telegram to you to General Eisenhower for his immediate information.

As a public outcry against the Darlan deal began to build, Hopkins recommended the following telegram be sent to Churchill. Within was a cable intended for Eisenhower which Hopkins considered "very important for the record." Neither cable was sent, although Roosevelt's distrust of Darlan was passed on to Eisenhower through General Marshall. (See memo from Hopkins to Roosevelt, Nov. 16, 1942, HLH: Sherwood Col., box 5; *FRUS*, 1942, II, 448.)

R-211/1, draft, not sent

Washington
Nov. 16, 1942

To the Prime Minister from the President.

I have your message regarding the Darlan business [C-190] and naturally it disturbed me as much as it did you. I have examined Eisenhower's despatches carefully, however, and I am sure that his judgment on the ground is better than ours and that we must support him. I have sent him the following message today with which I am sure you will agree.

It looks very much as though either you are going to throw Rommel into the sea or we are going to have him in a nutcracker before long.

To Eisenhower:

"Marshall has shown me your despatch giving your reasons for placing Darlan in charge of the civil administration of North Africa. I want you to know that I appreciate fully the difficulties of your military situation. I am therefore not disposed to in any way question the action you have taken. Indeed you may be sure of my complete support for this and any other action you are required to take in carrying out your duties. You are on the ground and we here intend to support you fully in your difficult problems.

"However, I think you should know and have in mind the following policies of this government:

"1. That we do not trust Darlan.

"2. That it is impossible to keep a collaborator of Hitler and one whom we believe to be a Fascist in civil power any longer than is absolutely necessary.

"3. His movements should be watched carefully and his communications supervised.

"I have not consulted Churchill in regard to this message but I am sending a copy of it to him at once and I am sure he will approve.

"I want to add a personal note to you and Clark to tell you what great confidence we have in both of you and how satisfied we are with the progress of events.

"This message is not to be made public."

Churchill agreed that the Soviets should be consulted about future Anglo-American operations in the eastern Mediterranean.

C-191

London [via U.S. Army]
Nov. 15, 1942

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

Your 211 I entirely agree with the course you propose and do not think any time will be lost by the procedure which is most necessary. We ought to reach a preliminary agreement in outline ourselves before sending a joint mission.

[MR*]

Japanese attempts to send reinforcements and supplies to Guadalcanal resulted in two major naval battles—one on the morning of November 13 and the other on the night of November 14–15. In one of the few engagements of the war between battleships, the Japanese lost two of their heavy warships while the Americans lost two cruisers and a number of destroyers. More significant was the sinking of seven Japanese troopships. Heavy air attacks on the morning of November 15 so damaged the remaining four troopships that only 4,000 Japanese soldiers and very few supplies reached the forces defending Guadalcanal against the U.S. Marines. Although the Japanese Army demanded that continued attempts be made to reinforce Guadalcanal, the Navy argued that the island should be given up, and attempts at resupply were limited to small destroyer and submarine runs at night. In January 1943 the Japanese finally decided to evacuate the island and by February 7, 1943, that withdrawal had been completed.

C-192

London [via U.S. Army]
Nov. 17, 1942, 1214 Z / TOR 9:30 A.M.

Former Naval Person to President Roosevelt Personal and Secret.

I am so glad to read about this splendid American naval victory in the Solomons. Pray accept my warmest congratulations and thanks.

[MR*]

R-212

Washington [via U.S. Navy]
Nov. 17, 1942, 10:25 A.M.

For the Former Naval Person from the President Personal and Secret.

Mrs. Roosevelt arrived safely this morning and I met her at airport and found her well and thrilled by every moment of her visit. My thanks to you and Mrs. Churchill for taking such good care of her.

[MR*. *FDR LTRS*, p. 1368.]

The deal with Darlan in North Africa aroused strong opposition within the British War Cabinet and throughout all of Britain. Moreover, as Anthony Eden pointed out to Churchill, the arrangement made it extremely difficult to work with the Free French led by Charles de Gaulle.

C-193

London [via U.S. Army]
Nov. 17, 1942, 1503 Z / TOR 1325 [EDT?]

Former Naval Person to President Roosevelt Personal and Secret.

I ought to let you know that very deep currents of feeling are stirred by the arrangement with Darlan. The more I reflect upon it the more convinced I become that it can only be a temporary expedient justifiable solely by the stress of battle. We must not overlook the serious political injury which may be done to our cause, not only in France but throughout Europe, by the feeling that we are ready to make terms with the local quislings. Darlan has an odious record. It is he who has inculcated in the French Navy its malignant disposition by promoting his creatures to command. It is but yesterday that French sailors were sent to their death against your line of battle off Casablanca and now, for the sake of power and office, Darlan plays the turncoat. A permanent arrangement with Darlan or the formation of a Darlan government in French North Africa would not be understood by the great masses of ordinary people whose simple loyalties are our strength.

My own feeling is that we should get on with the fighting and let that overtake the parleys, and we are all very glad to hear that General Eisenhower expects to be able to order the leading elements of our first army to attack the Germans in Tunis and Bizerte in the course of the next few days.

[MR*. *FRUS*, 1942, II, 445-46. *WSC*, IV, 632-33.]

Although the State Department opposed the deal with Darlan, General Marshall and Secretary of War Henry Stimson pushed for some sort of public statement from Roosevelt giving support to Eisenhower's decision. Churchill's cable apparently convinced the President to make a statement, because a few hours after the Prime Minister's message arrived Roosevelt sent off the following messages. The press release had been drafted by General Eisenhower's younger brother, Milton, who worked in the Office of War Information. Roosevelt revised that first draft, particularly in adding the word "temporary" a number of times. The final changes in the revised draft, shown below, are in Roosevelt's handwriting. Not surprisingly, Darlan immediately complained to General Clark that things would go more smoothly if the Americans did not announce that they would soon replace Darlan.

R-213

Washington [via U.S. Navy]
Nov. 17, 1942, 5:30 P.M.

For the Former Naval Person from the President Personal and Secret.

I too have encountered the deep currents of feeling about Darlan. I felt I should act fast so I have just given out a statement at my press conference which I hope you will like and I trust it will be accepted at face value. It follows in my number 214.

[MR*. WSC, IV, 633.]

R-214

Washington [via U.S. Navy]
Nov. 17, 1942, plain language despatch, 5:30 P.M.

Personal from the President for the Former Naval Person.

I have ~~approved~~ accepted General Eisenhower's ~~acceptance for political arrangements made for~~ the time being of the present political arrangements in Northern and Western Africa.

I thoroughly understand and approve the feeling in the United States and Great Britain and among all the other United Nations that in view of the history of the past two years no permanent arrangement should be made with Admiral Darlan. People in the United Nations likewise would never understand the recognition of a reconstituting of the Vichy Government in France or in any French territory.

We are opposed to Frenchmen who support Hitler and the Axis. No one in our Army has any authority to discuss the future Government of France and the French Empire.

The future French Government will be established—not by any individual in metropolitan France or overseas—but by the French people

themselves after they have been set free by the victory of the United Nations.

The present temporary arrangement in North and West Africa is only a temporary expedient, justified solely by the stress of battle.

The present temporary arrangement has accomplished two military objectives. The first was to save American and British lives on the one hand, and French lives on the other hand.

The second was the vital factor of time. The temporary arrangement has made it possible to avoid a "mopping up" period in Algiers and Morocco which might have taken a month or two to consummate. Such a period would have delayed the concentration for the attack from the West on Tunis, and we hope on Tripoli.

Every day of delay in the current operation would have enabled the Germans and Italians to build up a strong resistance, to dig in and make a military huge operation on our part essential before we could win. Here again, many more lives ~~would have been lost even~~ will be saved under the present speedy ~~and undelayed attack~~ offensive, than if we had had to delay it for a month or more.

It will also be noted that French troops, under the command of General Giraud, have already been in action against the enemy in Tunisia, fighting by the side of American and British soldiers for the liberation of their country.

Admiral Darlan's proclamation assisted in making a "mopping up" period unnecessary. Temporary arrangements made with Admiral Darlan apply, without exception, to the current local situation only.

I have requested the liberation of all persons in Northern Africa who had been imprisoned because they opposed the efforts of the Nazis to dominate the world, and I have asked for the abrogation of all laws and decrees inspired by Nazi Governments or Nazi ideologists. Reports indicate that the French of North Africa are subordinating all political questions to the formation of a common front against the common enemy.

[MR*. pWSC, IV, 633-34. *R&C*.]

Churchill did not want to miss an opportunity to present his views on a Mediterranean strategy, although at the same time he was rejecting papers from the British Chiefs of Staff which argued that a cross-channel invasion of France would be impossible until 1944 (Howard, *Grand Strategy*, IV, 207-16). In this set of messages Churchill used the phrase "under-belly of the Axis" to draw attention to the weakness of German defenses along the Mediterranean coast of Europe. As the debate over grand strategy continued into 1943, it became clear that the differences stemmed from logistical as much as military problems. The Pacific theater continued to receive an ever-expanding amount of men and matériel, and a 1943 cross-channel invasion

would pre-empt any major operation in Italy. At this time Churchill seemed unwilling to choose between BOLERO (the buildup for a cross-channel attack) and operations against Italy.

C-194

London [via U.S. Army]
Nov. 17, 1942; 0215 Z, Nov. 18

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

Your 210 and 211.

1. As promised in paragraph 2 of my 189, I am sending you in my immediately following telegram the text of a note which I have given to the British Chiefs of Staff.

2. The Chiefs of Staff are in general agreement with this note and are busily engaged in studying the implications of the various possibilities which it contemplates. I will send you the results as soon as possible.

3. Meanwhile you might find it convenient to let the Combined Chiefs of Staff see my note before their discussions. This would facilitate and hasten the agreement which we must reach between ourselves before we send a joint mission to Moscow.

4. Thank you so much for your statement about Darlan. This puts it all right for us.

[MR*]

As Churchill pointed out in his memoirs (*WSC*, IV, 659), Hitler's decision to reinforce the Tunisian tip proved costly, but it delayed the Allied conquest of North Africa by several months. That delay virtually guaranteed that any invasion of Italy, specifically Sardinia or Sicily, would eliminate a cross-channel invasion in 1943. The plans for Turkey, upon which Churchill placed so much emphasis, eventually came to naught as the Turks maintained their non-involvement. (Part of the portion of this document which is reprinted in Churchill's memoirs is dated November 25 and is apparently from a later version of the note he sent to the British Chiefs of Staff.)

C-195

London
Nov. 18, 1942, 3:50 A.M. / TOR 7:35 A.M.

President Roosevelt from Former Naval Person Most Secret and Personal.

Following is text referred to in my immediately preceeding telegram.

Note by the Minister of Defence to the Chiefs of Staff on plans and operations in the Mediterranean, Middle East and Near East.

In settling what to do in a vast war situation like this, it may sometimes be found better to take a particular major operation to which one is committed and follow that through vigorously to the end, making other things subordinate to it, rather than to assemble all the data from the whole world scene in a baffling array. After the needs of the major operation have been satisfied so far as possible, other aspects of the war will fall into their proper places. Moreover, it is by the continued stressing of the major operation that our will may be imposed upon the enemy and the initiative regained.

The paramount task before us is, first, to conquer the African chores of the Mediterranean and set up there the Naval and Air installations which are necessary to open an effective passage through it for Military Traffic: and secondly, using the bases on the African shore, to strike at the under-belly of the Axis in effective strength and in the shortest time.

There are therefore two phases—consolidation and exploitation. Dealing with consolidation first we may hope that General Alexander will become master of the whole of Cyrenaica during the present month, and that he will be pressing the enemy in the Agheila position or even at Sirte. We may also assume that in the same period or not long after the American and British forces will become masters of the whole of French North Africa including Tunis, provided they press forward with their present energy and violence.

It will be necessary to set up Air Stations at suitable intervals along all the African shore in our power, but particularly and urgently in the Tunis tip. The largest installations for American bombers ought to be set up here so that long range bombers sent by the United States to North Africa, together with American bombers already based on the Middle East can operate against Italian targets. The United States form of day light attack would have its best chance in the better weather of the Mediterranean.

The bombing weight of the British night attack should be brought to bear on Italy whenever the weather is more favourable than for bombing Germany. Every endeavour should be made to make Italy feel the weight of the war. All the industrial centres should be attacked in an intense fashion, every effort being made to render them uninhabitable and to terrorize and paralyze the population. I have asked for a scheme of desirable targets in Italy.

It will no doubt be necessary also to act against the Catania and Cagliari Airfields so as to keep down the attack on Tunis during the period of consolidation.

As soon as we are sure of ourselves, and consolidated, in French North Africa, including especially Tunis, two successive operations present themselves. The first is the advance to Tripoli. It is possible that General Alexander may be able to take this important prize from the East, and I have asked him how he feels about it, and how long he thinks it would require: but we must also be prepared for a rapid advance from the West. Would General Anderson's two British Divisions be sufficient, assuming that Tunis itself can be held by American and French Allied Troops? I should like the best possible estimate of the time that this will take.

The second immediate objective is obviously either Sardinia or Sicily. The possession of either of these islands and of the Airfields in the South would create an air triangle, in which we should fight for and secure air mastery. Moreover from either of them continuous intensified short range attacks on Naples, Rome, and the Italian Fleet Bases would raise the war against Italy to an intense degree. Let an immediate report be prepared in order that a decision can be taken. Whichever it may be, the fight for air control in the Central Mediterranean should be undertaken as a great air battle with extreme priority, the fullest advantage being taken of the Axis shortage of aircraft.

The swift success in French North Africa has completely changed the character of the problem which we had been bound to face in that region. We need no longer contemplate a protracted campaign against French in Algeria, nor immediate trouble with the Spaniards in Morocco. On the contrary, all is well in Algeria, and a French Army will be coming into existence, fed by Allied munitions at our discretion. An examination should be made as to how the follow up TORCH convoys can be drastically reduced and revised. Will the four British Divisions now in North Africa or under orders to go there be required for TORCH? It should be possible sensibly to reduce the "Tail" of these Divisions thus saving escorts for other purposes, including, in the following order: (A) Sardinia or Sicily (B) restoration of the British trans Atlantic convoys up to standard strength. (C) resumption of the P Q convoys in the latter part of December. To facilitate these vital needs, and to provide the large Naval, particularly anti submarine, forces which will be required, together with the necessary air forces, to secure a safe passage through the Mediterranean, United States Naval help will be urgently needed. Cannot the American Naval authorities reduce the strength of their follow up Transatlantic convoys and can the American "Tail" be reduced in the same way as I hope the British "Tail" will be combed?

