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"War by Consensus: Power, Perceptions and British Grand Strategy 1940-1943"

Brian P. Farrell
Department of History
McGill University, Montreal
March, 1992

"A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy"

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Abstract

From 1940 through 1943, British grand strategy was shaped by a broad consensus, generally accepted and understood in the central direction of the war. This consensus was based on the assumption of relative weakness, and was expressed by what may be termed the "wear down" approach: "to knock out the props" from under Axis military power by a combination of blockade, bombing, raids, subversion and sabotage, and peripheral campaigns. An ultimate direct assault would only be launched after enemy power had visibly declined. The balance, emphasis, and specific thrust of this outline changed; its essence did not. Even as a powerful Grand Alliance emerged, the British remained convinced that the assumption of relative weakness must continue to guide its grand strategy. This assumption was finally rejected by the coalition as a whole, but it proved well founded for the British themselves. Ultimately, however, this formulation of grand strategy by consensus was, in general, a sober and responsible interpretation of the overall British situation.

Résumé

De 1940 à 1943, la stratégie totale de la Grande-Bretagne reposait sur un vaste consensus quant à la conduite de la guerre. Ce consensus était fondé sur l'hypothèse de la faiblesse relative et s'exprimait suivant ce que l'on peut appeler l'approche de l'<<épuisement>> : ébranler la puissance militaire de l'Axe grâce à une combinaison de blocus, de bombardements, de raids, de subversions, de sabotages et de campagnes périphériques. L'assaut direct et untime ne devait être donné qu'après le déclin évident de la puissance ennemie. La plan fut changé au chapitre de son équilibre, de son emphase et de son dynamisme spécifique, mais il ne changea pas dans son essence. Malgré l'émergence d'une grande alliance, les Britanniques restèrent convaincus que l'hypothèse de la faiblesse realtive devait continuer de guider la stratégie totale. Cette hypothèse finit par être réjetée par l'ensemble de la coalition, mais elle s'avéra néanmoins entièrement fondée pour les Britanniques. En définitive, la formulation d'une stratégie totale reposant sur un consensus fut une inter prétation sensée et judicieuse de l'ensemble la situation britannique.

To Nick and Emma,
for a wonderful journey on the road of life

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Preface

One of the more pleasant customs of academic scholarship is the author's obligation to recognize all who have helped a study take shape. It is very true that the flaws and weaknesses of such work stem from the author alone, while its better points are the product of much cross fertilization and many minds. Financial assistance for this work was provided by McGill University, in the form of a Max Binz Major Fellowship, and by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada. The long months of toil at the Public Record Office were greatly eased by its helpful staff. Facilities were also generously supplied by the Library of the London School of Economics, the Record Office, House of Lords, the Imperial War Museum, Department of Documents, and - for the last time at its beautiful old Great Russell Street site - the British Library, Manuscript Collections. Special thanks for much assistance must go to the staff of the Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College London, the Librarian, Christ Church College Oxford, the Warden and Scholars of Nuffield College Oxford, and the Master, Fellows and Scholars of Churchill College in the University of Cambridge.

Both this project and this author's own career benefitted enormously from a wonderful year of monopolizing the attentions of Dr. Stephen J. Randall and Dr. Carman Miller, not to mention their unflagging support for bizarre requests at short notice. Over the years, the author had the opportunity to discuss this study with more senior colleagues who tried patiently to scuttle its weaker features: P.M.H. Bell, Trevor Burridge, David Dilks, Ben Greenhous, Ray Jones and Brian Villa. Their kindness is greatly appreciated. A year working for Terry Copp, and with my fondly remembered colleagues at Wilfrid Laurier University, carried me over the dreaded "hump" and helped me see how much I have to learn about my profession. Discussing the Second World War or any other issues with Terry Copp is a privilege.

Many of my fellow historians and close friends went above and beyond the call in putting up with my obsession with British grand strategy at the oddest times and places. Shaun Brown tried vainly to set me straight on the Italian campaign, on which I hope he someday writes for a wider audience. David Hall was a tower of strength,

with his relentless scepticism. Brian Hearnden must be sick of hearing the phrase "wear down," but never failed to answer that or any other call for professional or personal support. Charles Fedorak has mastered the difficult art of challenging as a colleague and supporting as a friend. George Urbaniak and Suzanne Zeller set the sort of example as friends and scholars that makes me uncomfortably aware of my limits in both areas.

I must conclude by noting my greatest debts. Norman Hillmer never fails to offer the priceless gifts of his time and counsel, and has answered one impertinent call for support after another. Robert Vogel may well be the ideal mentor. He never looked over my shoulder and I was free to make my own way. Yet he was always able to point to the unexplored angle, willing to drop everything to plough through chaotic drafts, and unfailingly in my corner when I looked back for a helping hand. His imprint on this study will be clear to those who have also gained from his dedication to the study and teaching of history. It is a very great honour to be included in that number. My greatest debt is now and always will be to my wife Avril, without whose support this point could never have been reached. She is my toughest and most cherished critic, and I am thereby doubly blessed.

Glossary

N.B. 1) All entries marked * were exclusively U.S. organs or posts.

2) Throughout the text all emphasized passages were highlighted by this author, unless specifically noted otherwise.

ABDA - American-British-Dutch-Australian Command, southwest Pacific

AEAF - Allied Expeditionary Air Forces

AFHQ - Allied Forces Headquarters

ASP - Army Supply Program*

AUB - Anti-U-Boat Warfare Committee

BEF - British Expeditionary Force

BWSC - British War Supplies Committee (Washington)

CCS - Combined Chiefs of Staff

CFB - Combined Food Board

CIC - Combined Intelligence Committee

CIGS - Chief of the Imperial General Staff

CNS - Chief of the Naval Staff

COS - Chiefs of Staff Committee

COSSAC - Chief of Staff to the Supreme Allied Commander

CPRB - Combined Production and Resources Board

CPS - Combined Planning Staff

CRMB - Combined Raw Materials Board

CSAB - Combined Shipping Adjustment Board

DC(O) - Defence Committee (Operations)

DC(S) - Defence Committee (Supply)

EAC - European Advisory Committee

ETO - European Theatre of Operations

GCCS - Government Code and Cypher School

JCS - Joint Chiefs of Staff*

JIC - Joint Intelligence Committee

JPC/JPS - Joint Planning Committee/Staff

JSM - Joint Staff Mission (Washington)

JSSC - Joint Strategic Survey Committee*

JWPS - Joint War Production Staff

LCS - London Controlling Section

LCT - Landing Craft Tank

LPC - Lord President's Committee

LRPG - Long Range Penetration Group

LST - Landing Ship Tank

MAB - Munitions Assignment Board

MAP - Ministry of Aircraft Production

MEW - Ministry of Economic Warfare

OIC - Operational Intelligence Centre (Admiralty)

OPD - Operations and Plans Division (War Department)*

PAIQ - Persia and Iraq Command

PWE - Political Warfare Executive

RAF - Royal Air Force

RN - Royal Navy

SEAC - South East Asia Command

SHAEF - Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force

SOE - Special Operations Executive

TAF - Tactical Air Force

USAAF - United States Army Air Force*

USN - United States Navy*

VCIGS - Vice-Chief of the Imperial General Staff

VCOS - Vice Chiefs of Staff

VLR - Very Long Range (aircraft)

WO - War Office

WPB - War Production Board*

WSA - War Shipping Administration*

Introduction

> **"The story of Allied strategy for the defeat of Germany is, simply put, the search for common denominators among three sovereign partners faced with a common enemy. That strategy was the product of many minds on both sides on the Atlantic, and of changing pressures and circumstances in the global war. It was the result of an evolutionary process and a series of compromises, and of a constant struggle to adjust ends and means."[1]**

During a discussion among eminent scholars of "Scholarship on World War II: Present and Future," a familiar issue arose - were there any problems of the war already so heavily investigated as to need no further study? American historian Stephen Ambrose replied - perhaps tongue in cheek - "I think we have had rather too much on grand strategy..."[2] Serious or not, the profession has not heeded the call regarding the problems of British grand strategy, where a lengthy and complex debate continues to evolve. This is not surprising, given the nature of the issues involved and what the concept itself entails. A definition is in order. Grand strategy is dependent on national war policy: the determination of the objectives for which the nation went to war, the nature of the sacrifices it is prepared to make to pursue them, and the conditions under which it will accept an enemy's submission. These are the aims; grand strategy is the means. It is an art, not a science, and a constant process: the art of relating the organization and application of power to the pursuit of national objectives, at the very summit of decision making and responsibility.[3] The issues involved in such a process could encompass no less than the entire Second World War experience of the United Kingdom.

This has opened the widest possible field for the perpetual argument that is the study of history, and scholars have applied themselves with a will. But right from the start, several central controversies and themes emerged, ones which continue to dominate the debate: the relationship of the wartime and post-war aspirations and fears of British leaders with their grand strategy, the impact of the performance of components of British power on their decision, and the nature of the process by which these decisions were made. Despite the fact that for the U.K. this was, from 1941 on, a global total war, the

core of the argument was clear from the beginning and remains unchanged: why did the British pursue the approach they pursued, and make the arguments they made, regarding the effort to defeat the European Axis? The course of the debate revolving around this core and these central themes has touched on every aspect of the British central direction of the war. In the process, it has revealed much about the motives of the historians involved as well as those of the principals they studied, and it has done much to advance our understanding of the concept of grand strategy itself.

British leaders had always planned to fight any future great war as part of a coalition. Even during the desperate days when the U.K. led a motley collection in which it was the only Great Power - a state able to project power and influence on a serious scale in more than one area simultaneously - they continued to plan on the basis of coalition warfare. It is a truism that power in a coalition, and the deciding voice in its policy, rests with the strongest member. The peculiar circumstances that shaped British grand strategy included the fact that while the balance of power shifted within the coalition that emerged to fight the Axis, British leaders were reluctant to accept that this necessarily meant the agenda of that coalition might also have to shift. That coalition agenda was throughout dominated by a clash of competing visions of how to pursue national interests.

After the war, loud claims arose that had one vision or the other been more or less successful, selfish or flexible, the war might have been won faster and at less cost and a more acceptable post-war international order might have been possible. The challenge was almost immediate. In 1946, Elliott Roosevelt and Ralph Ingersoll published accounts which argued that clever manipulation by the British had distorted Allied grand strategy with a calculated purpose. Instead of a straight forward focus on the optimum operational means to defeat Germany as rapidly as possible, as desired by the virtuous uncomplicated American government agenda, the Allies pursued operations designed to protect and preserve the U.K.'s control of a far flung dependent Empire and force the Soviet Union to carry the brunt of the war. These arguments were later reinforced by an American insider, A.C. Wedemeyer, in Wedemeyer Reports! Wedemeyer filled out the thesis: the British manipulated Allied decisions and

deliberately fostered an approach based on dispersing military power, conducting campaigns on the periphery of the Axis position, and avoiding concentrating force for a decisive campaign, all for the "ulterior" motive of forcing other allies to reduce enemy power while Allied power rescued and restored British interests.

The counter-blast was not long delayed, but the arguments were heavily influenced by the prevailing Cold War atmosphere of the 1940's and 1950's. Hanson Baldwin accepted the vision of a clash between concentration and pecking at the periphery, but argued that the latter was rejected by 1944 and would, in fact, have brought about a more favourable post-war situation. Chester Wilmot, in Struggle for Europe, defined the accusation: whereas the British approach might have prevented the Red Army from overrunning eastern and much of central Europe, the shortsighted "overly military" American approach prevailed.[4] Then a truly pivotal event occurred: the publication in succession of the multi-volume memoirs of the man at the centre of the controversy, Winston Spencer Churchill. Churchill treated most aspects of the war in erudite but often less than forthright fashion, and this was especially true of British grand strategy.

Churchill's argument may be paraphrased as follows: "The delusions of my predecessors left the nation unprepared for war and as a result the Allies suffered a catastrophic defeat in 1940 and the U.K. faced mortal peril. In a new spirit of resolve we parried the death blow and launched a holy war against an enemy beyond the pale. However, this enemy was formidable. Therefore, we were forced to define a vision to topple a stronger foe. The vision that emerged was this: using our strengths and avoiding our weaknesses, to weaken the enemy by an eclectic campaign of attrition based on disrupting his control at home and in conquered areas, cutting off his economic outlets, bombarding his heartland from the air, and reducing his outlying positions, until a great ring of fire closed in on him from all directions and destroyed his power. Through it all, the British leadership basically held fast to this vision. Above all, we realized the need first to erect a coalition with the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., then to ensure that coalition pursued this vision with determination and harmony. This was pressed with great consistency, and right prevailed." As will be seen through this study,

many of these arguments still hold sway but many others should never have gained any currency at all. However, because of who wrote them, how they were done and with what motives, and the specific issues they raised, these volumes set the tone for debate.