What are General Eisenhower's wishes about the force to attack Sardinia or Sicily? There are two British Divisions of the First Army,

as well as the two others which are standing by. Is there any need to put the first two into North Africa? Can they not be combat loaded here? Are the losses among our combat loaders crippling? How serious are they? There are great advantages and saving of time in going straight from the United Kingdom to the landings in Sardinia or Sicily. We must expect a steady reinforcement of both Islands by the enemy, and speed will make our task definitely lighter. Now that the preparations to attack Sardinia may take as long as those to attack Sicily and that Sicily is by far the greater prize. Decisions on all the above are needed within the next week.

The relief and resupplying of Malta should follow naturally from the operations now in progress or in prospect in the central Mediterranean, and the immediate needs of the Island are being dealt with on an effective scale. It would be well, when circumstances and shipping permit, to exchange the units who have long been in the fortress for some of those who have been in the desert, and vice versa.

I have received a telegram from the President [R-210] containing the following paragraph: "It is hoped that you with your Chiefs of Staff in London and I with the Combined Staff here may make a survey of the possibilities including forward movement directed against Sardinia, Sicily, Italy, Greece and other Balkan Areas and including the possibility of obtaining Turkish support for an attack through the Black Sea against Germany's Flank." I endorse the above conception by the President. The first part of the President's wishes are being studied by the Combined Staffs in Washington, and are the subject of the foregoing paragraphs for our discussions.

The second part relating to Turkey is also of vital importance, though it is a slower process. A supreme and prolonged effort must be made to bring Turkey into the war in the spring. We must expect that our Naval Forces and shipping, landing craft, etcetera, will be fully engaged in the Central Mediterranean, and that only minor amphibious facilities will be available in the Levant. Access can however be had to Turkey by the railways through Syria as well as by coastal shipping, and by a gradual build up of air protection not only Adalia but the Dardanelles itself might become open to supplies for Turkey. Troops can move by rail and road from Syria. I wish to record my opinion that Turkey may be won if the proper measures are taken. Turkey is an Ally. She will wish to have a seat among the victors at the peace conference. She has a great desire to be well armed. Her Army is in good order except for the specialized modern weapons, in which the Bulgarians have been given so great an advantage by the Germans. The Turkish Army has been mobilized for nearly three years, and is warlike. Hitherto Turkey has been re-

strained by fear from fulfilling her obligations, and we have taken an indulgent view of her policy on account of our own inability to help. The situation has now changed. By the destruction of Rommel's Army, large forces may presently become available in Egypt and Cyrenaica[a]. By a strengthened Russian resistance and a possible counterstroke in the Caucasus, which we should urge upon the Russians with all emphasis, great easement will be secured in Persia and the Tenth Army may be drawn upon. There is also the Ninth Army in Syria. From all these sources it should be possible, on the assumption of the Russians maintaining themselves in the Caucasus north of the mountain line and holding the Caspian, to build up a powerful British land and air force to assist the Turks. A target date for the concentration should be April or May. Let me have proposals.

The following is the order of procedure, political and military: (A) Turkey should be offered a Russian-American-British guarantee of territorial integrity and status quo. The Russians have already agreed with us upon this. The addition of the United States would probably be a decisive reassurance. This should be followed by the dispatch to Turkey of a strong Anglo-American Military Mission. (B) All through the winter from now on, Turkey must be equipped from Egypt and from the United States with tanks, A/T and AA guns, and active construction of airfields must be under taken. We have been working upon airfield construction in Turkey for two years. What progress has been made so far? Now that Rommel has been beaten, there is evidently a surplus of material in Egypt. We had over two thousand five hundred tanks at the disposal of the Middle East Army. Much enemy material has been captured, both German and Italian. This is also true of A/T and a AA guns. Experts must be provided to assist the Turks in learning to use and maintain this material. A ceaseless flow of weapons and equipment must go into Turkey. We have already promised a consignment, but the moment Turkey agrees secretly with the plan above, far greater quantities must be sent. What is the capacity of the railways from Syria to the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles? It would seem a great mistake to attack Rhodes and other Islands in enemy hands in the Eastern Mediterranean until we have got Turkey on our side. Any attacks can then be supported by heavy shore based air power. We have to creep round this coast both by land and sea, building up our air as we go. (C) In conjunction with the above, we should urge the Russians to develop their strength on their southern flank, to try to clear the Caucasus, to regain Novorossisk and, above all, to resume at the earliest date their intentions explained to me by Premier Stalin, of striking south west from the region north of Stalingrad towards Rostov on the Don. An ultimate

result of these operations, if successful, would be the opening of the Dardanelles under heavy air protection to the passage of supplies to Russian Black Seas Ports, and to any Naval assistance the Russians might require in the Black Sea. (D) Lastly, all being well we should assemble in Syria the British and imperial forces mentioned in preceding paragraphs.

[MR*. pWSC, IV, 654–55, 697–98.]

Churchill continued to worry about Russian morale and was willing to send another convoy to northern Russia—if the United States could provide sufficient escort vessels. “Scapa” was Scapa Flow, the home port of the British Home Fleet located in Scotland.

C-196

London [via U.S. Embassy]

Nov. 18, 1942, 7:15 A.M. / TOR 7:53 A.M.

Former Naval Person to President Roosevelt. Personal and Most Secret.

I know your earnestness about sending another convoy to North Russia as soon as possible. We can have thirty-one ships ready to sail from Iceland on 22 December.

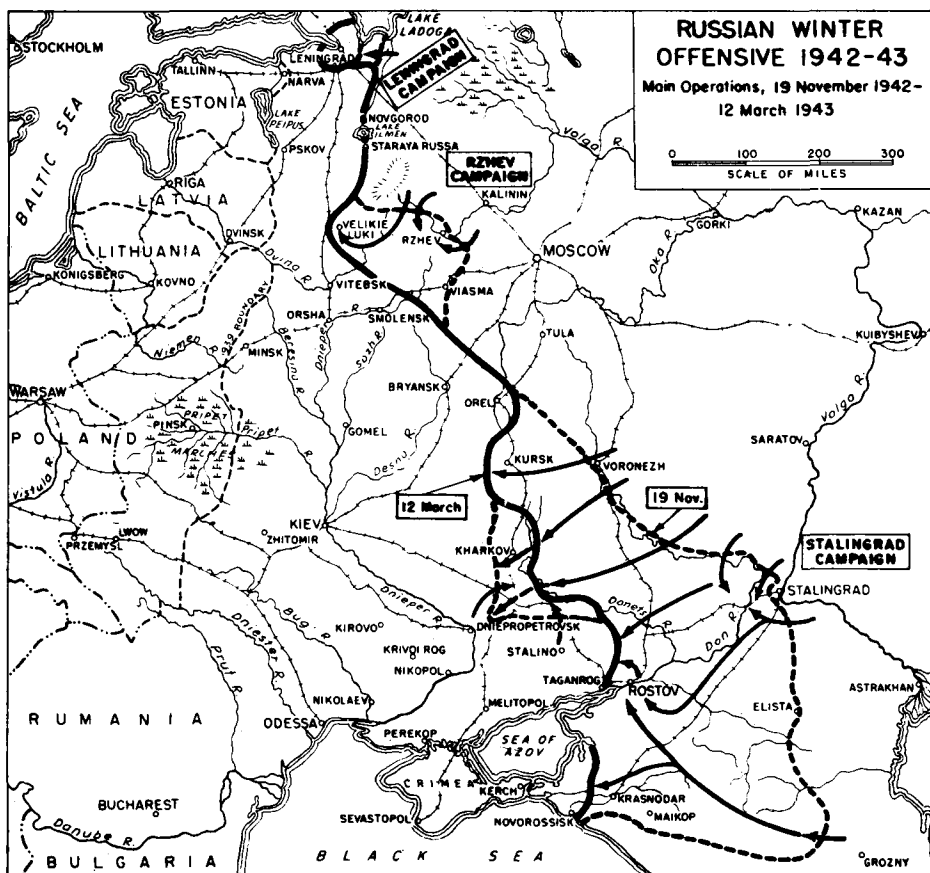
As *Tirpitz*, *Hipper* and two small enemy cruisers are stationed in Norway, it is essential to have with the convoy, in addition to their close escort, a striking force of sixteen destroyers to deal with the German Surface Forces.

We can provide the close escort for convoy but, owing to TORCH commitments and the casualties to destroyers in that operation we can only provide seventeen out of the twenty nine destroyers required for a screen for the battle fleet and cruisers and the destroyer striking force mentioned above.

I am reluctant to risk sending this convoy unless we give it adequate protection. It is hoped therefore that you would be prepared to send twelve long endurance destroyers to assist in passing the convoy in.

It would be desirable for your destroyers to arrive at Scapa by seventh December in order to give time for them to get accustomed to working with our fleet.

[MR*]



Churchill seemed pleased at having received a courteous and optimistic message from Stalin and quickly forwarded it to Roosevelt. The winter campaign referred to by Stalin was the Russian offensive at Stalingrad, which began on November 19. Vladikavkaz (misspelled by Churchill) is currently called Ordzhonikidze and is in the Caucasus, located at a vital crossroad west of the Baku oil fields. The town's original name translated as "possessor of the Caucasus."

C-197

London

Nov. 18, 1942, 9:27 A.M. / TOR 7:35 A.M.

Personal and Most Secret Former Naval Person to President.

On the thirteenth November I sent you through Lord Halifax an unnumbered telegram containing the texts of two messages from Stalin and my reply [C-189/1]. I have now received the following from him in answer to my last telegram. Begins.

Many thanks for your message of the thirteenth November we all here delighted at your successes in Lybia and at the successes of the British American Forces in the French North Africa. Let me congratulate you from the bottom of my heart on your victory and wish you further successes.

In the last few days we succeeded in stopping the Germans near Vladikavkas and in stabilizing the situation there. Vladikavkas is in our hands and, it seems to me, will remain in our hands. We are taking all possible measures to keep our positions in the Northern Caucasus.

We hope to start our winter campaign in the near future. The exact moment of the beginning depends on weather which is beyond our power. I will regularly inform you on the course of the operation.

[MR*. *Stalin/WSC*, doc. 86.]

Churchill remained concerned about Admiral Darlan in North Africa, and continued to treat Eisenhower as a political innocent. Eisenhower expressed his annoyance privately, but publicly and in messages to Churchill calmly defended his deal with the Admiral on grounds of military expediency. Cadogan was a strong critic of the Darlan deal, and Churchill apparently hoped that the Foreign Office official could convince Eisenhower of the need to consider political as well as military expediency.

C-198

London [via U.S. Army]

Nov. 18, 1942, 1351 Z / TOR 10:50 A.M.

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

Thank you for your statement about North Africa, which I thought admirable [R-214].

I understand that Eisenhower is planning to hold a small unofficial conference at Gibraltar. I think it would be helpful if some one from here who understands the political aspect could sit in for the conference. Eisenhower would like this. As Bedell Smith is leaving here tomorrow Cadogan plans to fly down with him. We should of course keep his journey secret.

[MR*]

Roosevelt gently but firmly defended Eisenhower by eliminating political issues as a subject for discussion at the Gibraltar meeting.

R-215

Washington [via U.S. Navy]

Nov. 18, 1942, 12 A.M.

For Former Naval Person from President Personal and Secret.

Your No. 198. I have not the slightest objection to the unofficial conference at Gibraltar or your sending Cadogan with Bedell Smith. However, I think it is of the utmost importance that Eisenhower and your people should not (repeat not) discuss the political aspects in North or West Africa at this time except to explore the existing situation in its military aspects. Most certainly no political decisions should be reached at the conference.

[MR]

Even before Roosevelt's cable arrived, Major General Bedell Smith, Eisenhower's representative in London, had questioned the value of Cadogan's going to the Gibraltar talks. Roosevelt's message eliminated the need for Cadogan to attend and the British so informed the President [C-201]. (See Cadogan, *The Diaries*, pp. 494-95.)

C-199

London [via U.S. Army]
Nov. 18, 1942, 1029 Z

Former Naval Person to President Roosevelt Personal and Secret.

Your number 215. Thank you so much. Of course no decisions will be taken.

[MR]

R-216

Washington [via U.S. Navy]
Nov. 18, 1942, 12 A.M.

For Former Naval Person from the President Personal and Secret.

Your No. 197. I also received through Russian Ambassador here a message from Stalin which is almost a paraphrase of his message to you [possibly *Stalin/FDR*, doc. 49]. I note a great improvement in the tone of our messages from Moscow and I hope this will continue.

[MR*]

In spite of strong opposition from the press and from within the British government, Churchill had little choice but to acquiesce in the American decision to work with Darlan. As ever, he tried to make the best of what he considered a bad deal.

C-200

London [via U.S. Army]
Nov. 18, 1942, 1:40 A.M. / TOR 2210 [EWT?]

Personal and Secret Former Naval Person to President.

Your public statement about Darlan has settled the matter in the best possible way. I am as anxious however as you and Eisenhower that we should profit to the full in the actions which are impending by French cooperation. Also I fully recognize that if Darlan and company render real services during the operations these would naturally count in their favour. I feel pretty sure we are looking at it from exactly the same point of view. Every good wish.

[MR*. WSC, IV, 634.]

The American Joint Chiefs of Staff were already engaged in a debate over post-TORCH strategy which would not be resolved until the President decided on an invasion of Sicily. General Marshall staunchly opposed any further operations in the Mediterranean as inspired by British political strategy rather than military considerations; Admiral King continued to fight for increased emphasis on the Pacific; and Roosevelt seemed most concerned about keeping Anglo-American forces engaged against German armies.

R-217

Washington [via U.S. Navy]
Nov. 19, 1942, 11:35 A.M.

From the President for the Former Naval Person Personal and Secret.

Reference your No. 195 of November 18th the Combined Chiefs of Staff are now studying the possibilities for future actions in the Mediterranean Theater, basing their studies on the following favorable and unfavorable assumptions and/or a combination of both.

The favorable assumptions are: (1) That Tunisia has been cleared of Axis troops. (2) That the British 8th Army has reached Bengasi, but that the remnants of Rommel's force are still in being to the west of that place. (3) That the Spanish reactions to TORCH remain satisfactory. (4) That the lines of communication are secure.

The unfavorable assumptions are the converse of the favorable assumptions stated above.

The Combined Chiefs of Staff will consider the contents of your No. 195 of November 18th in connection with the studies on which they are now engaged. I will tell you of their conclusions as soon as possible. Roosevelt [JCS]

[MR*]

Although Roosevelt softened slightly the matter-of-fact language proposed by Admiral King, even the President's strong concern about Russian morale could not overcome the severe shortage of escort destroyers. (The final sentence was added in Roosevelt's handwriting.)

R-218

Washington [via U.S. Navy]
Nov. 19, 1942, 11:38 (A.M.?)

From the President to the Former Naval Person Personal and Most Secret.