Churchill's main concerns were to defend his own record and that of his government, and criticize the distortion of his agenda later in the war, while maintaining harmonious relations between the U.K. and its indispensable allies, the U.S.A. and the Commonwealth-Empire. Churchill was assisted by a whole syndicate, which included some of those who had served him during the war in the most senior positions. As the later volumes emerged, Churchill himself returned to office. Of particular importance, Churchill was able to exploit his privileged position and base his account on the original records of the government and high command - correspondence, reports, minutes - still restricted from public view. This gave the works an added air of credibility and foundation, which further influenced the debate. This privileged access was reinforced by the massive - and still ongoing - publication of the "Official Histories" of the war. This is a concept that needs closer examination in order to be assessed fairly.

Following up efforts begun during the war, teams of scholars were given privileged access to official files, to compile every aspect of the war experience, military and otherwise. These were the basis for a series of published works by eminent scholars, with the volumes before 1973 published without citations. These scholars were uniformly excellent. Their work, though uneven in the end, remains the starting point for serious study of the British war experience. Despite some grey areas, crude direct interference with either the records or their treatment was uncommon. This was far from a simplistic "conspiracy." But it was distortion nonetheless, for reasons grounded on the British approach to contemporary history. The official records were closed for first 50 and later 30 years. When a general release to the archives began in 1972, many files remained "weeded," either closed yet longer or - in some cases - never to be released. The weeding was sometimes innocent, but a strong desire to protect reputations and preserve administrative continuity was also at work. The basic motive was clear - these controls would offer a politically benign sanitized image of the national experience. It seems fair to say that those chosen as Official Historians were selected because they

shared, with those who had directed the war effort, a similar general understanding of how that experience should be portrayed.

This was a problem that could not be resolved by even the most generous charter to the most independently minded scholar as long as they worked too recently after the events in question. Later volumes were able to offer more forthright criticisms and detailed citations.[5] But into the early 1970's, these largely unverifiable works held the field. That added, unworthily, to the prestige many earned on merit. Many volumes treated aspects of the questions pursued in this study. One particular series, entitled Grand Strategy, pursued the problem directly, in six volumes. The various authors outlined a clear argument: through 1941, British grand strategy was based on the need to revitalize and revise war policy after the debacle in France, and there was no clear "way forward"; when a stronger coalition emerged, the British were able to implant on it their policy of eclectic attrition, largely as described by Churchill; this policy prevailed until autumn 1943, when it was fused into a new outline under the pressure of force majeure. These were works of great profundity. They also marked an important methodological advance, by treating grand strategy in the broad terms defined earlier and examining the course of the war from a central vantage point. This permanently reinforced the direction of the debate. But these volumes were also influenced by the desire to demonstrate the consistency and wisdom of **underlying** British policy - certainly not of many specific decisions - and the virtue of British motives. This Cold War reinforced "establishment" approach did not remove their value, but it made them far from the last word.

The Americans outdid the British with Official Histories, especially the U.S. Army. Fascinatingly, however, the debate now freely crossed national lines, reinforced by the release of memoirs and diaries. Samuel Eliot Morison, the naval historian, argued that the British had crafted a detailed "Mediterranean Strategy" - involving a carefully planned move into Italy as the main axis of advance on Germany - to retain influence on Allied policy and further their own agenda. This was a direct response to Arthur Bryant's treatment of the Alanbrooke diaries. Bryant described the wartime Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS) as the genius whose vision - a careful and controlled

escalation of pressure to stretch German power - guided Allied grand strategy into 1944, and should not have been diluted. Matloff and Snell, the U.S. Army historians of grand strategy, offered a more sophisticated interpretation. There was indeed a clash of basic approaches - concentration versus peripheral. However, neither were entirely linear or one dimensional. From late 1943 they converged, as the American agenda absorbed the consequences of previous decisions and came to the fore.

There was room for consensus developing here, as the British Official Historians agreed that a synthesis of approaches had taken place as the Allies seized the initiative. Now some American scholars reinforced the trend. K.R. Greenfield, then the U.S. Army's Chief Military Historian, described Allied grand strategy as "fusion," and dismissed the "ulterior" argument. Then R.M. Leighton and R.W. Coakley offered a fresh perspective, with volumes treating the effort to organize and allocate material power as an integral part of grand strategy. They strongly dismissed the argument that the British had ever deliberately attempted to scuttle any major ground offensive in northwest Europe for "ulterior" reasons. They also insisted that the American vision was itself diluted by the British approach, and that what emerged was neither one nor the other. These probing investigations helped define the problem as a clash of competing national war policies, but did not prevent weak analyses. Indeed, the continued closure of British records only fostered them. The most notorious were the works of Trumbull Higgins, Winston Churchill and the Second Front, and The Soft Underbelly. Higgins accepted the argument that not until late in the war was British grand strategy aiming to forestall Soviet expansion. But relying on American accounts, he claimed that the British attempt to press a "peripheral" approach was grounded not on military weakness but on post-war related calculation. Such arguments distorted grand strategy, by not fully understanding what it was and how it was made.

Many works, particularly Higgins', bogged down over aspirations and personalities, especially Churchill's. Two points needed to be better understood: the actual position of the U.K. at the time, and how that position affected the perceptions of its decision makers regarding the relationship between national capability and national aspirations. These questions were already familiar when Michael Howard brought them

together - in a prelude to his own Official History volume on Grand Strategy - in a magisterial account of The Mediterranean Strategy in the Second World War. This remains the best brief survey of the dimensions of the problem of British grand strategy. That grand strategy was based more on perceived weakness than calculation. It proceeded opportunistically and uncertainly, rather than according to any detailed future blueprint. The British fought where, when and how they did because they felt this was where they both had to and **could** fight. The shift in the balance of power in the coalition affected this, especially by forcing a rift between Churchill and his military advisers over whether prestige or caution were more important. But by then American leverage was strong enough to guarantee a "Second Front" in 1944. Howard's work raised all the major dimensions and made the critical point - British motives were determined by perceptions of power. This led to a new dimension of study, which had meanwhile proceeded apace with a different focus.

The new dimension was really a connection of the debate on grand strategy to two other questions - the relationship of the capabilities and limits of British power to strategic planning, and the impact of the Second World War on the decline of the U.K. from a World Power to an apparently struggling regional power in the space of one lifetime. The first question was inherent, for reasons John Terraine explained with precision:

> "Modern warfare resembles a spider's web; everything connects, longitudinally and laterally, to everything else; there are no independent strategies, no watertight compartments, nor can there be."[6]

This is particularly true at the top. In order to understand grand strategy, the national power on which - as well as geography - it depends must be understood as a comprehensive factor. Military power is the ability to mobilize and maintain armed forces capable of imposing one's will on an armed enemy. Beyond military power there is **structural power** - the relative and absolute capacity to generate and maintain military power, which requires political will, unity and stability, economic strength, stability and

efficiency, scientific and technical capability and expertise, well developed infrastructure, plentiful raw materials, a large, determined and capable population, and above all, the ability to organize the whole. Grand strategy depends on both these kinds of power. This became clearer through the effort to determine the impact of global total war on the decline of British power.

Power of all kinds is relative as well as absolute. In the structural sense, Alan Milward offered a lasting analysis of the impact of the Second World War in War, Economy and Society 1939-1945. Milward pointed out that the economic impact of war was relative and uneven, and underlined the relationship between structure and strategy: a sound national policy was one which did not distort the national structure so much that at the end of the war it was no longer the same as that which was originally being defended. This reshaped an already thriving debate on the British experience, because that experience was grounded in an anomaly: the decision in 1940 to fight a total war on a scale clearly beyond national means. This can only be explained in a broad context, and it also became part of the debate over long term decline. Once again, volumes of Official Histories were and remain the starting point.

Through the whole "civil" series, from W.K. Hancock and M.M. Gowing's British War Economy, through M.M. Postan's British War Production, H.D. Hall's North American Supply, H.M.D. Parker's Manpower and C.B.A. Behren's Merchant Shipping, to name key examples, a basic theme consistently surfaced. It may be paraphrased as follows: "Initially, the government approached the war with a fairly realistic idea of the ultimate limits of national structure, but it failed to grasp three things: 1) the imperative need for haste; 2) the intensity of mobilization required; 3) the need to build a more powerful coalition. From mid-1940 the new government built on existing plans but pressed a policy of all out mobilization for total war and the pursuit of a new coalition. Mistakes were made, yet overall the policy was basically successful. In the process, however, the accumulated wealth of the nation was spent and its structure badly worn. The blame for the margin of failure lay partly with British weakness and errors, but largely with the less than generous approach to the principle of an integrated

war effort pursued by the Americans, on whose benevolence the British government had no choice but to base their plans."

The issues raised by this broad argument defined the debate and underlined two crucial questions. Had the U.K. already declined to such an extent that its war effort was the final blow to an already tottering structure, as far as remaining a World Power was concerned? Or was the war effort itself the cause of the U.K's fall from the first rank? Both these questions naturally developed much grey and nuance, but both also involved domestic problems and the American factor together. This question of the U.K.'s decline has, in fact, become an obsession, so much so that only the barest trace of the literature can be attempted here. The titles tell their own story: The Collapse of British Power, Succeeding John Bull: America in Britain's Place, The Troubled Giant, End of Empire, Retreat from Power. Milward's thesis helped the debate mature and the thread can be picked up from there.

Regarding the American factor, the original view of Lend-Lease as simply "the most unsordid act" has given way to A.P. Dobson's more sophisticated analysis in US Wartime Aid to Britain and The Politics of the Anglo-American Economic Special Relationship. The integration of American and British war efforts was an unequalled but also uneven success. The U.K. was left vulnerable to American pressure, which was applied in an attempt to restructure the international system. By fighting a global total war, the U.K. mortgaged its future. Placed in a larger and broader perspective, the two central questions clearly overlapped.

It is now generally agreed that British power had already been badly overstretched and British structure badly neglected overall, before the outbreak of war. The war effort was only an acceleration of decline, albeit a decisive one. Controversies remain, especially the issue of why this decline developed so rapidly.[7] According to Corelli Barnett, in The Collapse of British Power and The Audit of War, the British were largely to blame for their own decline, due to complacency, delusion, and especially the neglect of structure. The war merely capped the process. Paul Kennedy, in The Realities Behind Diplomacy and The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers, argued that British attitudes and policies greatly accelerated the decline of British power, and that the war

reinforced a long profound trend. A fairly consistent basic theme had emerged: British power and performance during the war, impressive on the surface, was both artificially sustained by outside help and the last real exertion on a global scale from an overtaxed structure. Among the many further questions this raised, one stood out: how powerful an impact did these basic weaknesses have on the central direction of the war?

That very question, the relative weight of perceptions of power versus post-war aspirations in the formulation of British national war policy and grand strategy, was what this study set out to investigate. It was able to benefit from a literature enjoying the advantages of a longer perspective and progressively more open archives. This is not to suggest that the perennial problems of the study of history - personal and political bias and access to sources, to name but two - can ever be avoided, or that the latest work on a topic is always the best. But it was now possible to go beyond the restrictions of privileged access and unduly restricted sources. Interestingly, few works were done on the theme of overall grand strategy itself. Instead, that question was treated as an aspect, albeit often a crucial one, of other questions. It will be so pursued.

The focus of attention very definitely remained the war in Europe. Among the few works to deal with grand strategy against Japan, there seems little dissent from R. Callahan's arguments in The Worst Disaster and Burma 1942-1945. British power was so badly overstretched that only the minimum level of strength could be spared to attempt to preserve British interests. This policy prevailed into 1945. A more important and controversial question was how the Soviet Union fitted into British policy. A variety of interpretations, that touched all aspects of the relationship, has in one particular sense brought Churchill's picture of consistency around full circle. Gabriel Gorodetsky, in Stafford Cripps' Mission to Moscow 1941-1942, argued that British policy was erratic and that the views of his subject and Churchill's team were seriously at odds. Despite his weak attempt to defend Cripps, Gorodetsky made one very useful contribution. He pointed out that in important quarters of the British government a "guiding concept," based on suspicions of Soviet intentions, shaped official thinking. Martin Kitchen in British Policy Towards the Soviet Union during World War II, and Graham Ross in The

Foreign Office and the Kremlin, put greater emphasis on uncertainty and internal debate. More recent work suggests that Churchill steered an erratic middle course, balancing weakness, suspicion and need.[8] This study will advance the argument by expanding on the idea of a guiding concept and by demonstrating that such a concept allotted the Soviet Union, after mid-1941, a very consistent role in British grand strategy.