Replying to your message No. 196 of November 18 I am in complete agreement that every effort should be made to send another convoy to

Russia at the earliest possible date.

It is noted that you can make available escort vessels for the close escort and some for the covering and striking forces but you feel that twelve additional destroyers are necessary for adequate protection.

You are familiar with the necessity of our radical reduction of escort forces even to retaining in the Atlantic destroyers urgently required in the Pacific in order to provide escort vessels for TORCH.

The movement of essential follow up convoys from America to Africa is contingent upon availability of escort vessels and the TORCH operation must be adequately supported.

Destroyer losses and damage to destroyers in recent naval operations in the Pacific have been so serious as to necessitate an immediate return of the destroyers borrowed from the Pacific for TORCH.

This will leave in the Atlantic only minimum requirements for follow up convoys to Africa and makes it impossible for us to provide the destroyers for the Russian convoy suggested in your message Number 196. I wish I could send you a more favorable answer. Roosevelt

[MR. R&C.]

C-201

London [via U.S. Army]

Nov. 19, 1942, 1221 [Z?] / TOR 1240 [Z?]

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

Your number 215. On further consideration I think it unnecessary for Cadogan to go now.

[MR*]

The politics of war continued to plague Roosevelt. Under heavy fire from the press, particularly Walter Lippmann, for seeming to violate all of the ideals professed in the Atlantic Charter, Roosevelt continued to emphasize the military expedience of dealing with Darlan. His proposal for sending two political advisers was designed to take some pressure off Eisenhower while simultaneously using the existing Vichy administrative system in North Africa. Newspaper reports that pro-de Gaulle Frenchmen were being persecuted by the Darlan government stimulated the President's specific instructions regarding political prisoners. Although de Gaulle was not free to make public comments (because of British censorship), Gaullists had made clear their vehement opposition to the arrangement in North Africa.

R-219

Washington [via U.S. Navy]
Nov. 19, 1942, 5:30 P.M.

For the Former Naval Person from the President Personal and Secret.

I told the press yesterday in confidence an old orthodox church proverb used in the Balkans that appears applicable to our present Darlan-de Gaulle problem. "My children, it is permitted you in time of grave danger to walk with the devil until you have crossed the bridge."

In regard to North Africa and possibly additional future areas, I think you and I might give some consideration to the idea of appointing one Britisher and one American to whom would be given authority not to administer civil functions but to hold a veto power over French civil administrators, and to direct them in rare instances to follow out certain policies. For example, I sent word to Eisenhower that all political prisoners in North and West Africa must be released. If Darlan fails to carry out this directive, Eisenhower must at once exercise his authority as Supreme Commander and take independent action in the matter.

[MR*. WSC, IV, 635-36. R&C.]

Domestic political pressures and a reasonable fear of the Japanese threat to Australia and New Zealand forced the Prime Ministers of those two nations to request the return of their troops fighting in North Africa. Eventually the New Zealand government accepted the Anglo-American arguments and left its troops in North Africa. Prime Minister Curtin of Australia persisted, however, and the Ninth Division returned to Australia.

R-220

Washington [via U.S. Navy]
Nov. 19, 1942, 5:47 P.M.

From the President for the Former Naval Person Personal and Secret.

I have received a telegram from the Prime Minister of Australia and as he does not say that he is repeating it to you, I am sending it to you in my following dispatch.

I have sent it to the Combined Staffs in Washington with the following memorandum:

"I enclose telegram from Prime Minister of Australia. I hope you will consider this and let me have your judgment as to what reply should be made. Obviously the British Combined Staffs should be consulted and their opinion be given great weight, in view of the fact

that while the African operation is largely American on the western end, it is preponderantly British on the eastern end. It is my snap judgment that Mr. Curtin should be told:

(a) That it is essential that General Alexander's and General Montgomery's operation continue in full swing and that it cannot be interrupted by the removal of any division or unit until the whole African operation from Algiers to Egypt is definitely settled in our favor and every German and every Italian is driven out of Africa.

(b) I think we should impress on Mr. Curtin that the opening of the Mediterranean to through shipping to the Far East via the Suez Canal is of major benefit to the safety of Australia, and that the work of the Ninth Division is a component part of the whole.

(c) As to the return of the Division to Australia after the completion of the African operation, I feel that this is a matter primarily for the decision of the Combined Staffs here and in London.

(d) If I felt sure that the return of the Ninth Division to Australia would result in its being reconstituted as an experienced fighting division available for use in New Guinea or some other island, I would be inclined to let it go back to Australia for that purpose. The division is entitled to a rest period after its strenuous campaigns in the Egyptian area, but I think it should be kept intact, filled up with trained officers and made definitely available to take the offensive northward from Australia."

I hope, therefore, that you will take this up with your people and my people in London. The primary consideration must, of course, be the relationship of the Ninth Division to the African campaign and after that there is the secondary consideration of building up the Australian strength for use north of Australia. Roosevelt

[MR*]

Roosevelt forwarded a copy of Curtin's angry message.

R-221

Washington [via U.S. Navy]
Nov. 19, 1942, 5:45 P.M.

From the President to the Former Naval Person Personal and Most Secret.
Here is the dispatch referred to in No. 220.

"Dear President Roosevelt,

I have carefully considered the suggestion in your telegram of November 1st for the retention of the 9th Imperial Division in the

Middle East and your proposal to send the United States Division to Australia from Hawaii conditional on the right to divert it elsewhere within the Southwest and South Pacific areas.

2. As explained to Mr. Churchill in my telegram of October 17th, which was repeated to you, it is impossible for Australia to despatch to the Middle East the reinforcements necessary for the maintenance of the 9th Division in view of the difficulties already being experienced in maintaining the Australian Army and meeting the heavy wastage from tropical warfare in New Guinea. Unless the Division returns to Australia it cannot be maintained, whereas it can be built up again in Australia by the allocation of personnel from other formations which are being disbanded owing to contraction in the number of our divisions.

3. The attitude of the Australian Government has all along been quite definite and clear regarding the future employment of this Division.

4. After the outbreak of war with Japan, and following a statement generously volunteered by Mr. Churchill that no obstacles would be placed in the way of Australian troops returning to defend their homeland, the Government requested that all Australian troops overseas should return to Australia.

5. In March we allowed two brigade groups of the 6th Division to be used in Ceylon on the understanding that the 9th Division would return to Australia as soon as possible. Had these brigades returned directly to Australia we would have been able to strengthen the forces in New Guinea much earlier with battle trained troops.

6. In April the Government agreed to the postponement of the return of the 9th Division until it could be replaced in the Middle East.

7. When the Australian Government had every reason to expect the return of the Division in July it raised no objection to its transfer from Palestine to the Western Desert to help stem the Axis advance. Mr. Churchill was advised there would be difficulties in the despatch of further reinforcements from Australia and that when available reserves were exhausted the Division would have to be withdrawn from the line of battle.

8. On July 30th in a further personal telegram to Mr. Churchill I stated it was impossible for the Government to do more than agree to an extension of the period for the temporary retention of the 9th Division in the Middle East. A limit was set to reinforcements that would be available and it was specifically stated ancillary units were not to be broken up for use as reinforcements. It was emphasized the Commander-in-Chief Middle East would therefore need to have these facts in mind in his use of the Division.

9. Mr. Churchill, the Australian Representative on the United Kingdom War Cabinet and the Commander of the Division have been informed:—

(a) No further reinforcements for the 9th Division are being despatched from Australia.

(b) The Government is not agreeable to the 9th Division being broken up by the replacement of wastage from ancillary and other units.

(c) It is essential that the Commander-in-Chief Middle East should have regard to this position in his use of the 9th Division.

The Government views the present use of the Division as absolutely governed by the fulfilment of the conditions laid down by it some time ago and I have told Mr. Churchill that in our plans and dispositions we are relying on the Division being returned in good shape and strength. Now that the situation in the Middle East for which the 9th Division was retained has been cleared up satisfactorily, the Government expects early effect to be given the understanding reached in April.

10. You might be interested to know that on the entry of Italy into the war certain units of the 6th Division reinforcements and Corps troops were diverted to the United Kingdom, where they were organized into the 9th Division for the defence of Britain against invasion. This Division, which was later transferred to the Middle East and withstood the siege of Tobruk, therefore really became an additional overseas commitment. It was realized at the time that it would probably be beyond our capacity to maintain it and experience has proved this to be the case.

11. Decisions on global strategy have been taken by Mr. Churchill and yourself. The Commonwealth Government has shown a ready willingness to co-operate in other theatres at considerable risk to the security of Australia. This has been demonstrated by the service overseas of our naval, land and air forces and our continued participation in the Empire Air Training Scheme. The Government considers the contributions it has made to other theatres entitle it to the assurance that the fullest possible support will be given to the situation in the Pacific. You will recall that the military advisers of the Commonwealth Government consider that three further divisions are necessary in the Southwest Pacific area. In view of its responsibilities for the local defence of Australia and in light of the views of its advisers, the Government feels that the maximum strength of Australian forces should be concentrated in the Southwest Pacific area to meet all contingencies of the military situation in the Pacific.

12. We are grateful to learn that you are sending to the South or Southwest Pacific Area the Division from Hawaii. We would be de-

lighted to welcome it to Australia where it would be an invaluable addition to the two splendid American Divisions already here.

Yours sincerely, John Curtin."

Roosevelt

[MR*]

Air to surface-vessel (ASV) radar, developed by the British, had been a valuable tool for detecting German submarines cruising on the surface—something the diesel submarines of World War II had to do frequently in order to recharge the batteries they used for undersea cruising. Wellington bombers were being converted to anti-submarine warfare, while American-built Liberator bombers (B-24), along with the Flying Fortress (B-17), were becoming the mainstay of the bombing offensive against Germany. The 1½-meter radar was replaced in March 1943 by a more effective unit.

As was commonly the case in messages sent to Roosevelt via Hopkins, the reply to Churchill came from Hopkins himself, sent on December 1, 1942. In that message Hopkins informed Churchill that the United States could not meet his request for thirty Liberator bombers with centimeter ASV, but was sending twenty-one such aircraft and associated ground equipment to General Eisenhower for use in anti-submarine operations near Europe. Hopkins also promised that the Liberators scheduled for delivery to Britain under the terms of the Arnold-Towers-Slessor agreement would be equipped with the special radars. (See Hopkins to Churchill, Dec. 1, 1942, HLH: Special Asst. to the President series.)

C-202

Washington [via U.S. Army]
Nov. 20, 1942, 1310 Z

Secret from the Prime Minister to Mr. Harry Hopkins.

Could you put the following before the President on a suitable occasion.

1. One of the most potent weapons for hunting the U-boat and protecting our convoys is the long range aircraft fitted with ASV equipment.
2. The German U-boats have recently been fitted with a device enabling them to listen to our one and one-half metre ASV equipment and thus dive to safety before our aircraft can appear on the scene. As the result our day patrols in the bay have become largely ineffective in bad weather and our night patrols, with searchlight aircraft, have been rendered almost entirely useless. Sightings of U-boats have accordingly declined very sharply from 120 in September to 57 in October. No improvement can be expected until aircraft fitted with a type of ASV to which they cannot

at present listen called "Centimetre ASV" become available.

3. One of the main objects of patrolling the bay [Biscay] is to attack U-boats in transit to and from the American Atlantic Seaboard. This region is doubly urgent now so many American TORCH convoys pass in the vicinity.

4. We can deal with the inner zone of the Bay of Biscay by modifying and diverting to our Wellingtons a form of Centimetre ASV which has been developed as a target location device for our heavy bombers.

5. A more difficult situation arises in the outer zone of the bay where aircraft of longer range fitted with Centimetre ASV are essential.

6. The very heavy sinking in Mid-Atlantic have forced us to convert our own Liberators for work in this area. This leaves us with no aircraft with adequate range for the outer zone of the bay, unless we make a further diversion from the small force of long range bombers responsible for the air offensive against Germany. Even if this diversion were made a considerable time would necessarily elapse before the essential equipment could be modified and installed.

7. I am most reluctant to reduce the weight of bombs we are able to drop on Germany as I believe it is of great importance that this offensive should be maintained and developed to the utmost of our ability throughout the winter months. I would, therefore, ask you Mr. President to consider the immediate allocation of some 30 Liberators with Centimetre ASV equipment from the supplies which I understand are now available in the United States. These aircraft would be put to work immediately, in an area where they would make a direct contribution to the American War Effort.

[MR*. WSC, IV, 284-85. R&C.]

The refusal of Vichy French officials in Tunisia to accept Darlan's authority had prevented a quick Allied occupation of that French colony. By mid-November the Germans had taken control of Tunisia, creating a front extending from the Algerian border in the west to Tripoli in the east. The Allies planned to drop paratroops behind this line and bypass the well-defended port of Bizerta on the way to the capital city of Tunis.

Field Marshal Jan Smuts of South Africa, whose report Churchill endorsed in this cable, believed that the results of the arrangement with Darlan and such Darlan supporters as Governor General Auguste Nogués of Morocco had more than justified the decision to work with the ex-Vichy leader. Darlan had strongly protested the Anglo-American statements that the deal was temporary. Appealing to the many Frenchmen who could not agree that Vichy had betrayed France, he claimed that his authority came not from the Allies but from Marshal Pétain.

C-203

London

Nov. 20, 1942, 2306 Z / TOR 8:08 P.M.

From Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

Following from Smuts who spent this morning 20th at Gibraltar Headquarters. I am in full agreement with him. Begins:

This is a most secret telegram. After arrival this morning I had a long talk with Eisenhower and Cunningham, which I summarise for your information. As regards coming operation next Sunday or Monday it is doubtful whether Anderson is strong enough to take Bizerta but Tunis appears more hopeful. In any case every effort will be made to press enemy into as small an area or bridgehead as possible so that air and other attack may finish him later. Further south attempt will be made to clean up small pockets of enemy at Sfax and elsewhere, but no large forces will be employed in Tripoli direction at present. Sea losses so far have been made good. Loss of personnel ships have been compensated by equal number of French ships acquired, and for every merchant vessel lost a U-boat has been sunk. As regards Darlan statements published have had unsettling effect on local French leaders and it would be dangerous to go further on those lines. Nogues has threatened to resign and as he controls Morocco population results of such a step might be far reaching. From point of view of securing French cooperation and stabilising situation nothing could be worse than impression that we were merely using leaders to discard them as soon as they have served their purpose. There can be no doubt that Darlan and his friends have burnt their boats and are doing their best to fight the Axis and consolidate French behind us in this fight. French are cooperating in non-combatant tasks and even in fighting on small scale, but their fighting value is at present low for want of proper arms. Darlan was not Eisenhower's choice but that of other French leaders some of whom were his enemies and our strong supporters and who all agreed that his leadership in cooperation was essential for our operations. It would be great mistake to create impression that he is to be discarded at early date. Military situation may call for his retention for fairly long period and meanwhile impression to contrary should not be publicly created. I explained to Eisenhower that I do not think that there was any intention to repeat or go beyond statements already made which were only intended to correct impression that political accord with Vichy elements had been come to. Future political arrangements should be left to governments concerned and agreement of French among

themselves. I think it would be wise to pass on to President Roosevelt my strong impression that further anti Darlan statements might be harmful to our cause, and indeed are not called for.

[MR. WSC, IV, 634-35.]

Eisenhower had negotiated a formal arrangement with Darlan (essentially drawn up by Darlan and General Clark) and, at the suggestion of his staff, had passed it to the Combined Chiefs of Staff for approval before issuing a public announcement. As Eisenhower expected, the CCS gave it to Churchill and Roosevelt. The President suggested that the word "protocol" be avoided since it implied a stronger commitment to Darlan than was intended. Roosevelt said he did not insist on that restriction to the point of jeopardizing military operations, but he did want the arrangement to be strictly military rather than diplomatic or political. The message was sent from the CCS to Eisenhower as R-3361 (Fan 21) with a copy to Churchill.

C-204

London [via U.S. Army]

Nov. 21, 1942, 1321 Z / TOR 10:15 A.M.

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

We entirely agree with your view reported in your R-3361 (Fan 21). In particular we agree that every effort should be made to avoid the form of a protocol or other formal diplomatic document.

[MR]

Given the decision to approve Eisenhower's agreement with Darlan, Churchill could not permit de Gaulle to jeopardize the arrangement. Churchill placed the entire blame for muzzling de Gaulle on the Americans and on Roosevelt in particular. Roosevelt saw no need to reply to this cable.

C-205

London [via U.S. Army]

Nov. 22, 1942, 1647 Z

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

General De Gaulle wished on November 21 to broadcast, through the BBC, the following statement (see my next telegram) denouncing the maintenance of the Vichy regime in North Africa. I felt that, in view of impending operations, I should not allow anything that might compro-

mise arrangement made by Eisenhower with Darlan or prejudice the military situation. I accordingly vetoed the broadcast, which will not now be made. De Gaulle was told that as the operations were under the United States Command I felt bound to take your opinion before agreeing to anything which might be detrimental to them. If your view was that broadcasts of this kind were undesirable at the moment, being your ardent and active Lieutenant I should bow to your decision without demur.

[MR]

De Gaulle's proposed speech was more than a condemnation of the deal with Darlan; it was also a passionate appeal for French unity under the leadership of Charles de Gaulle. (Churchill cabled the French text to Roosevelt. What follows below is the translation of that text provided to the President.)

C-206

London [via U.S. Army]
Nov. 22, 1942, 1717 Z

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.
My immediately preceding telegram. Text begins.

The French nation foresaw that in spite of the arrival of her allies the liquidation of Vichy in French North Africa would not take place without delay or even sudden changes. But, the French nation, in its imprisonment, felt greatest concern on learning that delays may be such and such and that sudden turns may take on such a character. The nation in its imprisonment intends to find out what goes on.

Much French territory is occupied by the allied armies with the consent and enthusiastic support of the people. The nation asks whether or not the regime and spirit of Vichy will remain there in force, whether or not the present Vichy "lords" will continue in office, whether or not this part of the French empire will be able to unite with that part which has already taken up arms again under the banner of honor, whether or not national deliverance beginning with the liberated empire ought to be dishonored by a foursome of culprits, camouflaged for the time being under additional perjury. It would be serious and dangerous simply to ask these questions if at the same time they could not be answered.

Certainly France has only too many times known that in the confusion of this world war there are risks of making mistakes on the part of individuals with the best of intentions. But she (France) has

also recognized that the alliance of all her allies was a sincere one and that the sacred ideal for which so many, many men and women suffer and die on the field of liberty necessarily rejected dishonor and treason as France herself cursed them.

Of a certainty, France knows now a regime of oppression and of lies has long been able to silence free speech and public opinion in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. But she also knows that once the columns of the temple of the idol have been shaken, nothing will again stifle the powerful expression of national will either in Africa or elsewhere.

Likewise, France is fully aware of the difficulty in bringing about co-operation in the war of territories so diverse and so long separated as those making up its empire and (she is also aware of the difficulty) of united action in combat of armed forces which she has or which she is going to be able to draw upon from all parts of the earth. But she knows that in order to unite all the forces which belong to her and the possessions which she protects, there exist ties of long standing: just laws of the legally constituted republic and treaties which she has concluded. She knows that her soldiers, whether they fight in Tunisia, Libya, in Tchad, or in the Pacific, are not the soldiers belonging to an individual but are soldiers of France.

Since the country fell beneath enemy blows and from treasonable plots, the treasure of national independence and dignity has been safeguarded. Through what trials? Only God knows. But having experienced that, France saw leap from the very depths of the soul of the people, the all enveloping flame of hope and liberty. It is due to this sacred flame that there has been raised up and organized, under the very heel of the enemy and of his collaborateurs, the tremendous resistance of the French people. It is by virtue of this same flame that much of our territory and a part of our forces have little by little come together. It is around this same flame that the whole empire will unite itself with the whole nation to fight and to conquer side by side with all the allies of France. It is thus and thus alone that victory will gloriously wipe out with a single blow, our misfortunes, our factions and our tears.

A single struggle for a unified country.

[MR]

The answer Roosevelt proposed to Prime Minister Curtin's request for a return of Australian troops from North Africa was sent to the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington and is summarized in R-220.

C-207

London [via U.S. Army]

Nov. 23, 1942, 1230 Z / TOR 9:31 P.M.

Personal and Secret Former Naval Person to President.

Re your proposed reply about recall of Australian Division. I should be glad if this could be delayed for a few days as we are studying the question here especially in its shipping aspect. It must be remembered that the Australian action will probably entail similar movement of New Zealand Division.

[MR*]

Oliver Lyttelton had gone to Washington to secure from various American officials firm allocations of supplies for Britain. Benefiting from the fortuitous timing of the British victories against Rommel in the African desert, he was most successful in obtaining guarantees for specific percentages of American production, ending at least temporarily British fears that they would receive only what was left over after American military demands had been met.

R-221/1, letter

Washington

November 23, 1942

My dear Winston:

Oliver's visit has been most welcome and I hope he goes home reassured about our ability and determination to stand beside you vigorously until the war is won. Thanks so much for letting him come over. He will convey to you some of the private thoughts, serious and otherwise, which we have discussed together.

Very cordially yours,

[MR. PREM 3/481/5.]

Although Churchill thought the Australians and New Zealanders were disloyal to the British Empire, he had no choice but to give in to their demands. Even so he passed the final determination on to the American government, along with a hint that the removal of the Australian division from the Middle East might cut back the reinforcements destined for the southwestern Pacific. Churchill was particularly annoyed with John Curtin, the Australian Prime Minister, since the New Zealand government was under heavy domestic pressure to follow the lead of its larger neighbor. That annoyance was heightened

by Churchill's dislike for the Australian Labour Party, which had taken office in October 1941. Peter Fraser, Prime Minister of New Zealand, likewise headed a Labour government.

C-208

London [via U.S. Army]

Nov. 24, 1942, 0040 Z / TOR 1:00 A.M.

To the President of the United States from Churchill

Your No. 220 of November 20 [19]. I cannot do better than send you the two telegrams I have despatched to Mr. Curtin and Mr. Fraser respectively. We cannot of course in any way oppose in principle the withdrawal of either or both of these divisions, but you who have a great army in the Pacific theatre and have assumed a considerable measure of responsibility for the defense of Australia have every right to express an opinion, more especially as American armies are also engaged in North Africa and it is arguable their position might be affected. Moreover there is a great case against the uneconomical use of our limited shipping. It therefore seems to me that the view taken by General Marshall is sound and that the Combined Chiefs of Staff should lay their view before the Dominion Governments concerned. We are very grateful to the United States for the help you are giving to the defence of Australia and New Zealand while our own troops are so fully engaged with the enemy in other quarters.

[MR*]

C-209

London [via U.S. Army]

Nov. 24, 1942, 0059 Z / TOR 1:00 A.M.

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

Following are texts referred to in my No. 208. Number 1. Begins:

Prime Minister to Prime Minister of New Zealand personal and secret.

1. Your Pefra No. 8 (for text see my immediately following telegram). I should very much regret to see the New Zealand Division quit the scene of its glories, but I quite understand your feelings and how embarrassing to you would be the withdrawal of the Ninth Australian Division. I am having the whole situation reviewed by the Chiefs of Staff in London. In the meanwhile I send you a copy of the telegram I have today despatched to Mr. Curtin. I am sure it would be a mistake for Australia and New Zealand to ignore the

opinion of the United States Military Authorities, having regard to the great contribution they are now making to the defence of the Southern Pacific and the still greater efforts we must expect from them.

Number 2. Begins:

Prime Minister to Mr. Curtin personal and secret.

Your Johcu 45 (President's No. 221 to Former Naval Person) and President Roosevelt's telegram of November first. We recognise of course that the withdrawal of the Ninth Australian Division from the Mediterranean Theatre rests with the Commonwealth Government. However, the United States forces are now heavily engaged both in helping Australia and mastering French North Africa as a prelude to further action in Europe. They are therefore entitled to have the opportunity of considering the position as a whole and of making any representations to you which they may think desirable.

2. It seems probable that the Eastern Mediterranean will be the scene of large scale action in the early spring and the position of Turkey is of peculiar interest. If the Ninth Australian Division is withdrawn to Australia, it will of course have to be replaced in the Middle East either by British or American Forces. In the present acute and aggravated shipping stringency it will be necessary to save tonnage as much as possible. For instance it might be most economical to move one of the American Divisions in Australia or destined for the Pacific direct to Suez, where they could pick up the Ninth Australian Division on the return journey. There might be no other way of maintaining the necessary strength in the Middle East. On the other hand it might be possible to carry the Australians' away from the Middle East as an isolated shipping operation. This again would have to be at the expense of our general power to move troops about the world and would have to be considered in relation to the dominating military exigencies. The matter is one on which the Combined Chiefs of Staff at Washington, who alone have the central point of view, should in the first instance advise.

3. So far as we are concerned we shall of course not oppose your wishes, although we greatly regret the departure from the Middle Eastern Theatre of a division which has rendered distinguished service. The object should be to bring the greatest number of the United Nations Divisions into contact with the enemy, and certainly it would appear more helpful to the common cause if fresh troops were moved from the United States into the Pacific and into action against Japan than that troops already engaged with the enemy in another part of the world should be withdrawn.

4. As I know the great importance which you have always attached to American opinion and how much you value the substantial aid they have given to the defence of Australia, I feel bound to put these points before you.

[MR*]

C-210

London [via U.S. Army]

Nov. 24, 1942, 0150 Z / TOR 1:00 A.M.

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

Following is text of Pefra No. 8. Begins.

The time has come I feel when I must raise with you the question of the return of the Second New Zealand Division from the Middle East. In doing so, I assure you that the exigencies of the war situation, both in this part of the world and in the North African Theatre, are fully in my mind. We in New Zealand have for considerable time been of the opinion that, in view of the growing difficulties of the manpower position and of our increased and increasing commitments in the Pacific Area, this request should be made by my colleagues and I also felt that to do so in the adverse circumstances which existed hitherto in the Middle East and in Russia would be inappropriate. It was always my intention however at the proper time, and when the situation in Egypt became easier, to place the whole position before you. As late as August of this year, when approval was given for the despatch of reinforcements for the Middle East, it was felt that the urgent needs of that theatre outweighed those of the area in which New Zealand was situated. Now however with the launching of the most promising Anglo American offensive, the immediate security of the Middle East, which we have always regarded as being of such vital importance, appears for all practical purposes to have been achieved, and, with the accession of large new forces from the United States and Britain, the presence of one New Zealand division in this theatre becomes a matter of diminishing importance. Here in the Pacific, on the other hand, we are faced not only with the possibility of Japanese launching further offensive action, both to retrieve the situation arising from her recent setback, and to take advantage of the preoccupations of the United Nations in Europe and in Africa, but also with what we regard as the necessity on the part of the United Nations to launch a counter offensive at the earliest possible date. In either case it is felt that the place of the Second Division is here in the South Pacific.

Now that the New Zealand Army and Air Forces have, at our own request, been placed under the Commander of the South Pacific Area, we anticipate that increasingly heavy demands will inevitably be made upon the resources of this Dominion, both in manpower and materials. Already as you are aware we have, in response to requests from the Commander South Pacific Area, readily and promptly agreed to send a New Zealand Division for service in the islands, part of which has already proceeded to its several destinations. In addition to our Army commitments, it has been decided that the New Zealand Air Force also should be trained and equipped to undertake an offensive role in the Pacific, and, for some time now, I should add a large proportion of our limited force of modern aircraft have been operating in Guadalcanal and Esperito Santo and other Pacific Islands. New Zealand is now endeavouring to complete preparations for an air force of sixteen squadrons for service in the Pacific, with an ultimate aim of achieving a thirty squadron air force.

You will appreciate that with our extremely limited manpower resources, which have now reached straining point, it is not possible for us to maintain two divisions overseas, and an adequate home defence force together with our air commitments, which include, of course, the Empire Air Training Scheme, and our comparatively small but increasingly useful Naval units. We have in fact reached the limit of our manpower resources in New Zealand. Up to the present we have taken over 163,000 men and 5,000 women from industry. We now find ourselves unable to reach the establishment which our Chiefs of Staff laid down as the minimum force required for the defence of the Dominion. There is also the question of production of food and other supplies, both for the United Kingdom and the South Pacific Area. The United States Forces are becoming increasingly dependent upon resources of the Dominion for those essential supplies and services which we must endeavour to provide under the Mutual Aid Agreement. Already, in order to maintain production, it has become necessary to strip the Army of a large number of its personnel and return such men to industry, and we are now forced, in considering the needs of essential industry, and our commitments in respect of the armed forces, to come to the decision to reduce establishment below the level which our military advisers regard as sufficient.

I think I should tell you also of the attitude of the New Zealand people, both Maori and European generally, towards the return of the division from overseas. The main body left New Zealand three years ago next January, and the greater proportion of the men now fighting in the Middle East have been absent from New Zealand for well over two years. There is general feeling in the country, partic-

ularly in view of the extremely heavy casualties which our division has suffered—18,500 so far out of a total of 43,500 sent to the Middle East—that our men have a strong claim to return, and further, that our own tried and well trained troops should be used for the defence of New Zealand in the Pacific Area.