The debate was also pursued in the area of internal aspects, such as the attempt to hasten the defeat of Germany by ways other than the application of military force by conventional channels and means. One spurious work was Anthony Cave-Brown's Bodyguard of Lies, wherein the author argued that to compensate for military weakness, and preserve both Imperial interests and the social order, strategic deception was made the very core of British grand strategy. This nonsense was laid to rest by Michael Howard's long delayed fifth volume of the Official History on intelligence. Howard demonstrated that strategic deception was an integral part of a multi-faceted grand strategy, meant to assist rather than replace the application of military force. A more serious argument about "irregular" grand strategy revolved around the mandate of the Special Operations Executive (SOE).

The Official History, SOE in France, by M.R.D. Foot set off a furore, despite a basically sound central theme, partly by exaggerating the impact of "irregular" operations. David Stafford expanded on Foot's basic view of SOE's role in grand strategy. Stafford argued that the evolution of the SOE can be seen as a reflection of the evolution of grand strategy itself: formed as an expedient in 1940 to offset serious military weakness; the very centre of grand strategic thinking into 1942 but as part of a vision of irregular warfare set off by "detonator" assaults by Allied forces; finally subsumed from 1943 on as an arm of a more conventional vision of applying military force. This author does not accept all of Stafford's points, but one very important argument moved the debate forward: British thinking was dominated, until 1944, by the belief that in relative terms the Allies were militarily weaker than their German enemy.[9]

The question of military weakness lay at the roots of other attempts to depict grand strategy from the perspective of the roles of the various armed forces. S.W. Roskill, in The War at Sea, saw British and Allied grand strategy from 1940 on as a

"maritime strategy," delayed by errors and weakness but ultimately leading to the correct application of overwhelming force based on the strength of "maritime power." R.J. Overy, in The Air War 1939-1945, on the other hand, felt that the Allies had correctly based their grand strategy around exploiting an advantage in airpower, with a "general air strategy." Overy attempted to treat the problem in comprehensive terms, but he rather overemphasized structural power at the expense of combat power. The Allied experience in the latter area revolved around the frankly vicious debate over the strategic bombing offensive against Germany. Frankland and Webster's Official History, The Strategic Air Offensive against Germany, argued that while strategic bombing proved unable to revolutionize warfare by defeating Germany by itself, the emphasis placed on it in the early years, by default, paid off when it blossomed into a major and effective part of the comprehensive assault on Europe. The focus of debate was whether the campaign was a relative failure or not, but in The Right of the Line, John Terraine went as far as to claim that the course of the war loaded the brunt of British grand strategy onto the RAF and kept it there. This specific theme is debatable, but again the general theme emerged: perceived weakness heavily influenced British thinking.

The direct impact of this perception on British grand strategy surfaced most dramatically in the study of the role and performance of the British Army. A central argument now very definitely holds sway, expressed by J.L. Strange and, in a very recent work, by Tuvia Ben-Moshe: the repeated set backs on the ground from 1940 well into 1942 convinced the British government and high command that the Army was unable to handle massed German ground forces on equal terms. This was the single most important influence in the evolution of British grand strategic thinking, particularly regarding a "Second Front."[10] This argument has been challenged, but not well. The debate continues to revolve around the issue of whether an earlier "Second Front" was feasible and why the British resisted it. In a throwback to earlier obsessions, Walter Dunn, in Second Front Now -1943, totalled up the overall balance of military forces then in existence, argued that the Allies could have risked invading France in 1942 and rolled in in 1943, and therefore that the military case was spurious. This meant that Churchill and Roosevelt made the decision for other reasons, probably involving Soviet intentions.

Dunn's argument will be further discussed as this study unfolds. Here it must be noted that Dunn failed to grasp the multi-faceted nature of grand strategy and the impact of sincere perceptions of relative power on British thinking.

Dunn's work was distorted by the old view that there could have been a "militarily pristine" grand strategy, a view already discredited in the American literature. R.W. Steele, in The First Offensive 1942, argued that both the British and the Americans tried to shape an Allied grand strategy designed to pursue a whole range of military, political and diplomatic interests. A premature attempt by the American Army to impose its policy of concentration of force led to a decision too heavily distorted by "political" imperatives. Mark Stoler, in The Politics of the Second Front and George C. Marshall, argued that Washington saw grand strategy in multifaceted terms and attempted to press its own broad agenda, and take control of coalition policy, by concentrating on preparing an early "Second Front." These are more comprehensive and convincing analyses of grand strategy as a central part of national war policy, and of the "Second Front" issue as one that involved multiple factors. Ben-Moshe recently summed up the direction of the literature: Churchill was less than honest regarding his consistency of thinking on the "Second Front," but his calculations at the time were based foremost on perceived weakness.

The full range of the question this study aimed to clarify was greatly advanced by two solid works which both treated British overall grand strategy as an important aspect of another problem. P.M.H. Bell's In a Certain Eventuality surveyed Franco-British relations in 1940, but argued that the collapse of the alliance generated a lasting perception that in relative terms British military power was greatly over matched. This perception shaped a grand strategic vision from which all further British thinking evolved. Denis Smyth's Diplomacy and Strategy of Survival surveyed British-Spanish relations in 1940-1941. Smyth demonstrated the massive impact perceived British military weakness had on British policy in general. He also offered a vivid interpretation of how the Churchill government formulated its policies and grand strategy, and how those responsible dealt with the clash between their aspirations and the limits of British power: the latter set the ultimate parameters. With this issue defined, a comprehensive

attempt could be made to reassess and clarify the motives underlying the making of British grand strategy.

Few would argue that the British pursued a basically opportunistic approach to grand strategy, that this was heavily influenced by the course of events, and the leading figures were Churchill and his senior military advisers, the Chiefs of Staff organization. Unfortunately, the literature has long been dominated by the argument over who was the master strategist most responsible for guiding British thinking on the proper course. This overemphasized the admittedly important issue of personality in a particular fashion. Churchill certainly started it, with his implied claim that his vigour and vision propelled policy. Brooke retorted, through Bryant, that Churchill was a genius but an erratic, even reckless one, who was only kept from an irrecoverable blunder by the steadiness of the professionals, especially himself. Lobbies soon developed. Ismay, Hollis, Colville and later Martin Gilbert promoted the Churchill claim. David Fraser entered Brooke's corner. Denis Richards saw Portal as the guiding hand. Roskill argued that Churchill was a great war leader but an erratic, emotional strategist.[11] Ronald Lewin put things in a better perspective in a synthesis, Churchill as Warlord. Churchill was a romantic with a streak of recklessness, but he played a pivotal role in animating, defining and promoting British grand strategy as part of a constant corporate effort.

This helped bring the literature back to a more accurate image. British and Allied grand strategy were both formulated by many minds working together. Ideas flew up and down, in and out, towards a central and constant matrix of discussion and debate. This was best expressed by J.M. Lee in The Churchill Coalition. In Lee's word's, Churchill and his senior military advisers, often, but not always, assisted by Cabinet colleagues and other senior official and personal advisers, conducted a perpetual "rolling seminar," in which the outline of British grand strategy was constantly updated and refined. This convincing interpretation filled out the dimensions of the questions that still needed to be clarified. Overall, the literature had over time developed an image of British grand strategy as a comprehensive effort to marshal power to execute policy, grounded more on perceived problems than prospects. Yet there was still something missing.

This study is offered as a synthesis, an attempt to clarify a complex question - the relative weight, in British thinking, of perceptions of power versus supposed post-war aspirations, in the formulation of national war policy and grand strategy. There are no smoking guns, no undiscovered sources. There is, however, an attempt to apply a fresh perspective: to analyze the problem by focusing on the evolution and impact of what emerged as a broad central **guiding concept and consensus**, one which the "rolling seminar" used to reorient its ideas as the war progressed. It will be argued that as this was a cognitive process, the key factor was the **perceptions** held by the central British leadership regarding military and structural power.[12]

The study will commence with the true onset of total war for the British, from the spring of 1940. A broad trace of the period 1940-1941 will demonstrate the emergence and evolution of the guiding consensus. A more detailed approach will then be taken, focusing on the evolution of British grand strategy as part of the unfolding of the coalition grand strategy of the Grand Alliance. For reasons which will become apparent, the study will end as 1943 gave way to 1944, when the British attempt to dominate coalition grand strategy was finally abandoned. The corporate nature of the definition and execution of policy will be clarified. The study will reinforce and extend the understanding of how perceived relative weakness affected that process. Above all, it will demonstrate that a coherent central body of assumptions emerged as the foundation of all British policy, as directed from the centre. This will shed some new light on the great Allied debates on grand strategy, British views of the Soviets as a strategic factor, and campaigns such as the anti-submarine struggle in the Atlantic and the strategic bombing offensive. Finally, it will demonstrate that the key feature of the evolution of British thinking regarding the central direction of the war was not change but **continuity**.

1. Matloff, M. "Allied Strategy in Europe 1939-1945, in Paret, P. Makers of Modern Strategy, Princeton, 1986, 678.

2. Kohn, R.H. (Editor) "The Scholarship on World War II: Its Present Condition and Future Possibilities," JMH, vol.55, #3, 7/1991.

3. A valuable definition and description of grand strategy was offered by Paul Kennedy in Grand Strategies in War and Peace, New Haven, CT, 1991, ch.1.

4. The above survey relied heavily on Leighton, R.M. "OVERLORD Revisited: An Interpretation of American Strategy in the European War," AHR, vol.67, #4, 7/1963, and Higgins, T. "The Anglo-American Historians' War in the Mediterranean," MA, vol.34, #3, 1970. The debate will be treated thematically rather than strictly chronologically. Other works cited in this introduction will be fully noted only where this author went beyond summary paraphrase; all can be found in the bibliography.

5. Good discussions of the problems of "Official History" are Connell, J. "Official History and the Unofficial Historian," JRUSI, vol.110, #640, 11/1965 and Stafford, D. Britain and European Resistance 1940-1945: A Survey of the SOE, London, 1980, Introduction. This author is not suggesting that historians deliberately distorted the truth. But there seems little doubt that Official Historians worked with unacceptable limits. The suppression of the "Ultra" secret is the classic case. This delayed the Hinsley volumes on Intelligence until the late 1970's. The last volume, Michael Howard's work on strategic deception, was suppressed for a further decade. Regarding attitudes, compare the difference between Roskill's "Official" The War at Sea, London, 1954-1961, and his later Churchill and the Admirals, London, 1977, as will be done below. Roskill's own papers, at the Churchill College Archives, document the pressures placed on the Official Historians despite their being "one of us." The point here is that unverifiable argument is by itself inadequate in principle. Compare Ehrman's 1950's volumes on Grand Strategy, strong works, with the Norman Gibbs' volume published with full citations. To this day one important source for this study, the CAB121 series of the Special Secret Information Centre files, remains sealed and withheld from the archives.

6. Terraine, J. The Right of the Line, London, 1988(1985), 400.

7. Recent challenges have been gathered in a response to the "Barnett-Kennedy" thesis in IHR, XIII, 4, 11/91, pp.662-783. Interestingly, this revisionist challenge accepts the shattering impact of the setbacks of 1940-1941 on the British experience. It also raises interesting aspects of the definition of power.

8. Cohen, E.A. "Churchill and Coalition Strategy in World War II," in Kennedy, P.M. Grand Strategies in War and Peace, 54.

9. See Wheeler, M. "The SOE Phenomenon," JCH, vol.16, #3, 1981, for the SOE debate. Stafford's points will be developed below, but a concise expression of his thesis can be found in "The Detonator Concept: British Strategy, SOE and European Resistance after the fall of France," JCH, vol.10, #2, 4/1975.

10. Strange, J.L. "The British Rejection of Operation SLEDGEHAMMER," MA, vol.46, #1, 1982; Ben-Moshe, T. "Winston Churchill and the Second Front: a Reappraisal," JModH, vol.62, #3, 9/1990.

11. Ismay H.L. Memoirs, London, 1959; Colville, J. The Fringes of Power, London, 1985; Fraser, D. Alanbrooke, London, 1982; Richards, D. Portal of Hungerford, London, 1977; Roskill, S.W. Churchill and the Admirals. Even Cohen, the most recent work, concluded by noting and reaffirming the central role of Churchill's genius.

12. As John Keegan put it so well in The Face of Battle, London, 1976, 29, the way forward is to demonstrate the connection between thought and action.