And finally I must draw your attention to the effect on New Zealand public opinion of the possible withdrawal of the Ninth Australian Division from the Middle East, concerning which Mr. Curtin has now sent me (corrupt group) [in both British and American files] you will appreciate that it would be absolutely impossible for the New Zealand government to resist the strong feeling to which I have referred should it become known that all three Australian Divisions have returned. I feel bound therefore to place the whole matter fully and frankly before you and to ask that as soon as circumstances permit effect should be given to this request.

That there will be difficulties and embarrassments I fully realise, and particularly in regard to shipping, but I hope that it will be possible for some adequate and early provision to be made. The urgent question at the moment is of course the despatch of the reinforcements which we had undertaken to send to the Middle East and for which transport is already bound for New Zealand. It will be necessary therefore to give further consideration to this matter upon receipt of your reply to this telegram.

I would like in conclusion to make it plain that it is not our intention to regard the Second New Zealand Expeditionary Force as a force to be stationed permanently in New Zealand itself. We are firmly convinced that a long and difficult conflict with the Japanese lies ahead, irrespective of the success of any operations against Italy and Germany and that the United Nations must, at the earliest possible date, make a forward move against Japan. We would wish to participate in any such offensive in the Pacific to the fullest extent of our capacity.

Dominion has, I hope, given unmistakeable evidence of its fixed determination to fight this war through to the end, and the losses we have suffered in successive campaigns are proof of the spirit of the New Zealand people and of their willingness to make every sacrifice to this end. I know you will appreciate the reasons which induce me to raise this matter and that you will give to it your full and sympathetic consideration.

As American military planners reluctantly began to accept the idea that a cross-channel invasion was not feasible until the spring of 1944, they naturally began to look to other theaters in which to utilize men and supplies. The requirements for TORCH and operations against the Germans in Tunisia had exceeded original estimates, and the Pacific forces seemed ready for more supplies and troops in order to take the offensive against Japan. Always concerned about the defense of the British Isles and also eager to maintain sufficient reserves for a quick strike in the event of a German collapse, the British continued to support BOLERO—the buildup of forces in England. But in spite of Roosevelt's subsequent assurances, the flow of American troops to Britain slowed dramatically. In the words of the official Army historians, "At the end of February 1943, when its American establishment had dwindled to 104,510 troops, the European Theater of Operations had become a stand-by theater manned by a skeleton crew" (Leighton and Coakley, *Global Logistics, 1940–1943*, p. 487). Churchill expressed in this cable his specific concern that ROUNDUP, the cross-channel invasion in the event of a significant weakening of German resistance, had been abandoned. When Major General Smith returned from North Africa, he assured the Prime Minister that his fears were unfounded. Actually, the debate over strategy was still going on among American military planners and the main issue would not be decided until early 1943, at the Casablanca Conference between Churchill and Roosevelt. In the light of Churchill's later misgivings about the massive cross-channel invasion, there is a good deal of irony in his appeal for a concentration of Anglo-American power against the Germans in western Europe. But at this stage of the war, Churchill feared a shift of American attention, and supplies, to the Pacific theater, and Marshall's arguments for BOLERO suited British purposes.

Churchill was also concerned about the Soviet reaction to another cancellation of the second front—hence his reference to the August 1942 talks in Moscow with Stalin and the American representative, Averell Harriman. Stalin had shown considerable anger and disappointment at the failure of the British and Americans to mount SLEDGEHAMMER, a major cross-channel invasion scheduled tentatively for 1942, and Churchill did not want to give him any further reason to suspect Anglo-American motives. Whether or not Churchill had already used Stalin's anger to push Roosevelt into supporting the invasion of North Africa is a matter for speculation.

Major General Russell P. Hartle was one of Eisenhower's deputies in London.

C-211

London [via U.S. Army]
Nov. 24, 1942, 1710 Z / TOR 3:15 P.M.

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

1. We have had a letter from General Hartle stating that under directive from the United States War Department ("Any construction in excess of

the requirements for a force of 427,000 must be accomplished entirely by your own labour and with your own materials and that Lend-Lease materials cannot be furnished in these instances"). This has caused us very great concern, not so much from the standpoint of Lend-Lease but on grounds of grand strategy. We have been preparing under BOLERO for 1,100,000 men, and this is the first intimation we have had that this target is to be abandoned. We had no knowledge that you had decided to abandon forever ROUND-UP and all our preparations were proceeding on a broad front under BOLERO.

2. It seems to me that it would be a most grievous decision to abandon ROUND-UP. TORCH is no substitute for ROUND-UP and only engages 13 divisions as against the 48 contemplated for ROUND-UP. All my talks with Stalin in Averell's presence, were on the basis of a postponed ROUND-UP. But never was it suggested that we should attempt no Second Front in Europe in 1943 or even 1944.

3. Surely, Mister President, this matter requires most profound consideration. I was deeply impressed with all General Marshall's arguments that only by ROUND-UP could the main forces be thrown into France and the low countries and only in this area could the main strength of the British Metropolitan and United States overseas Air Forces be brought into action. One of the arguments we used against SLEDGEHAMMER was that it would eat up in 1942 the seed-corn needed for the much larger ROUND-UP in 1943. No doubt we have all been sanguine of our shipping resources, but that is a matter which time can correct. Only by the building up of a ROUND-UP force here as rapidly and regularly as other urgent demands on shipping allow can we have the means of coming to grips with the main strength of the enemy and liberating the European Nations. It may well be that, try as we will, our strength will not reach the necessary levels in 1943. But if so it becomes all the more important to make sure we do not miss 1944.

4. Even in 1943 a chance may come. Should Stalin's offensive reach Rostov on the Don, which is his aim, a first-class disaster may overtake the German Southern Armies. Our Mediterranean Operations following on TORCH may drive Italy out of the war. Widespread demoralization may set in among the Germans, and we must be ready to profit by any opportunity which offers.

5. I do beg of you, Mister President, to let me know what has happened. At present we are completely puzzled by this information and the manner in which it has reached us. It seems to me absolutely necessary either that General Marshall and Admiral King with Harry should come over here or that I should come with my people to you.

Public pressure, distrust of Darlan, and the desire of the American military to avoid political entanglements had caused Roosevelt to suggest the appointment of two political counselors, one British and one American, in North Africa. Churchill, for the same reasons, agreed. Once again he indicated Britain's wish to avoid anything which smacked of recognition of a Darlan government for France. Roosevelt did not respond to this message and it appears that the War Department convinced the President that nothing should be done to diminish Eisenhower's authority. On December 8 Roosevelt told Lord Halifax, the British Ambassador in Washington, that any such political representatives should be subordinate to Eisenhower. That suggestion displeased the British, who wanted to take political affairs out of military hands. (See Woodward, *British Foreign Policy*, II, 378-79.)

C-212

London [via U.S. Army]
Nov. 24, 1942, 2120 Z

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

I think that the proposal made in the second paragraph of your telegram number 219 of 20 [19] November is a good one, and we shall be glad to appoint someone to act side by side with the person you select.

The functions of our two civilians should, I suppose, be defined by us before they go.

Am I right in assuming that your proposal is that they should not be accredited as representatives to Darlan or to the French Administration, but would act as the political agents of their governments on the civilian side in the territory, side by side with the Allied Commander in Chief, concerting their action with him.

[MR*]

This cable crossed one from Roosevelt which explained that the United States did not plan to abandon ROUNDUP, although there would be a delay [R-222].

C-213

London [via U.S. Army]
Nov. 25, 1942, 2303 Z

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

My number 211. In conference with Major-General Smith, who has just returned from Gibraltar and was out of England when we received General Hartle's letter, we have learnt that there is no change in the

general plan of BOLERO and ROUNDUP, and that the letter quoted related only to the rate at which accommodation should be provided for the build-up. I am very glad this misunderstanding has been cleared away and that we are as ever in closest agreement.

[MR*]

Roosevelt's reply to Churchill's appeal not to cancel ROUNDUP was drafted primarily by Hopkins, although the first paragraph came largely from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, with the final sentence inserted in Roosevelt's handwriting. Like the Prime Minister, the President seemed reluctant to accept the ramifications of the TORCH operation—its enormous drain on manpower, shipping, and matériel. Moreover, Roosevelt was under heavy pressure to increase support for American forces in the southwestern Pacific in order to secure Guadalcanal and drive the Japanese off New Guinea.

R-222

Washington [via U.S. Navy]
Nov. 25, 1942, 11:50 P.M.

From the President for the Former Naval Person Personal and Secret.

In reply to your 211. We of course have no intention of abandoning ROUNDUP. No one can possibly know now whether or not we may have the opportunity to strike across the Channel in 1943 and if the opportunity comes we must obviously grasp it. However the determination as to the size of the force which we should have in BOLERO in 1943 is a matter which should require our joint strategic considerations. It is my present thought that we should build up as rapidly as present active operations permit a growing striking force in the U.K. to be used quickly in event of German collapse or a very large force later if Germany remains intact and assumes a defensive position.

The conclusions of the Combined Chiefs of Staff at the meeting last summer in London indicated that the mounting of TORCH necessarily postponed the assembling of the required forces in the United Kingdom. In view of our requirements for the initiation and maintenance of TORCH our studies indicated that we could not send forces and materiel to the United Kingdom at this time in excess of that stated by General Hartle. Until we have provided adequately against the possible reactions from Spanish Morocco, and are clear as to the situation in Tunisia, North Africa must naturally take precedence. We are far more heavily engaged in the Southwest Pacific than I anticipated a few months ago. Nevertheless, we shall continue with BOLERO as rapidly as our shipping and other resources permit. I believe that as soon as we have knocked the Germans

out of Tunisia, and have secured the danger against any real threat from Spain, that we should proceed with a military strategical conference between Great Britain, Russia and the United States. I am hoping that our military position in Africa will be such that a conference might be held in a month or six weeks. Our own Combined Chiefs of Staff will, I believe, have a recommendation for us within a few days as to what the next steps should be, but I feel very strongly that we have got to sit down at the table with the Russians. My notion would be a conference in Cairo or Moscow: that each of us would be represented by a small group meeting very secretly: that the conclusions of the conference would of course be approved by the three of us. I would probably send Marshall to head up our group but I presume that all services should be represented. I think it would be wise to keep the numbers down to three from each of us.

I have given Oliver [Lyttelton] some private messages [R-222/1] to you which I do not wish to put on the cables and he will be returning I believe next Monday. I hope that all of his problems will have been substantially resolved.

Will you let me know as soon as you can what you think of my proposal?

[MR*. *FRUS, Casablanca*, pp. 488-90. pWSC, IV, 653, 662. R&C.]

Although the Prime Minister argued that making agreements with the Soviets required Stalin's presence, since only he could make decisions, Churchill was himself very reluctant to trust any major strategic decisions to his subordinates, particularly the military.

Churchill repeatedly tried to arrange a presidential visit to England. When Eleanor Roosevelt visited London in October 1942, she and King George looked at an apartment which could be redesigned for the handicapped President's use. (The plans may be found in the Map Room papers.) But despite Roosevelt's express desire to make the trip, something always intervened. Sometimes his health was the problem, but more often it was concern about raising suspicions among Soviet leaders on the one hand and various political groups in the United States on the other about Anglo-American power politics.

C-214

London

Nov. 26, 1942, 1426 Z

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

Your 222.

Thank you so much about my 211. As I cabled you last night, we are in full agreement.

I entirely agree in principle that there should be a conference with the Russians, but I doubt very much whether a conference on general war policy, apart from some special point, between officers would be of much value. Certainly if a Russian delegation went to Cairo, which I deem unlikely, they would be so tied up that they would have to refer every point of substance back to Stalin at Moscow. If the conference were held in Moscow there would be less delay, but I trust that before British and United States missions went to Moscow they would have a joint and agreed view, to serve at least as a basis for discussion. I hope also that if General Marshall were sent by you he would not by pass this country.

I think I can tell you in advance what the Soviet view will be. They will say to us both "How many German divisions will you be engaging in the summer of 1943? How many have you engaged in 1942?" They will certainly demand a strong second front in 1943 by the heavy invasion of the continent either from the west or from the south, or from both. This sort of argument, of which I had plenty in Moscow, requires to be met either by principals or by Naval and shipping authorities who would certainly have to be present. It would be very difficult to spare all our Chiefs for so long at this time.

Stalin talked to me in Moscow in the sense of being willing to come to meet you and me somewhere this winter, and he mentioned Iceland. I pointed out that England was no farther and more convenient. He neither accepted nor rejected the idea. At the same time, apart from the climate, there is a lot to be said for a new triple Atlantic conference in Iceland. Our ships might lie together in Halfjord and we would place a suitable ship at Stalin's disposal wearing the Soviet flag pro tem. He talked with some zest of his desire to fly and of his confidence in the Russian machines. Only at a meeting between principals will real results be achieved. What about proposing it for January? By that time Africa should be cleared and the great battle in south Russia decided.

I may add that if ever I can persuade you to come to Iceland I shall never be satisfied unless you look in on this small place before returning.

[MR. FRUS, *Casablanca*, pp. 490-91. WSC, IV, 662-63.]

Military strategy and global politics were exhilarating questions, but such mundane issues as merchant-ship production frequently decided broad strategic problems. Roosevelt did not reply to Churchill's letter of October 31 [C-180/1] until Oliver Lyttelton had finished his talks with American supply and production officials. Honestly admitting that he was trying "to have our cake and eat it too," Roosevelt promised Churchill the shipping the Prime Minister had requested. Unfortunately the President failed to pass a copy of this letter on to his military chiefs, and serious difficulties later developed as

TORCH, the Pacific theater, and German submarines all took their toll of ships. (See Leighton and Coakley, *Global Logistics, 1940–1943*, pp. 679–86.) In discussing other supply matters, Roosevelt indicated his willingness to give planes to both Russia and England so long as they were used for bombing Germany.

This letter was printed as a British War Cabinet paper. (See WP (42) 563, Dec. 6, 1942 (CAB 66) 31; the original is filed in PREM 3/481/5/97.) The printed copy erroneously substitutes “revise” for “review” in the postscript, which Roosevelt added in longhand. He also changed the valediction.

R-222/1, letter

Washington [via Oliver Lyttelton]
Nov. 30, 1942

My dear Winston:

I presume that we shall never satisfy ourselves as to the relative need of merchant ships versus escort vessels. In this case I believe we should try to have our cake and eat it too.

At any rate we are moving aggressively here to increase both of these programs and have given them the highest priority for material and machine tools.

So far as merchant shipping is concerned, we have, after reexamination of our steel plate problem and other facilities, determined to increase it to 18,800,000 deadweight tons in 1943. I intend to raise this to 20 million tons if after reexamination by our people it should prove possible.