Part 1

War "Alone"

Chapter 1

Strategy Emergent

"The wearing down of Germany by ever-increasing force of economic pressure should be the foundation of our strategy..."
- COS, 4/9/1940

The German offensive in western Europe and the formation of a coalition government in Britain under the leadership of Winston Spencer Churchill were not directly related. Indeed, they were coincidences in the literal sense of the term. But together they marked a decisive change in what had hitherto been a desultory, almost indifferent, belligerent clash of the great powers of Europe. The rapid success of the German offensive transformed this strange contest and laid the basis for a struggle which would evolve into global total war. This was primarily because the defeat of France shattered all Allied assumptions about the balance of forces of the contending powers and, at a more profound level, estimates of the national policy and effort required to defeat Germany. Hitherto, the keynotes had been measured effort and quiet confidence. Allied grand strategy as formulated by May 1940 had been based on the belief that in a lengthy war the superior economic power of the British and French Empires would outlast that of Germany. A strategy of attrition, based on the combination of the pinning and reduction of the German Army by a defensive stand on the western front, passing to a strategic counteroffensive revolving around an economic blockade, was adopted with some confidence as the surest way to check and then defeat German power. That confidence crumbled along with the Allied Armies in May and June of 1940 and the collapse of France forced the new Churchill coalition to rethink drastically national war policy. From their deliberations emerged a loosely defined consensus that the complete defeat of Nazi Germany was essential to national survival and future prosperity and an almost equally loosely articulated grand strategy designed to organize and apply the nation's power in pursuit of this aim. This grand strategy was also an attrition strategy, expressed as an intent to "wear down" the components of German power. But this new strategy was based not on measured effort and instinctive confidence, rather it stemmed from a steadily heightened perception of the need for a supreme national effort to meet a possibly mortal peril. With the loss of the French Army, the physical "grinding agent"

of Allied strategy, the psychological underpinning - the belief that the Allies overall potential resources were stronger - was shattered. A growing fear that Empire resources were not adequate to fulfil the task being set by national policy, or in other words a perception of not only absolute but also relative weakness, emerged as the new keynote of British grand strategy. This perception of relative weakness became entrenched as the dominant influence in the formulation of British grand strategy during the year that the British Empire was forced to fight a greatly expanded war against a more powerful enemy virtually alone.

From June 1940 to December 1941 Britain fought what can fairly be termed an "independent" war. In this eventful period an eclectic but nevertheless coherent and identifiable pattern of grand strategy, the "wear down" outline, emerged, and was accepted and pursued, by the inner circle of politicians, soldiers and advisers which made national policy. This strategic outline, grounded by a perception of weakness, became the general framework within which an attempt was made to harmonize the mobilization of the national effort and the overall direction of the war. From the start three major factors emerged as dominant influences in the conduct of this policy: 1) the overall potential and performance of the national and Imperial components of power; 2) events in the field, at the "sharp end" of war and; 3) the early recognition of the need to forge a new anti-Axis coalition, based especially on the entry of the United States into the war on the Allied side. These general factors interacted on a constant basis and, combined with assumptions regarding Britain's current and future national prospects and interests, set the broad parameters within which a small and highly integrated network of decision makers articulated British grand strategy. Although it is impossible to compartmentalize the influence of these physical factors on perceptions, they did exert different degrees of influence on strategists at different times. But throughout the dominant influence remained a sobering view of the limits of British power and the magnitude of Axis power. Yet against this sobering audit was set a deeply and broadly held view that the Empire was a global power which enabled Britain to play a major international role.

The emergence of a mortal threat to national survival did not really change the basic views of British leaders on the U.K.'s world position. Even though it seemed that

Imperial power would now be unable to both meet the Axis challenge and sustain Britain as a World Power, they remained convinced that future prosperity and security depended on the solution of that very problem. This central truth was misunderstood by many contemporaries and later by many historians who believed that it led to a cynical grand strategy based on the clever manipulation of coalition power to preserve Imperial interests. Such an interpretation mistook desired objective for central motive, and at no time was this clearer than in 1940-1941 when a national policy with total victory as its aim was imposed on a national power structure seen as hopelessly weak. The decision to fight on in 1940 was clearly irrational when judged on the basis of relative military power alone. This irrationality underwrote the "wear down" outline, which was more an expression of faith than a realistic program of operations. But circumstances and the unfolding of war hardened this irrational policy and inchoate strategy into the general national direction of a mighty national and Imperial war mobilization and deployment which gathered a momentum of its own. Structural power proved a source of great but uneven progress and greater but uneven hope, and left Britain powerful enough to pursue further a wider "wear down" strategy but not powerful enough to either adopt a new strategy or escalate the old. Performance in the field similarly reinforced both hope in "wear down" and the conviction that it was the only real choice. But above all, the increasingly close relationship with the U.S. gradually hardened the general belief that its full participation in the war was an essential British interest. This process was only accelerated by structural and sharp end performance, and came to shape the evolution of national war policy.

This evolution can be traced through four very loosely defined and, in many aspects, overlapping phases, in a process of fairly steadily hardening general conviction that "wear down" was the only safe way to victory and U.S. participation in all aspects was its prerequisite. Through September 1940 calamity in the field dominated and the focus went from the decision to continue the war "alone," to a great national bid for survival, through the formulation of an eclectic but definite outline consensus on how to pursue a long war against a stronger enemy. Into the new year and still almost entirely on the defensive this outline was defined and structural organization and patterns were

laid down. Meanwhile, the national effort intensified and an intense lobby was mounted to secure massive U.S. economic aid in order to enable Britain's war to continue.

Through the spring of 1941 and on a more beleaguered defensive, strategy and structure were further defined and alterations in emphasis made; also, a general strategic priority outline agreement was concluded with the U.S. and a more substantial effort was made to secure a pledge of American resources in order to complete a great long term expansion of British military power. Finally, from early summer 1941, British grand strategic conceptions were radically transformed both in overall context and specific emphasis but within the general thrust of the "wear down" outline. Fully belligerent American participation in a joint grand strategy and structural effort was now pursued and the centre of gravity of British military effort was firmly shifted on to a strategic bombing campaign as the prime "grinding agent" in the "wear down" strategy. A full and searching test of British power had proved the defeat of the Axis to be beyond its means. But it also strengthened the belief that this goal was a national necessity and the "wear down" concept was the only safe option. The erosion of an independent war policy was met with an attempt to forge a new coalition pledged to pursue this option.

The accession of Winston Churchill as Prime Minister was ironically the direct result of the Allied debacle in Norway, a costly farce for which he as much as any Allied leader had to accept responsibility. But Norway was only a specific. The general cause of the groundswell of political anger which toppled the Chamberlain government was the belief that the setback was just the latest result of a war policy poorly and reluctantly considered, conducted and organized. Churchill may have greatly contributed to the mishandling of the Norwegian campaign but in general he was clearly seen to stand for vigorous whole hearted prosecution of the war. Indeed, he had by his force of conviction and drive already absorbed a greater part of the direction of strategy into his hands and Chamberlain was well aware of Churchill's superior capacity as a war leader[1]. Whether Chamberlain knew his position was hopeless or not is a matter of some dispute, but there is no doubt that his resignation was forced by a combination of Labour's refusal

to serve under him and a Conservative revolt orchestrated by Leo Amery and Kingsley Wood.[2] But this combination of forces brought Churchill forward as "man of the hour" without a personal power base. He was forced to construct a carefully balanced coalition encompassing the still powerful Chamberlainites and a Labour team led by Attlee, which accepted Chamberlain's continuance in the War Cabinet with great reluctance. Labour only accepted this political balance for the sake of national unity under Churchill as a war leader, in the midst of the great military crisis which erupted in France even before the new coalition was complete.[3] This was a factor of great importance, as it symbolized the first step in the national acceptance of the need for total war. But it also left it up to Churchill to use his personal influence and vision to carry a new national war policy, and he had to do so in the midst of disintegration in the field so total that it brought up the fundamental question of that policy.

Churchill has left eloquent testimony to the sense of shock which gripped Allied leaders as the German "blitzkrieg" ripped asunder Allied dispositions and the preconceptions which underwrote them.[4] In two bewildering weeks the German advance broke the Allied front and the will of the French government and pinned the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) against the Channel. The Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) warned on 24 May that the whole BEF faced elimination and that subsequently France itself seemed likely to fall; this would put the Germans in a position to attack the U.K. itself.[5] This warning now raised as a general and urgent question the defence of the U.K. itself. British reliance on the ability of the Allied armies to stand as a shield, while the sword of carefully mobilized economic and airpower was forged, had been so complete that the 10 divisions and auxiliary forces of the BEF formed fully 90% of the combat ready and equipped land forces immediately available. On 25 and 26 May when the developing plans to attempt a full evacuation (DYNAMO) were settled, the best estimate was that the equivalent of two divisions might be saved. This spectre of complete catastrophe brought on by the failure of the Allied forces raised the questions of both Britain's ability to carry on the war and the purpose of doing so. It also raised the questions underpinning war aims and national war policy which the formation of the Churchill coalition had revealed just beneath the surface.

On 13 May, when the full extent of crisis in the field was still unclear, Churchill presented his vision of national war policy to the House of Commons in the first of his famous series of speeches that momentous summer. It was a clarion call to arms with its vision of a relentless struggle for survival against sheer evil and its war aim of one word - victory.[6] It was also a political masterpiece. Here at last was a vision, a call for clear-cut national crusade around which an all too often bitterly divided nation could rally on the basis of a lowest common denominator. This policy of total war to pursue complete victory was Churchill's most basic personal policy and indeed was perhaps the only realistic basis on which his coalition could have functioned. But the shattering collapse of the Allied armies brought forward both a clear and present danger to give substance to Churchill's vision and a serious debate on whether or not British power would be sufficient to carry out such ambitious aims. It is a central theme of the mythology surrounding Churchill and British national resolve that from 10 May 1940 government and nation pressed forward unflinchingly intent on victory. Churchill himself stated repeatedly in his matchless prose that the question of whether to fight on was never seriously considered, a view accepted even by some historians who have perused the archives.[7] Like all myths, this romanticized the essential truth by the suppression of a disturbing fact. The truth is that Churchill's political position and his war policy were not universally triumphant in May 1940. The crisis in the field raised as a national priority the issue of war a l'outrance versus a more considered appraisal of power prospects. The Chamberlain government had gone to war to attempt to prevent German hegemony in Europe. Whether this was to be pursued to the bitter end at the risk of British power itself was another matter entirely, and it is surely not remarkable that this was so. As the crisis became extreme, French and British fears of Italian intentions developed into a Cabinet debate over the basis of war aims and policy.

The question of the basic thrust of national war policy erupted into a Cabinet crisis from 25 to 28 May, while - it must be noted - it was as yet unclear whether the BEF would be rescued. Three issues: 1) a French plea for a bribe to Mussolini,to keep Italy neutral; 2) an appeal to Roosevelt to approach Mussolini, then Hitler; and 3) the basic issue of whether in principle a negotiated settlement should be sought, floated by

the Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax - merged into what became a tense debate over national policy itself, led by Churchill and Halifax. Churchill's accession was greeted with dismay in many quarters, where he was seen as emotional, reckless and erratic. Halifax, in particular, felt that Churchill's determination to fight on even if French power was destroyed flew in the face of reason and realism. Four basic points emerged in debate from a confusing series of cross currents, discussions and intrigues. First, it was agreed that the only acceptable terms were ones which did not threaten British independence and continued rearmament. Second, the French had to be encouraged to stay in the war; the reply to their plea for mediation had to be framed so as to avoid giving them an excuse to blame British policy for a lost chance. Third, Churchill, strongly supported by the Labour and Liberal leaders, insisted that a now victorious Hitler would not offer acceptable terms, while any suggestion that terms were even being considered would sap the national will to fight. Finally, Halifax, hesitantly supported by Chamberlain, ostensibly agreed that such terms were unlikely but insisted that the objective facts required consideration of a settlement short of victory.[8]

This opened a basic division on principle. Churchill, influenced by the still very real prospect of the loss of the BEF and his own weak position, was ambivalent on the surface. But he insisted that **German military power** must be destroyed if the U.K. were, in the future, to enjoy security and prosperity. The rift opened on whether this aim should be pursued at all costs. On 28 May, fortified by the support of Labour, the Liberals and the Chiefs of Staff (COS), Churchill escalated the debate. The House of Commons was called to arms in categorical terms. In Cabinet, Churchill insisted that "the nations which went down fighting rose again, but those which surrendered tamely were finished." Then Churchill held a timely interview with Ministers outside the War Cabinet, exhorting them to set an example and insisting "of course, whatever happens at Dunkirk we shall fight on." The unanimous support for this policy was taken back to Cabinet; this was political intimidation per excellence, and its impact was decisive. It was agreed to give no further consideration to the question of a negotiated peace with Hitler.[9]

Churchill's attempt to conceal this serious dispute is now discredited, but the argument continues as to what its meaning and consequences were at the time. The most recent treatment by John Costello argued that this debate was the most serious expression of a deep antipathy to Churchill's policy, based on a "rational" calculation of forces which overlooked the more profound issues at stake and continued into 1941 to unsettle central policy. This is part of an argument which becomes progressively weaker, and merely borrows the best part of conclusions already offered by P.M.H. Bell. Bell pointed out that this was the point at which Churchill's clear grasp of one point - the fundamentally unappeasable nature of Nazi policy, which would lead it to a position ultimately unbearable for British interests, regardless of Hitler's reluctance to destroy the Empire itself - asserted itself, won the political debate, and set the future agenda. This is convincing. The unity Churchill sought remained elusive inside important quarters of the political elite who feared the consequences of total war on social and international order, but this marked a decisive shift in national war policy. Unless he stumbled, the way was clear for Churchill to pursue his policy. This also marked an important shift in the political balance. It may well be that Chamberlain personally - whose hatred of Nazism was never in question - was now not that far from Churchill's position. But the opposition to that position was held in check not with the help of Churchill's own party but with the backing of the Labour Party.[10] This marked an important new direction in the coalition, and through it the nation.

The other crucial point is that the decision to fight on had been taken before it was clear the Army would survive. Indeed, the essence of Halifax's case was that defeat was already inevitable, so terms should be sought now before it set in. This whole debate underlined the symbiosis between a national war policy and the basic plan by which national power was to be applied to conduct the war in pursuit of its objective - a grand strategy. Debate continues to rage here as well. David Reynolds felt that the strategic grounds for the decision to fight on rested primarily on a mistaken perception of ultimate German economic potential. Eliot Cohen replied that Churchill's understanding of the nature of Nazi policy, plus his faith in, and determination to harness

American power, were more important.[11] The one point of consensus is that it had been agreed to pursue a more vigorous and infinitely more dangerous war.

This new policy would be given substance by the coming battle for the defence of the U.K. itself and the new coalition's moves to reorganize and galvanize national and Imperial power. But the guiding aims were simply survival and victory. This was national war policy stripped to its essence. The charter for this essence and a decisive factor in its political survival was the grand strategy by which it was proposed to carry on alone and pursue victory. At this point, it consisted only of two papers hastily drafted by the COS as a result of the Cabinet debate. When a French defeat became a real possibility, the COS were directed to consider whether it was possible to fight on alone and broadly suggest how. They submitted two papers which together formed the basis of professional advice on how to prosecute the war in the new situation. Like all exercises in future strategic planning they were heavily influenced by previous assumptions, current developments, perceived prospects and committee compromises. But these hastily cobbled efforts reflected more than all subsequent attempts the stresses of the moment and the unrestricted faith vested in widely held tenets of grand strategy, for this one time the question at hand was whether Britain should fight on at all.

The first paper presented, "British Strategy in the Near Future," was submitted as an extemporary answer to Churchill's question of whether the Royal Navy (RN) and the Royal Air Force (RAF) could resist a serious German attack on the U.K. The paper was brief, without detail, and adhered to the issue of an imminent invasion in all three elements. For the only time in the war the COS and their Vice-Chiefs (VCOS) together affixed their signatures. Their conclusions were that the Army was too weak to eject an invading force, which left control of the air the decisive factor. The RAF could hold by day but the German Air Force, four times as numerous, could by night press home a bombing offensive which might bring all industrial production in the critical aircraft industry to a standstill and thus starve the RAF. As against this it was a question of whether national morale and determination could stand up to the pounding and see it through. Their remarkable conclusion was:

> "To sum up, our conclusion is that prime facie Germany has most of the cards; but the real test is whether the morale of our fighting personnel and civil population will counter balance the numerical and material advantages which Germany enjoys. We believe it will."[12]

Here was an astonishing confession. After nine months of war and over four years of serious consideration of air defence, the professional advisers could offer in the immediate crisis no suggestion other than a pious belief that the poor man in the street could stand up to a beating they supposed they would be unable to prevent. Never can a starker admission of real military weakness have been given to a British government.

This paper was expanded by a 17 page proposal on "British Strategy in a Certain Eventuality," the latter a euphemism for French surrender. It was drawn up in great haste in 10 of the most hectic days of the war by the Joint Planning Committee (JPC) and a senior official of the Ministry of Economic Warfare (MEW).[13] Given the circumstances it could not have and did not contain anything more than an instinctive reflection governed by those four ingredients of strategic thought. Previous assumptions about British and Imperial economic staying power and the efficacy of economic warfare underpinned the whole concept. Current events shaped the pessimistic estimate of the Army's ability to eject any invading force that reached the U.K., and perceived prospects and committee compromises shaped the vision sketched of the "way forward". Five conclusions of lasting influence were reached. Firstly, massive U.S. economic and financial aid and supplies were essential; without them, the war could not continue. Secondly, it was now necessary for the government to assume full powers and convert the nation and its economy to a total war footing, a measure already underway. At least 60% of the current level of imports would have to be achieved to allow production to continue. Thirdly, the Empire itself was an essential component of British power and a vital strategic factor, although the defence of the U.K. came first, and all overseas positions should be retained. Fourthly, as this would mean leaving Far Eastern positions dangerously weak, the U.S. should be urged to take the lead in opposing all Japanese pressure. Finally, it was considered that even with the loss of French power and the threat to Britain, Germany might still be defeated by:

> "economic pressure, by a combination of air attack on economic objectives in Germany and on German morale and the creation of widespread revolt in her conquered territories."

Italian hostility and Japanese bullying were forecast and Germany was expected first to try and overwhelm the U.K. by a strategic air offensive and then attempt to conquer British positions in the Mediterranean and Middle East. British air defence and civil stamina would bring a long war into play. Then, it was felt, Germany would be economically vulnerable, as it was assumed that her economy was on a total war footing yet still short of vital raw materials, especially oil. Provided overseas possessions held, a comprehensive blockade could be launched, which would be reinforced by strategic bombing to destroy German industry and a "special organization" to organize subversion and then timely revolts in occupied countries when economic crisis broke. The thesis was clear - a three pronged general attrition strategy would "wear down" the substance of German power and undermine the support base of her powerful armed forces.

Cabinet took this paper at a critical point in its great debate on 27 May. Arthur Greenwood, Labour Minister without Portfolio, submitted a report supporting the concept but warning it could only be pursued by a greatly reorganized and intensified national effort amounting to a total war economy, coupled with massive U.S.economic aid.[14] With quibbles over details, the COS proposal was quickly accepted.[15] This was a major decision, which supported Churchill's stand in the policy debate and the push for internal reorganization for total war. Above all, it established as an instrument of broad national war policy a strategic plan based on newly perceived profound relative weakness and existing over-optimistic estimates of the prospects of economic warfare. In their haste to show a "way forward" the Staffs had placed in the forefront of thought an eclectic combination of naval, air, diplomatic, financial, and covert efforts tailored to sap German power **without facing the German Army in the field.**[16] As yet the Army had no role and its survival was an open question. This would change; but the basic assumptions and the direction of strategic thought would not.

It was wrongly believed that the blockade had been the decisive factor in the victory of 1918. It was blithely assumed, based on the isolated raids on the U.K. in

1917 and twenty years of theorizing hardened into dogma, that the RAF had the power to inflict real damage on the German economy. Above all it was accepted as fact, based on totally inadequate intelligence, that the German war economy was taut and vulnerable to properly applied pressure. These assumptions would last and would be reinforced by two newly acquired beliefs - firstly, that the German Army, in an unweakened state, was much too powerful to confront in decisive battle; secondly, to make the British Army strong enough to consider such a confrontation was beyond the entire power of nation and Empire. Together these assumptions formed the core of a general grand strategic outline, filled out by the convictions of the need for total war, massive U.S. assistance, and retention of the Empire as a strategic necessity. This came together as the basis of the general direction of all sectors of national power as the means of executing the policy of victory. In reaction to the unfolding of events the internal balance of emphasis would change. Survival was still uncertain, the real potential power of mobilized nation and Empire and friendly states was still unclear, and a more detailed study of power and prospects would be necessary. But the basic strategic assumptions behind the central conduct of the war had been laid down and accepted by the tightly interlocked nucleus of British government sensing the need for a general outline as a starting point, as yet uncertain of its weaknesses, and determined to persevere. That doctrine became and remained the belief that Britain and Empire could "wear down" the basis of German power to the point of collapse without again facing the unbeaten German Army in decisive battle, but could afford no other course. At this point such a concept was more an expression of faith and resolve than a serious program of grand strategy. Nevertheless it remained the hub of strategic thought even when Britain's power and situation improved. In fact, it became the dominant feature in the central direction of the war.

Simple survival was the dominant concern that summer of 1940, with the need to defend the U.K. and react to the French collapse marking the daily focus of the central government. The rescue of most of the BEF was a great tonic, but the collapse of France, Italian entry into the war, and the loss of most of the BEF's heavy equipment

left the British in dire strategic straits. Strenuous efforts to reinvigorate defences and a real general resolve gripped the nation; but the beginning of the German aerial onslaught, the "Battle of Britain," brought war to Britain itself and made the less than 50 modern Spitfire and Hurricane equipped squadrons of Fighter Command and their sophisticated control network and technical aids the crux of immediate British power. It was as well for Britain that German efforts suffered from the ambivalence Hitler always felt when dealing with the British and from the uncoordinated nature of German strategic planning and war policy. These impediments helped Fighter Command defeat a massive German day offensive by late September. It became apparent that although a new phase of great danger was at hand, the imminent invasion threat was receding. For the first time the Germans suffered a serious strategic reverse, but it had been a close run thing. The heavy bombing attacks concentrated the mind on the overhaul of central war policy while the fight for survival went on. At the same time, the British were forced to react to the wreck of the Alliance.

At first Churchill bent every nerve to keep the battle alive in France and escalate British assistance, but the Germans were simply too strong. The decision taken as early as 15-16 May not to risk all for France was confirmed on 8 June when the decisive German push was well underway.[17] This was a realistic decision and after the failure of a dramatic appeal for combined sovereignty,[18] British efforts turned to preserving their own interests and encouraging continued resistance from any French faction or possession still capable. Preserving British interests naturally came first, and the urgent need was to prevent the French fleet from being added to the Axis Order of Battle. The JPC warned before France surrendered that this would overtax the RN fatally and a ruthless act of prevention might be necessary. Cabinet accepted this point on 16 June and made satisfactory assurances regarding the fleet a condition of their acceptance of a separate French armistice.[19] The only assurances forthcoming were self denial pledges by the Germans and verbal reassurances by the new Petain regime; neither greatly moved Whitehall. Cabinet resolve hardened, led by Churchill, and a new French resistance faction led by General de Gaulle, Under-Secretary for War in the previous French government, was recognized. Stiffened by this move, which risked alienating the

Petain regime, Cabinet overruled the Admiralty's fears and a coordinated action to neutralize or destroy French fleet units in England, Algeria and Egypt was approved on 27 June. The COS then endorsed the operation, agreeing that the blockade would anyway alienate the French. Operation CATAPULT, highlighted by a significant battle at the major Algerian base of Mers-El-Kabir, was carried out on 3 July.[20]

CATAPULT has remained controversial but there is no doubt that it sent a signal of British resolve to friend and foe and heartened British opinion. But it only further confused policy towards the French. The new regime in Vichy was regarded with distrust but remained the legitimate government of a large empire with sizeable forces, and its importance to the blockade meant the British could not afford lightly to estrange Petain. But de Gaulle was the only French leader the British were able to rally to the cause, unfortunately with insignificant forces but a powerful symbol of alliance. His statesmanlike reaction to CATAPULT and Churchill's insistence that all French forces willing to fight were to be supported secured him limited recognition as a military ally and led to Cabinet approval of an operation to install him at Dakar to rally the northwest African colonies.[21] But poor intelligence, slack planning and co-ordination of forces, and a confusion of aim - deliberate assault or political coup - led to a fiasco when operation MENACE was finally launched, and London was forced to scrap the effort on 25 September. This failure embittered relations with de Gaulle and revealed the scope of the dilemma which henceforth marked British strategy and the French. An attempt to solicit any and all possible support was pursued but it degenerated into a confused effort to reconcile principle - de Gaulle - with expediency - Petain - or find an alternative.[22] The alliance was indeed a wreck.