Of one thing I think you can be sure, that we will build in this country a minimum of 18,800,000 tons of merchant shipping of all kinds. Your offices here will keep you informed of the types of ships that are being built and, naturally, I would welcome your judgment in regard to this, because it is very important that we have a proper balance between tankers, cargo vessels and transports.

I agree that this is the time for me to reply to you concerning the very urgent requirements of the British shipping program in 1943.

I have had the 27 million ton figure of imports to the British Isles examined rather hurriedly here by our own people and they are satisfied that this figure is substantially correct.

Our joint war effort requires that this pipe line of material and food to Britain be maintained, that the moving of this tonnage at reasonably even levels is a matter of primary importance. I recognize it as such.

I am well aware of the concern with which your government faces the serious net losses in tonnage to your merchant fleet. It is a net loss which persists and I think we must face the fact that it may well continue through all of next year. I, therefore, want to give you the assurance that from

our expanding fleet you may depend on the tonnage necessary to meet your import program.

Accordingly, I am instructing our Shipping Administration to allocate through the machinery of the Combined Shipping Adjustment Board enough dry cargo tonnage out of the surplus shipbuilding to meet your imports, the supply and maintenance the war effort of the British Commonwealth, to the extent that they cannot be transported by the fleet under British control.

I have been given to understand by our combined shipping people that an average of nearly 300,000 tons each month of carrying capacity will have to be used to supplement the tonnage already engaged on behalf of the British war effort. Because of the commitments already made, the allocation of ships during the next three months must of necessity be less than the average for the whole period.

We may hope for a substantial reduction in this if we can make our way through the Mediterranean. Furthermore, I think that you and I should insist that every possible economy is exercised by our shipping and military authorities.

You will, I am sure, agree that emergencies may develop which may require me to divert for our own military purposes tonnage which it is now contemplated will be utilized for imports to Great Britain. There will, no doubt, be other cases in which we shall wish jointly to confer relative to vital military uses of merchant tonnage.

I want you to know that any important diversions of tonnage will be made only with my personal approval, because I am fully cognizant of the fact that your government may feel that decisions might be made to divert tonnage in contravention of the policy which I am laying down in this letter.

The allocation of tonnage month by month must be worked out by the Combined Shipping Adjustment Board. And hence I confine myself to the above statement of policy, I wish to give you the definite assurance, subject to the qualifications I have indicated, that your requirements will be met.

We have increased our escort program recently by 70 for 1943, so that we should turn out 336 escort vessels during the next calendar year. I am asking Admiral King to confer with your representative here and make arrangements about the distribution of these ships.

The problem of getting our troops to England is a serious one. I recognize that there must be a minimum joint force there, well equipped and prepared to meet any eventuality.

While ROUND-UP seems more and more difficult, I do not think it should be taken off the boards by any means. We never can tell when the opportunity may come for us to strike across the Channel and if that

opportunity comes we must be ready to take it. Obviously, however, the success of our joint enterprise in North Africa requires us to review the movement of our troops during the next few months. We need to come to an early decision as to what our next steps are going to be and upon that decision must rest our determination of the number of American divisions that should be in England. We have this whole matter very much in mind here and our Chiefs of Staff have it under constant consideration.

As you know, we have recently agreed upon a program of 82,000 combat planes. There have been misgivings in some quarters about the size of this program. I have none. We simply must get a complete domination of the air next year, even though other important things give way.

One thing is sure, that the aircraft must be brought to bear on the enemy at the earliest possible moment and, if there are competent British and Russian crews to fight these planes and you can get at the enemy quicker and just as effectively as we can, then I have no hesitancy in saying that you and the Russians should have the planes you need.

We must give consideration to the shipping difficulties that are met when we send our U.S. air forces great distances. We have heavy commitments in the Southwest Pacific. We are rapidly assuming similar commitments in North Africa, and the bombing of Germany and Italy, whether from England or Russia, must be an unrelenting and constant business.

There have been many conferences taking place here between our respective representatives regarding the distribution of aircraft. I am in accord with the agreement that has been reached. Oliver will tell you of this. A detailed memorandum of the agreement will follow in a few days. Oliver has impressed upon me the necessity of making an early decision regarding the distribution of our combined aircraft production. I think the decisions that we have come to regarding aircraft are of the highest importance.

I am told that there is a substantial meeting of minds between your representatives and ours relative to the medium tank. I must confess that I think we are both underrating the need for these medium tanks. It is quite possible that the Russians may again press for large increases in medium tanks and I have a feeling that we are cutting our pattern pretty thin. I am asking General Marshall to explore this once more. I should think it would be no great strain on our production to get a few more thousand medium tanks in 1943.

I understand that some of your ground force requirements have not yet been discussed with my officers. These are being considered. Every effort will be made to include your essential requirements in our Army Supply Programme and I have asked to have a report of these further discussions submitted to me as early as possible.

I also recognize that your own production for Navy, Army and Air, and for the minimum needs of the civilian population, requires an assured flow of materials, machine tools, components and complementary items from America. These supplies, unless unforeseen circumstances intervene, will be maintained.

In conclusion, I want you to feel that this letter, together with the agreements that Oliver is taking home with him, gives you the assurances that you need in planning your own production, and that you may regard them as a firm base upon which to make the allocations of your remaining reserves of manpower.

~~Very cordially yours,~~ As ever yours, [signed] Franklin D. Roosevelt
P.S. I forgot to say: Russia asks 500 transport planes as a prime necessity.
Let us remember that we *may* have to review that item. F.D.R.

[MR. PREM 3/481/5. pR&C.]

The vehicles required for Operation PLOUGH (a commando raid against various targets in German-occupied Europe using special equipment for traveling on snow) were expected to be ready late in December, General Marshall reported in a memorandum dated November 1. There is no explanation of why Roosevelt did not respond until a month later even though he used General Marshall's proposed draft word for word. Possibly Marshall's memo was misdated.

R-223

Washington [via U.S. Navy]
Dec. 1, 1942; 00:35 A.M., Dec. 2

From the President to the Former Naval Person Personal and Secret.

Reference your No. 177 concerning the PLOUGH Project, the vehicle will be produced on schedule and the special service force will have the vehicles for use this winter. Development of improved design now in progress and tests will be made this winter for possible production for future use. The training of the special group of U.S. and Canadian soldiers is proceeding vigorously. Roosevelt

[MR*]

The Polish Corps was composed of Polish soldiers evacuated from Russia. The British planned to use it in the Middle East.

C-215

London [via U.S. Army]

Dec. 2, 1942, 0001 Z / TOR 12:00 P.M., Dec. 1

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

1. I have had a telegram from Mr. Curtin insisting on the return of the Ninth Australian Division and assuming that their equipment will go too.

2. We cannot resist longer the return of the personnel, but we ought not to impede future operations by moving the equipment, which makes a further inroad on shipping and is urgently needed for the Polish Corps. I still hope that New Zealand will allow its division to remain.

[MR*]

POSTPONING THE SECOND FRONT
IN EUROPE

In spite of almost unanimous advice to the contrary from his military experts, Churchill, made even more optimistic by Allied successes in North Africa, continued to grasp at straws, hoping to implement ROUNDUP in 1943. It seems clear, however, that the Prime Minister's concept was not that of General George Marshall and the U.S. Army. Churchill wanted a major invasion of France but did not favor the massive, almost total concentration of Anglo-American forces on a cross-channel attack that the Americans wanted. Moreover, he never lost faith in General Brooke's strategy for a war of attrition. Churchill also worried about Stalin's reaction to any further postponement of the second front, and was thus willing to risk the heavy losses another supply convoy to northern Russia would sustain. The "QP" convoy mentioned by Churchill in his telegram to Stalin was the return of the empty ships which had made up the P.Q. 18 convoy of September 1942.

Churchill was well aware of the difference between the massive Soviet battle and the much smaller, peripheral nibbling being carried out by Anglo-American armies, and he tried to make up in rhetoric what his forces could not do on the field. Bringing "the war home to Mussolini and his Fascist gang with an intensity not yet possible," hardly substituted for an assault against the main enemy—Germany. "Continuous preparations" to "keep the Germans pinned in the Pas de Calais" and Allied bombers "blasting Germany with ever increasing violence" were a far cry from a confrontation with the enemy's armies. Such measures would "tighten the halter upon the guilty doomed," but the Soviets would continue to suspect that the Anglo-Americans were deliberately delaying the second front. Those suspicions could eventually lead to Soviet-German peace talks, which left Churchill on the horns of a dilemma, a dilemma made worse by the initial Soviet successes at Stalingrad; for if they no longer needed Anglo-American assistance to expell the Germans

from the Soviet Union, such negotiations would become even more feasible. Stalin, unswayed by the Prime Minister's eloquence, bluntly asked if Churchill was hinting at a change of heart about a 1943 second front.

The Prime Minister's fascination with getting Turkey into the war continued until almost the end. But no matter what aid the Allies promised, the Turks always raised the ante whenever they were asked to join the fight against Germany. Not only had the German and Turkish military had a long, close relationship, but the Turks feared that any alliance with the nations fighting Germany would give the Soviet Union some kind of postwar advantage over Turkey.

C-216

London [via U.S. Army]
Dec. 2, 1942, 0047 Z

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Most Secret.

1. I give below the text of telegrams exchanged between me and Premier Stalin.

2. Please note particularly the last sentence of Para 5 of Stalin's message. The chances of ROUND-UP may be greatly improved by the present battles on the Russian front.

3. It seems to me that the whole question ought to be re-examined in the light of the Russian victories. It would be unwise in my view for us to send separate delegations to Moscow without having decided what we are going to do about ROUND-UP which is almost the sole thing they will want to know.

4. I hope therefore that you will allow General Marshall and Admiral King to come over here, if possible with Harry, at the earliest moment.

5. I still cherish the hope of an Iceland meeting after the ground has been fully explored.

6. Telegram to Premier Stalin dated 24 Nov. 1942 begins:

"1. It gave me the very greatest pleasure to receive your warm and heartfelt congratulation. I regard our trustful personal relations as most important to the discharge of our duties to the great masses whose lives are at stake.

2. Although the President is unable with great regret to lend me twelve American destroyers for which I asked, I have now succeeded in making arrangements to sail a convoy of over thirty ships from Iceland on December twenty-second. The Admiralty will concert the operation with your officers as before. The Germans have moved the bulk of their aircraft from the north of Norway to the south of Europe as a result of TORCH. On the other hand the German surface forces in Norway are still on guard. The Admiralty are pleased so

far with the progress of the Q.P. Convoy which has been helped by bad weather and is now under the protection of our cruisers which have been sent out to meet it.

3. I have communicated to President Roosevelt some preliminary ideas about Turkey, and have found that he independently had formed very similar views. It seems to me that we ought all of us to make a new intense effort to have Turkey enter the war on our side in the spring. For this purpose I should like the United States to join in an Anglo-Soviet guarantee of the territorial integrity and status of Turkey. This would bring our three countries all into line, and the Americans count for a lot with the Turks. Secondly, we are already sending Turkey a considerable consignment of munitions including two hundred tanks from the Middle East. During the winter by land route, or coasting up the Levant, I shall keep on sending supplies of munitions to Turkey together if permitted with experts in plain clothes for training and maintenance purposes. Thirdly, I hope by the early spring to assemble a considerable army in Syria drawn from our Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Armies, so as to go to the help of Turkey if either she were threatened or were willing to join us. It is evident that your operations in the Caucasus or north of it may also exercise a great influence. If we could get Turkey into the war we could not only proceed with operations to open the shipping route to your left flank on the Black Sea but we could also bomb heavily from Turkish Bases the Roumanian oilfields which are of such vital importance to the Axis in view of your successful defence of the main oil supplies of the Caucasus. The advantage of a move into Turkey is that it proceeds mainly by land and can be additional to offensive action in the Central Mediterranean which will absorb our sea power and much of our air power.

4. I have agreed to President Roosevelt's suggestion that we each send in the near future, if agreeable to you, two high British officers and two Americans to Moscow to plan this part of the war in 1943. Pray let me know if you agree.

5. I hope you realize, Premier Stalin, that shipping is our limiting factor. In order to do TORCH we have had to cut our Trans-Atlantic escorts so fine that the first half of November has been our worst month so far. We and the Americans have budgeted to lose at the rate of 700,000 tons a month and still improve our margin. Over the year the average loss has not been quite so bad as that, but this first fortnight in November is worse. You who have so much land may find it hard to realize that we can only live and fight in proportion to our sea communications.

6. Do not be disturbed about the rogue Darlan. We have thrown a large Anglo-American Army into French North Africa and are

getting a very firm grip. Owing to the non-resistance of the French Army and now to its increasing support, we are perhaps fifteen days ahead of schedule. It is of the utmost consequence to get the Tunisian tip and the Naval Base of Bizerta at the earliest moment. The leading elements of our First Army will probably begin their attack immediately. Once established there with overpowering air, we can bring the war home to Mussolini and Fascist gang with an intensity not yet possible.

7. At the same time, by building up a strong Anglo-American Army and Air Force in Great Britain and making continuous preparations along our southeastern and southern coasts, we keep the Germans pinned in the Pas de Calais, etc., and are ready to take advantage of any favourable opportunity. And all the time our bombers will be blasting Germany with ever increasing violence. Thus the halter will tighten upon the guilty doomed.

8. The glorious news of your offensive is streaming in. We are watching it with breathless attention. Every good wish." Ends.

Telegram from Premier Stalin dated 28 Nov. 1942. Begins:

"1. Many thanks for your message which I received on the 25 November. I fully share your view on the importance of developing our personal relations.

2. I am grateful to you for the measures you are taking to send a new big convoy to Archangel. I realise that in view of the considerable Naval Operations in the Mediterranean Sea this constitutes great difficulty for you.

3. I am in full agreement with you and President Roosevelt on the question of Turkey. It would be desirable to do everything possible to have Turkey enter the war on our side in the spring. This would be of great importance in order to accelerate the defeat of Hitler and his accomplices.

4. It seems to me that the Americans used Darlan not badly in order to facilitate the occupation of the Northern and Western Africa. The military diplomacy must be able to use for military purposes not only Darlan but 'Even the Devil himself and his grandma'. [Ambassador] Maisky's footnote: This is a strong Russian proverb.

5. I paid close attention to your communication that you and Americans do not relax preparation along your south-eastern and southern coasts in order to keep the Germans pinned in the Pas de Calais etc. and that you are ready to take advantage of any favourable opportunity. I hope this does not mean that you changed your mind with regard to your promise given in Moscow to establish a second front in Western Europe in the spring of 1943.

6. I am in full agreement with President Roosevelt's suggestion and your wish to arrange in Moscow conversations of the representatives of the three general staffs to prepare the respective military plans for 1943. We are ready to meet the British and American representatives whenever you wish.