In addition to salvaging the central position and some vestige of the alliance, British strategists also faced the need to settle immediate strategic policy and priority in the overseas theatres which made up such a large part of Britain's power position. Under mortal peril, the emphasis everywhere had to be defensive, and farthest and least immediately threatened was the position in the Far East. The bulk of Imperial resources and most prestigious territories were east of Suez, including nearly all its rubber resources and 85% of its tin;[23] they all lay under threat from the hostility of an ex-ally,

Japan. The long apparent dilemma of having inadequate resources to meet global commitments had resulted in decisions which left British Far Eastern possessions dependent on the arrival of a battle fleet at the main base at Singapore. But, by 1939, it had been slated to concentrate in the Mediterranean, it being decided that a simultaneous triple threat from the European Axis and Japan could not be met.[24] Japanese pressure to cut supply lines to China forced a review of strategic policy. The COS and the Foreign Office clashed over whether to appease the Japanese and close the Burma Road, expressing in this case the respective real imperatives of Britain's desperate power position and shaky prestige position. Cabinet accepted the COS advice to close the Burma Road and held in abeyance the issue of whether to guarantee aid to the oil rich Dutch East Indies.[25] From these reflections it became clear that the extreme weakness of the British global position forced avoidance of any clash with the Japanese and real risks with defences. These were accepted, comforted by the strong belief that the U.S. could be pressed to expand its role in the area and that Japanese power was uncertain enough to gamble on. Both assumptions were to prove costly, but at this point there was little real choice.

The German victories were, of course, the root cause of the relegation of Far Eastern interests, but they were exacerbated by that existing global over-commitment which was greatly worsened when Italian hostility made the Mediterranean an active theatre. This opened up the central hub of the Empire, its lines of communication and the vital Suez Canal position and especially the oil resources in the Middle East, to pressure from numerically stronger forces while the U.K. itself was under attack. The Admiralty even considered withdrawing from the Eastern Mediterranean altogether, but was overruled.[26] Having decided to hold the position, Churchill's pressure for action led to important consultations with Gen. Wavell, Commander in Chief Middle East, and decisions which shaped the relative priority of, and approach to, overseas areas in grand strategy. British leaders were faced with the need to hold an existing position, which they felt to be crucial to overall British power and strategy, with whatever forces could be scraped up. All agreed that the real threat was German penetration in the area, and were determined to forestall this by holding and then rolling back the Italians and

clearing Africa.[27] A bold decision to risk sending 150 precious tanks from the U.K. to Egypt led to a sharp argument over whether to risk battle and send them through the Mediterranean or be safe and dispatch them the long way around the Cape. This led to an attempt by Churchill, reluctantly accepting the cautious route, to draft a detailed directive for Wavell, on the grounds that this great gamble gave London the right to establish strategy for the area. A compromise directive was agreed by which Wavell would concentrate in Egypt but contest all other positions in his vast domain.[28] More importantly, it was agreed that the area was to stand behind only the U.K. in general priority.

The most remarkable feature of all these decisions was that they took place in the midst of the Battle of Britain. Confidence increased as time passed but the U.K. remained very much an insecure priority, and the decision to accept an active Mediterranean theatre displayed both great courage and the belief that British power and strategy depended on utilizing the Empire as a whole. As moves to one area meant less for another this was a decision for Whitehall, which faced it squarely. In the process the triangular network of Churchill, COS, and theatre commanders emerged in control of "current" grand strategy, in interactive debate, and several lasting features became apparent - the tendency of theatre commanders to consider their command both decisive and understrength; the disposition of the COS to compromise in favour of the service most directly affected by an operation, viz the Admiralty and the tank convoy; finally, Churchill's multi-faceted personal general strategic method. This last consisted of several lasting features which consistently marked his approach to grand strategy: a suspicion that theatre commanders misused forces to try and cover everywhere; a conviction that the ratio of logistics "teeth" to combat "tail" was wasteful; a firm belief that commanders and the COS bureaucracy emphasized the obstacles to all proposals by compiling the sum of service fears; an intention to be directly involved in strategic planning; and, above all, a desire to engage the enemy with the most possible forces at the maximum intensity possible, at all times. The theme of cautious bureaucracy and reckless Prime Minister has been overdone, but there is no doubt that Churchill

immediately established himself as an active factor in strategic planning and thus made true military-political partnership in grand strategy operative from the start.

Grand strategy developed at this time by increments and in reaction to the new situation and the enemy's retention of the initiative. Home defence, retrenchment in the Far East, and daring stubbornness in the Mediterranean were supplemented by attempts to refashion along the lines of general attrition the longer term initiatives which could be deployed from the U.K. itself. These emerged along one line dictated by physical necessity and traditional disposition - seapower and the control of the sea lanes - and five concepts shaped by a variety of influences and seen as "offensive" - raiding, subversion, propaganda, economic warfare, and strategic bombing. All were central ingredients of the great general rethinking of long term grand strategy then underway,* but as they all also developed pragmatically, and had immediate active impact, they can briefly be considered here.

The idea of aggressive amphibious raids by specially trained and equipped forces was the product of the new situation, old military tradition, and Churchill's offensive spirit. Encouraged by the rescue of the BEF, Churchill insisted "an effort must be made to shake off the mental and moral prostration to the will and initiative from which we suffer," and called for amphibious raiding. However, Churchill soon concluded that the Staffs were trying to restrict this initiative and concentrate on the defensive. In reply, he plucked out of retirement the controversial Admiral of the Fleet Sir Roger Keyes, M.P. Churchill then appointed Keyes Director of a new tri-service Combined Operations Headquarters responsible directly to him, to study and develop amphibious resources and operations. Churchill wanted elite forces to carry the war to the Axis in a small but dramatic way, but the COS objected both to the person and mandate of Keyes and the effect elite forces would have on general training and re-equipment. The COS noted by 6 August that a two tier raiding policy - special units and regular formations, competing for training and resources - was developing. Churchill disagreed, but he reluctantly agreed to review the whole concept within the general policy review.[29] Even given that

* *See below p. 27*

only groundwork was possible in this early phase, Combined Operations was not off to a good start.

The concept of a "special organization" to organize subversion and prepare timely revolts became mired even deeper in political cross currents. Subversion and sabotage had respectable enough lineages and were enhanced by the new situation of an occupied Europe, stress on economic warfare and strong support from Churchill. The problem was to define the concept and decide who was to control it and how it was to be related to grand strategy. A fierce three cornered argument developed between the Foreign Office, the existing organizations in the service departments, and the new Minister of Economic Warfare, aristocratic socialist Hugh Dalton. Dalton, aided by Attlee, and by the identity of his romantic views on resistance with those of Churchill, broke down opposition at a major meeting of 1 July and secured support for a new organization to bring all existing bodies under the control of MEW.[30] Detailed talks led to the establishment of the secret Special Operations Executive (SOE), headed by Dalton with a Foreign Office official as deputy, and divided into SO1 - subversion and propaganda - and SO2 - sabotage and resistance organization. The COS accepted the scheme on 21 August as a new control for "subversive war," loosely defined as non-uniformed, with tri-service liaison.[31] But this was an incomplete success for Dalton. He saw the war and his new portfolio as an opportunity to sweep away the reactionary forces of European society in a great popular crusade, and was convinced that a politicized civilian body would best spark this. But SOE's own powers and resources were not defined and its creation was resented.[32] Much would depend on whether or not its role as a political arm of MEW operations was considered important by strategists.

Similar political and doctrinal confusion dogged early attempts to improve the use of propaganda as a strategic weapon. It was believed that totalitarian and occupied countries were fertile ground for propaganda, thus assuring it a major role. This belief was reinforced by yet another uncritical assumption from 1918. This was heightened by necessity in mid 1940, despite the lack of success from earlier, largely leaflet bombing, efforts. A squabble developed between the Foreign Office, SOE, and the Ministry of Information over control of efforts, aggravated by the lack of agreed slogans and general

war aims. The JIC insisted that policy had to be "intimately associated with the general policy of the government for the conduct of the war,"[33] but this proved easier said than done. An attempt to define policy led on 18 August to a trial accord: SOE would control "black" or disavowable efforts while Information ran the "white" or open efforts such as BBC broadcasts; efforts would tailored to each area and to strategic prospects there; and close liaison would be pursued.[34] Large grey areas between "covert" and "open" and the question of access to strategic plans lay unsettled, but a basis had been laid. Now the question of what to say had to be addressed.

No such intellectual dilemma dogged the cherished "blockade," cornerstone of the concept of economic warfare and its responsible department, MEW. The older concept of a tight physical cordon of naval forces was, by 1940, the core of a much broader range of weapons such as pre-emptive purchase of neutral goods, diplomatic agreements on quotas of exports, aerial bombardment, and monitored shipping cargo, seen comprehensively as "economic warfare." The blockade was yet another supposedly decisive 1918 factor and had been adopted as the core of long term grand strategy well before the war.[35] The loss of France forced a review of prospects but faith in economic warfare was quickly reaffirmed. This reflected traditional affinity to the blockade, erroneous estimates of German vulnerability, and most of all a simple lack of choice. Military power was inadequate, so economic warfare would have to take the lead. To relieve the strain on the RN, efforts were made to increase the focus on the source and receiving ends, which brought diplomatic and air force interests into play. Dalton launched a concerted appeal in July for all out economic warfare as the core of grand strategy. This fitted well with Churchill's total war policy and the Air Ministry's support for strategic bombing. It also enabled the COS to see more reasons for holding resource rich Imperial possessions,[36] but clashed with Foreign Office concern over neutral reactions and with Treasury parsimony. Dalton's call on 13 July to adopt aggressive "sink on sight" policies and crack down on Spanish and Vichy loopholes, "to make the law fit the war," was carried in principle by Cabinet,[37] but watered down in practice by RN weakness and by flexible approaches to Vichy and Spain in the hope of avoiding open clashes. However, the general desire to escalate the war pressed in the other

direction, even to the point where in an angry moment, after the Dakar fiasco, Churchill expressed blockade policy regarding French colonies as "join de Gaulle or starve."[38] Britain's power was too weak to make policy that clear cut, but that very weakness did keep economic warfare at the centre of strategic thought. The assumptions underlying its new role in strategy were well summed up in a July 1940 paper on "The Outlook for Economic Warfare":

> "The French collapse has altered the balance of importance of the different means to victory, but has not affected the central idea. This is to create disunity in Germany and in Italy, thought the defeat in the field of the main Armies of the Reich is now unlikely to be the predisposing cause. Bearing in mind this underlying purpose of all offensive action, the present situation manifestly enhances the importance of the economic and psychological means of attack... All false sentiment must be put aside..."[39]

Although perhaps the service most involved in the initial events of this phase, the RAF emerged with its strategic thinking least related to the lessons of recent events. Overall, however, the RAF was forced on the defensive; overseas commands were left to make shift while the home commands fought the decisive battle. Coastal Command and Fighter Command also buckled down to clearly defined tasks, but Bomber Command, the focus of Air Staff thought and the showpiece of RAF autonomy, experienced early the conflicting pressures of war which threatened for the next four years to unravel the core of RAF doctrine. This doctrine - faith in the power of "strategic" bombing i.e. attacks on the sources of enemy power[40] - was a legacy of yet another 1917-1918 "lesson," fierce political and doctrinal struggles, and the definition of a grand strategy of a long war with an initial defensive followed by a slow buildup to a general offensive. But unexpected failures in 1939, and severe restrictions on targets set by a cautious government, left Bomber Command off balance when thrown belatedly into the battle in mid-May by a Cabinet naively hoping for decisive disruption of German industry. This did not happen, and Bomber Command became caught in a tug-of-war. On the one hand calls for support from uncommitted force encouraged pressure to divert the bombers. On the other hand the Air Staff argued that inadequate power and frequent diversions, not faulty doctrine, hindered the "main" effort. Dogmatic faith in strategic bombing plus support for economic warfare and long term attrition strengthened this

appeal, but the need to respond to German pressure offset it. The result was a bewildering variety of overlapping directives. Oil refineries and transport facilities were to be attacked, as choke points in the enemy economy. The aircraft industry and airfields were to be destroyed. Crops were to be fired, to "deepen the blockade." Ports and assembly areas were to be pounded, to disrupt invasion plans. By late September even the lifting of restrictions on deliberate attacks on cities to terrorize the populace was under review.[41] That line was held, but it was clear that strategic bombing had moved to the centre of grand strategic hopes without proving its ability to carry the load. The effects of this were to prove lasting.

No such confusion over ultimate grand strategic tasks marred the conduct of the last and most crucial element of grand strategy, the struggle to control the sea lanes. For Britain, control of the seas was a simple matter of life and death. The RN, centuries old foundation of Britain's power and symbol of its armed might, faced from the start a global task. This forced it to prioritize, and priority was simple - control of the Atlantic sea lanes. The equation was stark: if the sea lanes were cut, imports to the U.K. economy would cease, and if that happened the war could not be carried on. As a result, leadership in the Pacific was ceded to the U.S. and seapower concentrated against Germany and Italy. The RN had a very active war before May 1940 and maritime strategy proved fertile ground for dispute. Seapower now relied on airpower as well, a lesson drummed home by the loss of Norway; but the inferior status of the RAF's Coastal Command and the RN's own Fleet Air Arm had left them poorly equipped and therefore a potential source of real trouble. The Admiralty still saw the balanced capital ship fleet as the crux of seapower and all other forces as auxiliaries, and proceeded accordingly. From June light units were concentrated to defend the U.K., which left the vital merchant convoys weakly protected from the prime German maritime threat, the U-Boat fleet. Another 1917 "lesson" gave the Admiralty confidence that its equipment and tactics could overcome what they knew to be the main foe, but its efforts were hampered by long arguments over doctrine - whether to seek out U-Boats, or stick to close escort and kill them as they attacked.[42] The fall of France greatly expanded the operational range of the still fortunately small U-Boat fleet. This and anti-invasion withdrawals led

to steep rises in shipping losses as the battle widened. By late August the Admiralty warned that more resources would have to be committed to meet the growing threat.[43] This was premature, but again a major dilemma was clear - spread too thinly to meet too many threats and lacking agreed doctrine or enough good equipment to fight the U-Boats, the RN risked losing the decisive long term battle. A real commitment of resources to secure the sea lanes, as the grand strategic priority, became the Admiralty's absolute priority.

As opposed to current grand strategy, the overall comprehensive policy required for the central direction of the war emerged from a tightly knit machinery of command within the overall structure of British government. This British government machinery as Churchill reorganized it in 1940 was the empirically evolved product of centuries of constitutional development which blended official and informal power channels and rested on the committee system. The Cabinet was the supreme executive power, dominated by a Prime Minister whose largely undefined powers could become largely what he made of them. The powerful departments of state were the sources of expertise and resources and major agents in policy making, joined together in central function oriented committees designed to reconcile views and produce consensus. These formal channels co-existed with informal but real social strata, especially a homogeneous closely knit governing establishment which provided the vast bulk of leaders of all institutions in society and regarded itself as in partnership with the government of the day. Formal channels provided a flexible skeleton by which policy was made, knit together by the committees and their indispensable secretariats. But it was the interaction of system and personality, machinery and individuals, which really shaped the method of government. Churchill believed in a small powerful War Cabinet of members with departmental responsibilities who could unite responsibility and executive authority and reconcile the political balance. He was at first forced to balance the Chamberlain faction and Labour in his coalition, but established his ascendency as the summer wore on and leant more and more to an expedient partnership with Labour and his own circle of intimates. By September his War Cabinet included Lord Beaverbrook, Minister of Aircraft Production,

a post itself created to galvanize efforts, and was clearly emerging from a transition phase. Several committees had been established to try and coordinate the "civil" effort, especially the Production Council and the Lord President's Committee (LPC). Their mandate was to reconcile conflicting claims and priorities and their composition reflected the balance of the coalition, but a real concentration of authority was lacking and much depended on the ability of Ministers to tame strong departments in committee.

It was on the military side that Churchill made his most important moves. Military advice was the province of a committee system uniting the three professional heads of services in the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COS), with duplicates at lower levels who carried out the vast bulk of actual staff work, the Joint Planning Committee (JPC) and the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC). Churchill made himself Minister of Defence and established not a department but an office, staffed in duplication by the military side of the War Cabinet Secretariat. This at a stroke united political-military responsibility by placing the COS under the Prime Minister, and enabled Churchill to imprint his vigour and drive on the central controlling machinery. His power was also enhanced by the creation of two Cabinet sub-committees, the Defence Committee (Operations) and Defence Committee (Supply), which became flexible organs to which strategic and structural issues with major political dimensions could be referred. The system was created by Gen. Hastings L. Ismay, Military Secretary to the War Cabinet, who became Chief of Staff to the Minister of Defence and assumed the vital role of interpreter between Churchill and the COS. The service ministers, one from each party, retained administrative and political roles but were quickly excluded from control of strategy. That emerged as the province of Churchill and the COS machinery, overseen by Cabinet at large. The whole structure was a loosely overlapping matrix of layers of formal and informal government which created a network within which ideas circulated and moved in and out from the centre. Real power lay in personal strength, and devolved into a loosely defined "secret circle" of ministers, officers, and advisers, never more than 20, who had access to information in all three vital areas:1) current and future strategy; 2) intelligence sources; 3) industrial and research efforts.

At the centre of it all stood Churchill, who at this stage dominated the machinery and cast it in his mould. His own personal Statistical Section, headed by his crony and controversial Oxford don, Frederick Lindemann, helped him do this with advice and expert information independent of the Cabinet Secretariat, with whom it was soon forced to attempt to regularize relations.[44] Within the network of DC(O & S) and COS Churchill carried on a personal style of decision making, complemented on both flanks by the formal channels of Whitehall and the informal grapevine of clubs, personal links, and weekend retreats. The British government carried on "muddling through" as it always had, and personal ability determined influence in decision making. The scope of business and dual responsibilities of committee and department were so vast and onerous that relentless pressure formed the daily context of the efforts of all those involved in the central machinery. This must always be remembered. What appeared on paper as well considered reflection was often the improvised result of hasty compromises by men under almost unbearable conflicting pressures. Churchill never forgot this and defined early on a charter which established a formal channel for the swirl of paper by which business was recorded:

> "Let it be clearly understood that all directions emanating from me are made in writing, or should be immediately afterwards confirmed in writing, and that I do not accept any responsibility for matters relating to national defence, on which I am alleged to have given decisions, unless they are recorded in writing".[45]

As a result of these efforts, central machinery emerged from this transition with strategic planning now well connected to national war policy. But structural policy was mired in new channels, with departments still battling to define ascendancy under loose central oversight. Politically it can be said an overall improvement took place. Churchill swept the bulk of the Chamberlain faction from office, but enhanced his own position by a strong principled and calculated opposition to an attempted political witch-hunt of the so called "guilty men" of appeasement. By preventing personal rancour Churchill avoided an open feud while the enemy was at the gates and showed compassion for colleagues rebuffed by events; it is noteworthy that both he and Chamberlain adapted quite readily to their new roles.[46] Grumbling continued, fuelled by fears of social upheaval, dislike of Churchill, political principles, and the tendency to reshape

governments in drawing rooms seen by the political class as its birthright. Churchill also stored up political trouble by appointing strong willed Ministers to a very disparate coalition bound only to himself. But for now he did seem to articulate the deeper mood of the nation and came to symbolize its ideal image of itself. All questions of terms were dismissed, to the extent that a BBC reporter rejected Hitler's 19 July "peace offer" on his own initiative.[47] Hitler was clearly identified as an irreconcilable enemy, a sentiment which Chamberlain agreed with wholeheartedly. Doubts remained in some establishment quarters, but for now, Churchill had secured his mandate to prosecute total war.

As important as it was to settle basic policy, the revamped machinery now had to find concrete ways by which it could be pursued. The concept of economic attrition outlined in late May was placed under general review in an attempt to consider how to reorganize national and Imperial resources in accordance with a definite strategic outline. This went on as the same men, at the same time, under direct attack themselves, tried to grapple with the conduct of a war which expanded daily. Problems had to be handled as they arose while an effort was made to define a general consensus outline to orient all efforts. Only the central authority could attempt to define a general grand strategic posture which seemed best suited to the type of war it was felt Britain both had to and could wage. Only in such a central authority could the general consensus on direction be found and the constant adjustments and balances of priority and effort be pursued, only there a global policy forged. All agreed that some general blueprint by which the complex activities of a society at war could be coordinated was essential, to map out some long term direction. The eclectic attrition of bombing-blockade-subversion-raids-propaganda and overseas operations was what had been, in any case, the general focus of British strategic thought. But this necessary attempt to look beyond the needs of the moment clashed unavoidably with those needs and was influenced by preconceived assumptions about relative structural and military power and prospects.

The starting point for the thorough review of future grand strategy lay in the combination of the grand strategic assumptions generated before the war and the instinctive reaction to the collapse of May and June. As early as 1936 Whitehall thought

centred on warding off a knockout blow and then building up resources in measured steps to conserve economic power, the "4th arm" of strategy, in order to prevail in a long war. This pattern filled in as rearmament became more and more urgent. In 1937 the COS talked of "wearing Germany down with her inferior resource base"[48] and Cabinet in 1938 was "looking to our staying power and our capacity to mobilize our resources."[49] The COS last pre-war appreciation in February 1939 looked to a long three phase war: defensive consolidation, buildup, general offensive.[50] This thesis rested on the beliefs that the French Army could hold and that the German economy was vulnerable to pressure. Tinted memories of World War I had left British leaders abhorrent of any continental campaign and leaning to a more varied strategic posture. The quick French collapse reinforced this drift and entrenched the determination to avoid the German Army and pursue the supposedly successful eclectic efforts of 1918. Once it was decided to pursue victory, the loss of the defensive shield fostered this instinctive turn to other directions because there was no other way. Economic attrition would work because it was the only "weapon" available. Fatally flawed intelligence confirmed this nimble shift.

The various British intelligence organs had by 1939 completely misread the nature of the German economy. It was assumed that Germany was economically on a war footing, had little margin left to expand war production, faced serious resource shortages, and had built up huge stocks to win a quick war and avoid long term strain.[51] This was seriously in error, but the outbreak of war further reduced the flow of intelligence and Whitehall adopted the "common sense" assumption that Germany had now launched all out war production.[52] All British estimates of German production were set too high,[53] and the grave miscalculation that the German war economy was "taut" was generally accepted. Oil was felt to be its Achilles heel. Germany relied on imported stocks and expensive synthetic processes. It was felt that this most basic war material could be disrupted and thus the whole war effort dislocated. Dalton felt this could happen by April 1941, noting MEW saw it as "a date at the end of a string, which can be drawn nearer by air bombing on synthetic plants and stocks and by other measures of many kinds, designed to reduce imports."[54] MEW was supported by the Committee on Axis Oil Supplies, chaired by Lord Hankey. Hankey's committee reported that their conquests

would actually strain the German position and felt that pressure on oil and transportation systems could produce decisive results; it was estimated that German surplus could rapidly be cut to one and a half million tons. Hankey concluded that if Russian and Middle Eastern sources were withheld and pressure proved effective it "...might, within a comparatively short period, deprive the German command of real freedom of strategy."[55] Cabinet acceptance of this report meant the prevailing concept of long term attrition was reaffirmed despite the failure to ward off the knockout blow, sustained by the belief that there were choke points which could be pressed to lessen the disparity. The JPC brought this assumption into their request on 1 July to "commence the preparation of an appreciation leading to a precise definition of the policy which should now govern our war effort and the future conduct of the war."[56]

The JPC argued that the vague papers of May had only generally outlined the case for continuing the war. They favoured an immediate, thorough study of long term goals to define strategy and structure which would then be discussed with the U.S. and the Dominions. Cabinet had already agreed to a thorough review of strategy, a comprehensive study of war programs and economic prospects, and a concerted appeal for assistance and frank discussions with the U.S. and the Dominions.[57] The COS readily agreed to the proposal and the JPC launched a major Whitehall survey of war policy as a whole which emerged along the above three broad lines. They aimed from the start to define a general but flexible "master plan" to which production and allocation and the relative sizes and roles of the services could be tailored, to anchor national war policy. The pressure to articulate plans not just for survival but for victory grew steadily,[58] and the JPC, MEW and supply department officials worked intensely through July and August. Their efforts were inextricably bound to relations with the nation on whose power and benevolence British hopes ultimately rested, the United States.