7. In the Stalingrad operations we were so far successful partly because of snowfall and fog which hinder the activities of the German aviation.

8. We have intention to start in the next few days active operations on the central front in order to pin here the enemy forces and to prevent the transfer of any portion of them to the south."

[MR*. *FRUS, Casablanca*, pp. 491-94. p*Stalm*/WSC, docs. 88, 89.]

The original American request for British naval assistance in the Pacific had gone through naval channels in late October after the Battle of Santa Cruz left the United States with only one carrier in the South Pacific, and that one, the *Enterprise*, badly damaged. Because British naval authorities had not received adequate information concerning American losses and fleet dispositions, an unpleasant misunderstanding arose. The Americans, particularly Admiral King, interpreted British questions as indicating reluctance to provide assistance, whereas the British felt the Americans were insensitive to their problems in the Indian Ocean (the Eastern Fleet of Admiral Somerville) and in supporting TORCH. Churchill's proposal to send two carriers under the command of Rear Admiral A.L. St. G. Lyster met with King's opposition since he did not want any separate British commands operating in the Pacific. The *Graf Zeppelin*, a German aircraft carrier under construction, was never completed. (See below R-226, C-221.)

C-217

London [via U.S. Army]

Dec. 2, 1942, 0113 Z / TOR 12:00 P.M., Dec. 1

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

1. Ever since we received a request for carrier reinforcement for your Pacific fleet we have been earnestly seeking to meet your wishes. We did not feel able to come to a decision about these very few vital units until we knew how our carriers had fared in the restricted and dangerous waters in which they had to operate for TORCH.

2. The hazards of TORCH are not yet ended, as our build-up of shore-based aircraft will not enable the withdrawal for some time of the two carriers now employed on TORCH. Knowing however, how urgently you require a reinforcement of carriers in the Pacific we are prepared to take

a risk now and come to a decision as to what assistance we can give you.

3. As you are aware, our carrier strength consists of the following:— (A) four long endurance armoured fleet carriers:— *Victorious*—efficient and just withdrawn from TORCH. *Illustrious*—efficient and the only carrier now with the Eastern Fleet. *Indomitable*—undergoing after action repairs, and will not be worked up before February. *Formidable*—now employed on TORCH but has turbine trouble and must go into dockyard hands for six or seven weeks as soon as possible (B) one short endurance fleet carrier, *Furious*, which is now employed in TORCH (C) an aircraft repair ship, *Unicorn*, which can operate about twenty-five aircraft but will not be ready for service until early February.

4. In the hope that your operations in the South Pacific will prevent the Japanese from making serious raids into the Indian Ocean we are prepared to take the serious risk of withdrawing *Illustrious* from the Eastern fleet, and given Admiral Somerville the *Unicorn* and an auxiliary carrier. We are also prepared to withdraw *Victorious* from the Home Fleet, and to send you both *Victorious* and *Illustrious* if you can allow *Ranger* to join the Home Fleet.

5. In view of the vital importance of the Atlantic communication, the necessity of supporting the North Russian convoys, the possible appearance of *Graf Zeppelin* at the end of the year, and the present condition of *Indomitable* and *Formidable*, we could not release both *Victorious* and *Illustrious* without the addition of *Ranger* to the Home Fleet.

6. I am much in favour of sending you two carriers rather than one if this can be managed, as this will not only give you increased strength but would allow the two ships to work as a tactical unit, which would appear to be necessary as neither ship carries sufficient aircraft to operate singly. I would propose to send Admiral Lyster, who is known to a good many of your officers, in command.

7. It is considered necessary for both ships to proceed to Pearl Harbour, where they should arrive about the end of December to adjust their complement of aircraft.

8. If you are in favour of this exchange Pound will settle details with King.

[MR*]

A firm believer in personal diplomacy, Roosevelt agreed that a Big Three conference made sense. However, the changes he made to a draft apparently written by Harry Hopkins indicate that the President wanted to avoid preliminary discussions with the British not only for fear of raising Stalin's suspicions but also to avoid being pressured by Churchill. Although Roosevelt's decision to exclude State Department representatives has frequently been

explained as a means of excluding Cordell Hull from the conference (Hull and his supporters read it that way), it may also have resulted from the President's desire to avoid getting into discussions of postwar political plans, something Eden and the Foreign Office continually tried to bring up. "The raft at Tilsit" refers to the meeting between Alexander I of Russia and Napoleon I of France held on a raft in the Neman River near Tilsit, East Prussia. The resulting Treaty of Tilsit was aimed primarily against the Prussians, which made a fitting analogy since Roosevelt believed that Germany had been "Prussianized" (militarized). The idea was probably suggested when the President compared the discomfort of a conference in Alaska or Iceland to what Hariman termed "the most practical oasis"—Khartoum (*R&H*, p. 662).

R-224

Washington [via U.S. Navy]
Dec. 2, 1942, 5:40 P.M.

From the President for the Former Naval Person Personal and Secret.

I have been giving a good deal of thought to our proposed joint conference with the Russians and I agree with you that the only satisfactory way of coming to the vital strategic conclusions the military situation requires, is for you and me to meet personally with Stalin. My thought would be that each of us would be accompanied by a very small staff made up of our top Army, Air and Naval Chiefs of Staff. I should bring Harry and Averell but no State Department representative although I believe we should arrive at tentative procedures to be adopted in event of a German collapse. I should like to see the conference held about January fifteenth or soon thereafter. Tunis and Bizerte should have been cleared up and Rommel's army liquidated before the conference. As to the place. Iceland and Alaska are impossible for me at this time of year and I believe equally so for Stalin. I should prefer a secure place south of Algiers or in or near Khartoum. I don't like mosquitoes. I think the conference should be very secret and that the press should be excluded. ~~It is essential that you and I have a thorough understanding before the conference takes place.~~ I would question the advisability of Marshall and the others going to England prior to the conference because I do not want to give Stalin the impression that we are settling everything between ourselves before we meet him. ~~On the other hand I realize the importance of you and us going into that conference only after the fullest exchange of views and a complete understanding. I will try to suggest a method in the next few days and would welcome any other suggestions from you.~~

I think that you and I understand each other so well that prior conferences between us are unnecessary and when the time comes we can work things out from day to day. Our military people will also be in close cooperation at all times from now on.

I think that this conference may well result in knocking out Germany sooner than we anticipated. As you know Stalin has already agreed to a purely military conference to be held in Moscow and I have today sent him a message urging him to meet you and me. I believe he will accept.

I prefer a comfortable oasis to the raft at Tilsit. Roosevelt

[MR. FRUS, *Casablanca*, pp. 494–95. WSC, IV, 662–63. *R&C*.]

C-218

London [via U.S. Army]

Dec. 2, 1942, 1137 Z

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

Your 223. Thank you very much.

[MR*]

Churchill continued to express reluctance for Anglo-American representatives to hold discussions in Moscow with their counterparts, and he was equally adamant about having Anglo-American talks before meeting with Stalin. Khartoum is located in the Sudan, at the junction of the White and Blue Nile. Marrakesh lies about 100 miles south of Casablanca, at the foot of the Atlas Mountains. Churchill's prediction about the expulsion of the Axis from Tunisia and Libya was far too optimistic. Not until May 1943 did the last of the German-Italian forces surrender in Tunisia.

"Barkis is willin" was the message Barkis gave David Copperfield for Peggy, indicating that Barkis was willing to marry her. In this case, Stalin was the uncertain bridegroom.

C-219

London [via U.S. Army]

Dec. 3, 1942, 1857 Z

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

1. Your 224. I am delighted at your proposal which is the only way of making a good plan for 1943. At present we have no plan for 1943 which is on the scale or up to the level of events. It is grand of you to come and I will meet you anywhere. I am telegraphing Stalin to reinforce your invitation.

2. Meanwhile I deprecate sending our military representative to Moscow. It will only lead to a deadlock and queer the pitch. We still think that Marshall, King and Arnold should come here in advance, so that at least we have some definite plans as a basis for discussion when we all meet in January "Somewhere in Africa." Otherwise Stalin will greet us

with the question "Have you then no plan for the second front in Europe you promised me for 1943?"

3. Khartoum is at your disposal and would be most satisfactory as regards weather, security and communications. I will report on accommodation tomorrow. We should be honoured to be the hosts. I am not informed, though quite ready to learn, about the Oases south of Algiers. Marrakesh I can personally vouch for as regards accommodation, climate and, barring any extraordinary lapse, weather.

4. A supreme war conference, as this would be, ought to have the necessary staffs. For ourselves I should like to bring Eden from the War Cabinet with me and three Chiefs or Vice-Chiefs of the Staff, supported by a powerful secretariat, cypher staff, map room, etc., say about twenty-five.

5. As to timing, the sooner the better. Every day counts. We may reasonably expect that Tunis will be settled by the end of December and Tripolitania by the end of January. We ought not to be dependent on the actual working out of these operations. All prospect of attack in Europe in 1943 depends on early decision.

6. However everything hangs on whether "Barkis is willin".

[MR*. *FRUS, Casablanca*, pp. 495–96. WSC, IV, 664–65.]

On November 23, the Governor General of French West Africa, Pierre Boisson, indicated his willingness to accept the authority of Admiral Darlan. Roosevelt and Churchill had long been concerned about who controlled the port of Dakar in French West Africa, since it could have provided a jumping-off point for air attacks on the Western Hemisphere. Moreover, the French battleship *Richelieu* lay in the harbor. Boisson had finally agreed to support Darlan when Eisenhower gave his personal word that all arrangements would be fairly carried out—particularly those establishing the relationship between the Governor General and the forces of Charles de Gaulle. Boisson, who held both British and Free French prisoners, was reluctant to release them until de Gaulle's supporters released their Vichy French internees in French Equatorial Africa. Churchill did not respond directly to Roosevelt, but British officials informed the Americans that the British prisoners had to be released without any bargaining or further delay.

R-225

Washington [via U.S. Navy]
Dec. 3, 1942, 12:50 P.M.

From the President for the Former Naval Person Personal and Secret.

I am informed today that the Dakar negotiations are impeded by a question of the release of French prisoners held by De Gaullists in Equatorial Africa.

torial Africa in exchange for release of Allied nationals held in French West Africa.

It seems to me that it should be made clear to Boisson that if he releases all De Gaulle sympathizers in Dakar, De Gaulle will also release all Vichy or Darlan sympathizers in French Equatorial Africa. The use by us of Dakar is as you know very important and Eisenhower is waiting for a quick decision.

[MR*]

Anglo-American authorities regarded Stalin's request for planes instead of a joint Anglo-American air force in the Caucasus (VELVET) as a barely disguised attempt to increase the number of aircraft allotted to the Soviet Union, and Soviet alternatives to VELVET amounted to an increase in their allotment of new aircraft. The purpose of the operation had primarily been to shore up Soviet morale and demonstrate Allied support following the delay in a European second front, but with the Russian victories in the Caucasus the project became less important and Stalin changed his mind. Throughout the war Stalin was reluctant to permit British or American units to operate behind Russian lines.

C-220

London [via U.S. Embassy]

Dec. 3, 1942; 4:24 A.M., Dec. 4 / TOR 5:10 A.M.

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

We have had the following exchange of telegrams with Air Marshal Drummond in Moscow. Extract from 0 Z 2077 of first December to Drummond.

1. The operational and administrative advantages to the RAF in the Middle East of Russian alternative proposal of number of aircraft equivalent to VELVET force and your suggested compromise are fully realized, but these alternatives would not achieve the overriding political benefits which were the object of the original plan. It was hoped that by sending VELVET force to Caucasus an example would be given of Allied forces working hand in hand with the Russians for the same military objectives and under unity of strategic control on a bigger scale than anything yet attempted. Not only would there have been practical cooperation on a considerable scale but there might also have developed a genuine spirit of comradeship in arms which would have opened up considerable possibilities in the political and military fields. This spirit was very evident in the Russian Navy as a result of our small fighter force going to North Russia in 1941.

2. The replacement of the whole or the greater part of VELVET force by the equivalent in aircraft would not have this effect and would destroy the whole *Raison D'Etre* of the plan. There would be the further risk that if we only have aircraft on this occasion we might let ourselves in for sending VELVET force as well at a later stage in the war if the situation in Caucasus should deteriorate. Provision of aircraft is also bound to leave Middle East short at least in certain types and so cause the dismounting of squadrons.

Following is Drummond's reply dated second December.

1. Your 0 Z 2077 first December gives me political background which I needed. It is already clear beyond question that the Russians will not resume discussions and will [not?] allow us to proceed to the Caucasus to arrange any further details for the establishment and operation of the force until they are convinced that we shall not agree to their alternative proposal of providing aircraft in lieu of the force. I must, therefore, preface my renewed approach with a reasoned refusal to entertain their alternative proposal. Even so I do not think they will accept this unless I can assure them that it is the agreed decision of the joint British and American Governments. I, therefore, suggest that I be authorized to convey to the Russians as from the Anglo/American Governments a reply in the sense of, paragraphs two, three, four and five following.

2. The British and American Governments cannot agree to disarm 22 fully operational squadrons in order to provide aircraft for the Red Air Force additional to those already promised and being supplied.

3. At the present date, the military situation in the Caucasus appears to be not unfavourable and there is, therefore, less urgent need for the Anglo-American Force to be provided. These units would however, prove a most valuable asset in any offensive operations which the Russian High Command may undertake on the Caucasus front in the spring of 1943. In the meanwhile these squadrons can be usefully employed in the operations now proceeding in North Africa.

4. The Anglo American proposal, therefore, is that the complete Anglo-American Force as originally accepted by Premier Stalin should be dispatched to the Russian Southern Front at a time which will permit it to be fully operational by early 1943. For this purpose detailed arrangements for the reception of the force must now be undertaken by the Allied Staffs and all administrative arrangements including predumping must proceed in the Caucasus and in North

Persia. The basis of these arrangements had already been most amicably agreed between representatives of the Red Army Air Force and my mission. The principles agreed to in Moscow should now be applied in the Caucasus and a nucleus Anglo-American headquarters should be set up at Caucasus G H Q forthwith. It is desired to perfect these administrative preparations now so that the force can move in at short notice.

5. If this later date for the arrival of the force in the Caucasus is agreed a longer period is available for assembling supplies for it. In consequence the proportional interruption of this flow of aid over the Trans-Persian Railway to Russia will be smaller. We compute that there would be a twelve percent interruption in January, a ten percent interruption in February, a nine percent interruption in March and thereafter less than eight percent monthly. Moreover, if in the meanwhile the Russians will develop or allow us to develop the road Rowandaz-Lake Urmia we may be able to maintain the force without any interference with the flow of Russian aid.

6. I would re-emphasize that General Falalaev has clearly indicated that the Russian High Command will not engage in further discussion of the original project unless and until a firm Anglo American Government refusal to consider the Russian alternative proposal is received.

It seems to me that the situation is changing so rapidly that we should do well to let a week or so pass before ourselves taking steps to break the deadlock. We have made an offer which could only be fulfilled by heavy sacrifices on our part. We made that offer largely to take the edge off various Russian disappointments about the Second Front in 1942, about the P Q convoys, etc, and to show that we really wished to help. The offer stands. Since it was made immense improvements have occurred in the Russian position which have already altered and made completely changed the strategic situation on the Russian Southern Front. At the same time by the Anglo American successes along the whole North African Front we have shown the Russians that we are active comrades in the war and they are impressed by this. I do not wish to force upon them what it costs us so much to give. I consider therefore that Air Marshal Drummond and your representative, General Adler, might mark time a little on the ground defined in Air Marshal Drummond's telegram without bringing matters to a sharp point. Meanwhile the strategic situation will be clarifying itself and we can make the arrangements for the conference proposed in your number 224 about which I am sending you a separate telegram. It seems to me that VELVET might well be brought into the general scheme and should be decided at this conference. In the mean-

while all preparations for VELVET should go forward so far as they rest with Britain and the United States.

[MR*]

Although Admiral King, the Commander in Chief of the U.S. fleet, used diplomatic language in writing the draft of this message, an accompanying memo indicated his staunch opposition to any sort of joint naval units. Moreover, the Admiral wanted to retain control of the USS *Ranger* so it could be used in the Atlantic or Pacific as necessary. Roosevelt sent the draft as submitted to him.

R-226

Washington [via U.S. Navy]
Dec. 5, 1942, 12:05 P.M.

From the President for the Former Naval Person Personal and Most Secret.

Your despatch number 217 of December 2, 1942, has received serious consideration. Your offers of cooperation are deeply appreciated.

In spite of the advantages which would result from the employment of both *Victorious* and *Illustrious* as a tactical unit in the Pacific, other considerations make it necessary to forego the services of *Victorious* there. If it becomes necessary to send yet another carrier to the Pacific in the near future, *Ranger* would be chosen because she does not require special preparation for operations with other American forces.

The early arrival of *Illustrious* in Pearl Harbor is looked forward to with anticipation. Roosevelt

[MR*]

The *Victorious* arrived at Pearl Harbor on March 4, 1943. Not until May 8 was she ready to participate actively in the Pacific operations, since training and technical refitting proved complicated. Churchill was disappointed that the joint naval force did not materialize, for he had hoped to increase Britain's role and influence in the Pacific without hurting the war effort against Germany.

C-221

London [via U.S. Army]

Dec. 6, 1942, 1420 Z / TOR 11:50 A.M.

Personal and Secret Former Naval Person to President.

Reference your number 226. I bow to your wishes, though I should have preferred on general grounds the arrangement we proposed. Not only on account of her earlier arrival at Pearl Harbour but also for various reasons connected with equipment of aircraft and better fighter directions, it is preferred to send *Victorious*. Pound will communicate with King regarding the transfer.

[MR*]

Much to Churchill's satisfaction, New Zealand decided to leave its army division with the British forces in the Middle East.

C-222

London [via U.S. Army]

Dec. 6, 1942, 1432 Z / TOR 11:50 A.M.

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

I have received a very handsome telegram from Fraser stating that his government and house of representatives have unanimously decided that the New Zealand division shall stay in the Middle East. I am sure they would appreciate a complimentary message from you.

[MR]

Roosevelt agreed with Churchill about stalling Operation VELVET, but still held out hopes that it would materialize, primarily because of the political benefits.

R-227

Washington [via U.S. Navy]

Dec. 6, 1942, 2:45 P.M.

From the President to the Former Naval Person Personal and Secret.

Replying to your 220, I agree with you that our two representatives in Moscow mark time in relation to VELVET. On the other hand, I would

not wish to give them any authority to call that enterprise off because it seems to me to have great political and possibly military advantages.
Roosevelt

[MR*]

Roosevelt quickly followed Churchill's suggestion (C-222) with a message to New Zealand's Prime Minister Fraser.

R-228

Washington [via U.S. Navy]
Dec. 6, 1942, 3:45 P.M.

From the President for the Former Naval Person Personal and Most Secret.

This message sent to Fraser.

"I have been delighted to learn that you are leaving the New Zealand Division in the Middle East for the present. This action on the part of your government is a renewed evidence of our mutual military interests.

I believe you have done the right thing. It is altogether generous."

Roosevelt

[MR*]

The Prime Minister agreed that Operation VELVET should not yet be permanently shelved.

C-223

London
Dec. 6, 1942, 2255 Z

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

Your No. 227. I entirely agree.

[MR*]

Stalin felt unable or unwilling to attend any Big Three conference, and he so informed the Allied leaders. The fighting in the Soviet Union had increased in intensity as Russian troops continued to press the encircled German Sixth

Army at Stalingrad and prepared to attack German forces in the Caucasus (see map, p. 16). The increased activity in January which Stalin predicted may have been a reference to the attempt to relieve the siege of Leningrad. Churchill's main concern, of course, was Stalin's continued requests for information about the planned second front in Europe.

C-224

London

Dec. 7, 1942 / TOR 1:45 P.M.

Former Naval Person to President.

Following just received from M. Stalin. Begins.

Premier Stalin to Premier Churchill Personal and Secret your message of the fourth December received.

I welcome the idea of a meeting between the heads of the Governments of the three countries being arranged in order to fix a common line of military strategy.

To my great regret however I will not be in a position to leave the Soviet Union. Time presses us and it would be impossible for me to be absent even for a day as it is just now that important military operations of our winter campaign are developing. These operations will not be relaxed in January, probably to the contrary.

I am waiting your reply to the paragraph of my preceding letter dealing with the establishment of the second front in Western Europe in the Spring of 1943.

The operations in the Stalingrad area as well as on the central front are developing. In the Stalingrad area we are keeping a large group of the German troops surrounded and we hope to annihilate them completely.

Pray look especially at sentence beginning "I am waiting".

[MR. pWSC, IV, 665-66. pStalin/WSC, doc. 93.]

Churchill planned to release to the public his message on the anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack. The State, War, and Navy Departments advised Roosevelt against that in order to avoid placing undue emphasis on the defeat, but the two messages were printed on December 9 in the *London Times*.

C-224/1

London [via British Embassy]
Dec. 7, 1942

[Churchill to Roosevelt]

I feel it is right that I should address you, Mr. President, on this day since our country no less than the United States was the object of the infamous outrage of a year ago. The injuries that we have all suffered at the hands of Japan during the past year are grievous indeed. The peoples of the British Commonwealth of Nations are deeply conscious of their duty. We look forward one and all to the day when our full strength can be joined to that of our United States, Dutch and Chinese allies for the utter and final destruction of Japan's aggressive power.

[PSF:GB:WSC*]

R-228/1

Washington [via British Embassy]
Dec. 7, 1942

[Roosevelt to Churchill]

I deeply appreciate your message. Much has happened since the treacherous attack in the Pacific one year ago today. For months, most of the news was bad despite heroic resistance of the Chinese, Dutch, British Commonwealth and American forces. The injuries that all of us have suffered at the hands of Japan are indeed grievous. A partial retribution in kind has been meted out to the Japanese forces during the last seven months. This is only the beginning. We will continue to strike them, with ever increasing force. I welcome your statement and join with you in the resolution that Japan's aggressive power must be utterly destroyed. In no other way can we be certain that their infamous aggression will not be repeated. [CH]

[PSF:GB:WSC. *R&C.*]

As the military need for Anglo-American assistance in the Caucasus diminished, the political aspects of Operation VELVET became more important—to both the Soviets and their Allies. What had been designed to help the Russians stabilize the front in the Caucasus had quickly developed into a gesture of good faith by the English and Americans, when they postponed any invasion of Europe into 1943 at the earliest. Then, as the Russians took the offensive, VELVET seemed to become a vague sort of test for Allied-

Soviet cooperation, at least in the minds of Churchill and Roosevelt. Stalin apparently viewed it from either a strictly military standpoint or suspiciously, as an attempt to introduce Allied forces into the Soviet Union.

C-225

London [via U.S. Army]

Dec. 8, 1942, 1229 Z / TOR 9:40 A.M.

From Former Naval Person to President Most Secret and Personal.

Your No. 227 on the subject of VELVET. I suggest that we should now send to our two representatives in Moscow the instructions proposed by the Combined Chiefs of Staff, namely:

(a) Alternative proposals of Soviet officials that either the equivalent number of aircraft or of aircraft with US or British air crews be sent to South Caucasia in place of Anglo-US air units are *not* acceptable to Combined Chiefs of Staff.

(b) Proposal to send only aircraft or aircraft and crews which can only be found by disarming existing formations is bound to lead to a loss of effective air strength and serious complications in matters of maintenance, and is therefore most undesirable in Russian as well as in Anglo-American interests. Many practical difficulties would arise from the proposal to mix air crews.

(c) Combined Chiefs of Staff are convinced that experience will show that the most effective force will be brought to bear against Germany by establishing in the Caucasus the combined British-American air force to be employed under strategic direction of Russian High Command. Upon approval of the original proposal by the Russian Government, every effort will be made to expedite operations of the combined force and to meet the logistical problems involved without interference with flow of allied supplies obviously committed to Russia.

[MR*]

R-229

Washington [via U.S. Navy]

Dec. 8, 1942, 4:20 P.M.

For the Prime Minister from the President Personal and Secret.

I am in full agreement with your number 225 on the subject of VELVET and instructions will be issued to American representatives in Moscow to be guided by instructions contained in sub paragraphs a, b, and c of your number 225. Roosevelt

[MR*]

Given Stalin's firm rejection of a tripartite meeting, either the historical record or one-upmanship seems to have been Roosevelt's real motive in sending a second invitation to meet in Africa. The changes in the draft were apparently made by Admiral Leahy, probably at the President's direction. As Chief of Staff to the President, the post Leahy held since returning from Vichy, the Admiral drafted or commented on almost all Churchill-Roosevelt exchanges.

R-230

Washington [via U.S. Navy]
Dec. 8, 1942, 4:35 P.M.

From the President for the Former Naval Person Personal and Secret.
Your No. 224:

The telegram you received from Moscow is essentially identical with the one sent to me [*Stalin/FDR*, doc. 56].

For the sake of the record, I am sending another telegram which follows in my next number, as I think we should continue to make every effort for the African meeting and put the responsibility for declining up to our friend.

~~In the meantime, I am inclined to think we should send our Staff people to Moscow if they are only to take up the Caucasus air matter or similar relatively small operational moves. On the other hand,~~

I think it would be a mistake for our Staff people to discuss in Moscow any major moves planned for this coming summer. From the practical point of view they could not bind your Government or mine, nor could final plans be approved by you or me without careful study with our Staffs at home.

What would you think, therefore, of suggesting that Staff conversations between military officials from U.K., Russia, and America take place in Africa, either in Algiers, Khartoum, or some other suitable place. The results and recommendations of such a meeting would, of course, have to be taken up in all three Capitals before final approval.

[MR*. *FRUS, Casablanca*, pp. 497-98. pWSC, IV, 666.]

R-231

Washington [via U.S. Navy]
Dec. 8, 1942, 5:20 P.M.

From the President for the Former Naval Person Personal and Secret.

The following is a close paraphrase of the message I sent to Stalin today.

It was with deep disappointment that I learned that you felt that you could not get away for a meeting with me in January. Many matters of great import should be discussed between us. They appertain not only to vital strategic decisions, but likewise to matters we should discuss in a tentative way respecting emergency policies which we should be prepared with, if and when conditions in Germany permit.

Included also would be other matters relating to future policies in North Africa and the Far East, which matters cannot be discussed by our military people alone.

The necessity for your presence near the fighting front, and your strenuous situation which exists now and in the immediate future, is fully realized by me.

Therefore I wish to offer a suggestion that a tentative date be set for a meeting in North Africa about the first of March.

Roosevelt

[MR*. *FRUS*, 1942, III, 675. *Stalin/FDR*, doc. 57. *R&C*.]

Churchill had apparently not read message R-213, which indicated that R-214 had been given out at one of Roosevelt's press conferences. Moreover, it had been sent to London as a plain-language (not coded) dispatch. Possibly for that reason Roosevelt, in a message drafted in his handwriting, added a little information which increased the distance between Darlan and the Allies.

C-226

London [via U.S. Army]

Dec. 9, 1942, 2:40 A.M. / TOR 11:00 P.M., Dec. 8

Personal and Secret Former Naval Person to President.

I should like to read your No. 214 to the House in Secret Session on Thursday [Dec. 10] as there is a good deal of uneasiness about Darlan which the reading of the above message would clear away. There is nothing in it which could be harmful if published but you may be sure Parliament will observe the strictest secrecy.

[MR*]

R-232

Washington [via U.S. Navy]

Dec. 9, 1942, 11:50 A.M.

From the President for the Former Naval Person Personal and Secret.

Very glad to have you read my No. 214 in Secret Session Thursday.

You might add from me if you wish that General Eisenhower has definite instructions from me to enter into no agreement or bilateral contract with Admiral Darlan, but that all decisions by Eisenhower shall be unilateral on our part, and shall take the form of announcements from the military Commander-in-Chief of our armed forces.

Furthermore I hope you will call attention to the fact that Dakar instead of being a menace is today open to use by British and American ships and planes in the prosecution of the war. Roosevelt

[MR*]

The inability of French General Henri Giraud to gain any following in North Africa forced Eisenhower to rely almost totally upon Admiral Darlan and the bureaucratic structure which had previously functioned under the Vichy government. As a result, organizations like the Service d'Ordre Legionnaire (SOL), which had systematically betrayed and persecuted supposed opponents of the Vichy regime, always paying special attention to Jews, continued to function. Churchill's sources were apparently largely Gaullist, but even taking into account the probable exaggeration of such informants, serious political problems did exist in French North Africa. Generals Charles Mast and Émile Béthouart, who had been instrumental in organizing the pro-Giraud Underground in North Africa, were viewed by their fellow officers as betrayers of their oaths and could not be used effectively by Eisenhower. Mast eventually became Governor General of Tunisia in 1943, but Béthouart had to accept a meaningless liaison post in the United States. The Franco-Spanish border to which Churchill referred was the one between French and Spanish Morocco. (On December 15, this message was sent to General Marshall's office for preparation of a reply.)

C-227

London [via U.S. Army]

Dec. 9, 1942, 1910 Z

Former Naval Person to President Personal and Secret.

I have been disturbed by reports received during the last few days from North Africa about conditions in French Morocco and Algeria. These reports, which come from independent and reliable sources, all paint the