British leaders had long despaired of U.S. policy but were well aware of latent American power. Churchill especially was convinced that the countries shared real vital interests in world affairs which could bring them together. He moved to nurture a "special relationship" and sway U.S. policy by a sustained personal correspondence with President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, which set the whole tone of Anglo-American

relations. Churchill wanted a full alliance from the start and set about to nudge Roosevelt, by increments, to push U.S. assistance to the Allies to the political limits. Early proposals stressed the need for massive U.S. financial assistance and supplies, immediate aid to combat the U-Boats, and greater assistance to offset Japanese pressure. All these sentiments were expressed as early as 15 May in a major telegram in which Churchill warned the new situation would greatly increase reliance on the U.S. and only really radical policies might suit:

> "We shall go on paying dollars for as long as we can, but I should like to feel reasonably sure that when we can pay no more, you will give us the stuff all the same."[59]

This telegram set off a careful private and public lobby by which British leaders attempted to convince Roosevelt that Britain needed and deserved aid and that it would not be wasted. Contacts flourished - a scientific mission brought over research secrets, supply orders were escalated, the whole tone of intercourse was galvanized by a sense of shared crisis. Roosevelt launched a general escalation of war preparedness but was forced to steer a tortuous election year course. Two initiatives did emerge, one public and one private, which really elevated Anglo-American co-operation to an embryonic partnership. In a complex series of negotiations dogged by political factors on both sides, 50 old American destroyers were dramatically donated to Britain by a clever legal manoeuvre publicly presented by FDR as quid pro quo for the lease of some British bases in the Western hemisphere; others were leased outright as gifts. The destroyers were useful, but Whitehall really accepted the move for its public signal of American solidarity in the hope that:

> "It might well prove to the first step in constituting an Anglo-Saxon bloc or indeed a decisive point in history."[60]

An equally vital private initiative led to the initiation of covert strategic discussions between American staff officers and the COS and JPC from late August. The U.S. Navy (USN) had had talks with the RN in 1937-1938, and their RAINBOW plans in cases envisaged coalition warfare with the British. But just as the political will for military expansion coalesced, the German victories wrecked staff assumptions. However, Roosevelt was willing to gamble on British survival and accepted a proposal for staff

talks in London.[61] Pressed by events and their leaders, both sides proved surprisingly frank.

The COS outlined British views to the American officers on 31 August. The concepts of economic attrition, confidence in home defence, stress on the Mediterranean, and overseas possessions as vital strategic factors were all clearly outlined. A call for greater U.S. assistance led to a discussion which crystallized the central issues. Rear Admiral Ghormley, USN, asked bluntly whether the British were relying on both American economic aid and eventual active alliance. Air Chief Marshal Sir Cyril Newall confirmed American economic aid was "fundamental to our whole strategy, "but dodged the latter as a "matter of high policy." Ghormley then asked how the British envisaged final victory. Newall's reply pointed to the essence and newly emerging balance of grand strategic thought:

> "...in the long run it was inevitable that the Army should deliver the coup de grace. We hoped, however, for a serious weakening in the morale and efficiency of the German fighting machine if not a complete breakdown, which would make the task of the Army much more easy [sic]..."[62]

This frank exposition to a neutral was testament to how clearly Whitehall now perceived the need for U.S. assistance. But large uncertainties remained and for now American aid could only be considered as additional to British efforts. Contacts proceeded on this basis as more detailed co-operation was pursued. Yet a basis had been laid which reflected the fact that the American factor, in yet undefined form, was becoming the undercurrent of all British grand strategic thought. Nowhere was this clearer than in the other vital aspect of central policy, the reorganization of economy and industry for total war.

Before the war a broad political consensus that rapid rearmament would upset both social peace and foreign policy, a strong Treasury grip on spending, and a conviction that the export trade which formed the perceived basis of economic power could be disrupted by large war production, combined to hinder industrial rearmament. The poor general state of the British industrial infrastructure, eroded by years of depression, neglect, atomization, and bitter labour strife, further aggravated attempts to rearm.[63] As a result, although remarkably durable overall munitions programs were

belatedly in place by 1939, the government was convinced that it could neither afford nor needed to accept draconian measures to organize the national mobilization effort. Progress was made but by April 1940 first reports indicated that munitions production had expanded by only 11%, one fifth of the level deemed essential. The margin of inferiority behind the Germans was not being cut and departments were engaged in a loose scramble for undirected resources.[64] The German breakthrough exploded complacent assumptions and gave Churchill a political climate conducive to the great acceleration of effort he had long desired. Cabinet did not move immediately to adopt a really total war footing, but the basic principle of total powers to direct national life was agreed on 22 May.[65] It was too early for drastic detailed steps but basic principles were set towards which the pragmatic Whitehall machine could grope. A COS call for the acceleration of existing programs set the trend for review.[66] This concept of building on existing programs made good sense given the momentum built up by industrial efforts. It was also well suited to sorting out the intimate links of strategy and structure in the midst of a crisis which forced a short term focus on immediate priorities.

The JPC brought supply department officials together at a crucial meeting on 13 August to determine whether Britain could meet the new level of effort deemed essential. Hitherto, they noted, service programs and thus military strength had been tied to industrial capacity. But now it seemed that a greatly intensified war called for stronger forces at levels set by strategic forecasts. It seemed that production would have to be related to strategy. Was this possible? Whitehall thought had been drifting this way for weeks, but solid information on real prospects was only barely beginning to come forth. Nevertheless, answers could not wait. Manpower and machine tools were singled out as limiting factors, and it was stressed that the margin of "resources to task" was so tight that it called for the closest possible co-ordination and linkage to strategic plans. But it was implied that if much more vigourous conversion to war production, greater U.S. assistance, and better controls were secured, a decision to relate structure to strategy could be risked.[67] Inside its tight network it was clear that Whitehall was moving towards a seminal national war policy decision. Lindemann warned Churchill on 18 August that it was now felt that to make a respectable war effort, "say 30 to 40% of our

national effort," civil consumption would have to be severely reduced and U.S. supplies greatly increased.[68] The greatest of exertions would be necessary, and it still could not be done alone. In uneven symmetry, the definition of an approach to the Americans and the vision of their possible role emerged apace. The need for American assistance was widely agreed, but two antithetical policies were advocated on the critical questions of general financial resources and orders from American industry. Linking the two was the question of national finance.

Before May 1940 the Treasury adhered to a voluntarist approach, convinced that healthy export levels were economically vital and unwilling to stir political friction.[69] The new government brought in tougher taxation but fell short of gripping the economy as a whole. New Chancellor Kingsley Wood shared officials' desire to maintain healthy levels of exchange, credits and exports, seen by the Treasury to be long term necessities. Arthur Greenwood, surveying policy towards U.S. supplies, argued on 25 June that the gravity of the crisis meant that a massive unrestricted move to expand U.S. supplies was necessary to "provide a fair chance of victory." His call for outright economic alliance was rejected by Wood, who insisted that the credit imbalance was already grave and any further extension would risk Britain's accumulated wealth.[70] The crux of the matter was that only a mobilized American economy could supply the resources both to enable British production to escalate and to fill the margin it could not meet, but Britain could only pay for these by large exports which would prevent escalated war production. Britain could either curtail its war effort or face ruination in attempting to secure the vital supplies. The very low level at which American production still ran cut through the ambivalent feelings about risking solvency on U.S. aid, as the escalating crisis underlined Greenwood's case that current needs were overriding. Sir Arthur Salter, representative of the Ministry of Shipping in Washington, reported that the U.S. government was now launching a long laid economic mobilization plan. Because the nature of large scale production meant that decisions now would determine the volume and balance of output through 1942, the British had now to make out a comprehensive list of ultimate needs to spark large expansion and secure their share. Salter concluded that really massive claims could generate such momentum that they might well induce the Americans to

solve the credit problem and even hasten U.S. entry into the war.[71] This was strongly supported by Beaverbrook, Lindemann, and the JPC, and accompanied by greatly increased orders, especially for aircraft.

These pressures induced Wood to bring matters to a head. On 21 August he circulated in strict secrecy a paper which warned that the escalating orders from the U.S. would wipe out British gold reserves by December.[72] Beaverbrook responded the next day with the pithy conclusion:

> "We cannot match the Germans in manpower and must, therefore, overcome our deficiency by machines."[73]

Cabinet took Wood's warning seriously but felt that it was a question of time. If Britain could hold out until after the U.S. elections, serious assistance could be expected; but, in the meantime, real risks were necessary. Churchill concluded:

> "He agreed, therefore, with the Supply Ministers that we should continue to pledge large scale orders in North America. If the military position should unexpectedly deteriorate, we should have to pledge everything that we had for the sake of victory, giving the U.S., if necessary, a lien on any and every part of British industry."[74]

This rhetoric reflected the current intensity of the Battle of Britain and did not represent a decision to cast centuries of accumulated assets into an all out gamble. But it did reflect the realization that the goal could only be pursued by generating more power than the Empire could concentrate. This meant making a commitment to the Americans, in the hope that they would ultimately act as if the British struggle was their own. This seminal decision to fight beyond Britain's means brought to a head the strategic and structural reviews which would confirm it.

On 29 August Minister of Supply Herbert Morrison reported the general conclusions as to what British power was thought capable of and the implications of this for grand strategy.[75] Morrison warned that the German situation had actually improved and new conquests had eased Germany's economic strain. Citing a complex set of statistics he argued that after the loss of France the relative power ratio of Germany to the U.K. alone stood as 20 to 3. A total war effort and totally planned economy was imperative, with greater mobilization of manpower and resources and improved collection

of information and controls. Policy towards U.S. supplies needed close co-ordination. Service programs appeared feasible if bomb damage was bearable, but clashes for scarce resources were unavoidable. They would have to be overcome by allocations and constant adjustments based on much better statistics. This new economy could support a strategy of securing air supremacy and conducting carefully selected peripheral campaigns to wear down Axis power enough to launch mechanized invasions to ignite uprisings and implode that power. No more was possible, and success would depend on progress at the "sharp end." This more sober estimate of relative power set off a debate on the size and roles of the armed forces, which Churchill moved to control. Convinced that he, personally, was the ideal candidate to co-ordinate strategy and structure, he drafted a proposed directive which defined the kind of war Britain should pursue.[76] It was a sweeping pungent survey which reflected the shock Churchill felt about the collapse of the Western front and his belief that a new revolution in warfare would allow a strategy of powerful air and mechanized forces to offset relative inferiority.

The spectres of 1916 and 1940 shone through the basic theme:

> "This war is not, however, a war of masses of men hurling masses of shells at each other. It is by devising new weapons, and above all, by superior scientific leadership that we shall best cope with the enemy's superior strength..."

The call for a science and technology war and Britain's strategic prospects pointed to an obvious priority:

> "The Navy can lose us the war but only the Air Force can win it. Therefore our supreme effort must be to gain overwhelming mastery in the air. The Fighters are our salvation, but the Bombers alone provide the means to victory..."

This emphasis on the most "technical" service, and the only one capable of immediate riposte, reflected the perspective of the moment. It has been overemphasized by historians at the expense of a more lasting vital theme. The RAF's leading role was to be "subject to what is said later." Rather than a fixed pledge to one track strategy, Churchill laid down a vision of maximum efforts by all three services with only their relative priority and composition altered to adapt to needs as they arose. Home defence was priority, but only a starting point. The blockade now seemed less promising and the Navy should move aggressively to defeat the U-Boats and control the seas. The Army

would remain large but be altered to a focus on peripheral and "igniter" campaigns, with its armoured component increased, at the expense of naval building. Here, not in the ringing rhetoric of victory by bombing, was the thrust of Churchill's policy - the "wear down" concept was acceptable but it was to be pursued in all three elements, with air and mechanized forces as the new "grinding agents." Implicit in this thesis was the idea that there was to be a definite sequence of strategic priority - airpower would carry the brunt of reducing Axis power but all three services would carry the final offensive. This offered a flexible opportunistic approach to the eclectic attrition of a stronger opponent and called for balanced forces which would be able to adapt to changing circumstances. Above all it aimed to buy time to mobilize power without irreversible strategic or structural commitments. This was wise, as Britain was so weak in September 1940 that fixed dispositions would have been foolhardy. Churchill concluded not with rhetoric about bombing, but by a perceptive warning that the British had eight months to improve their overall power before serious escalation of operations could be expected.[77]

The "wear down" outline which Churchill proposed to define was submitted to Cabinet in final form on 4 September. This was the first of only two efforts ever made to survey in one document all aspects of the war in a general strategic framework. In 61 pages the economic and military situations on both sides were reviewed, enemy intentions estimated, options and prospects in all occupied and neutral areas detailed, full forecasts of service requirements offered, and detailed friendly and Axis Orders of Battle listed. All the basic perceptions regarding grand strategy which marked British thought for the next three years were expressed or implied. Current expectations were stated. The end result was an attempt to blueprint the execution of grand strategy. Germany was identified as the major enemy and a mortal threat. It was felt that its economic situation forced it to seek quick victory, but it was nevertheless depicted as an intimidating foe who for some time would be militarily much stronger and retain the initiative. A U.K. invasion might come but an intense air/sea blockade and a big drive in the Mediterranean was more likely; all must be faced. The current level of 205 field divisions would remain but armoured divisions would increase from 10 to 20 by 1942; 125 divisions would be available for operations, with 45 of the remainder committed to watching the

Soviets. The air force was very strong and would remain so, but its strength and the navy's would be affected in uncertain ways by program decisions. Italian forces were virtually written off as a wasting asset. British strategy would have to be flexible and opportunistic, poised to ward off German pressure and respond to events. But a general policy framework, to direct efforts and hopefully produce forces of the right type and strength, was seen to be imperative. All components were assessed. Economic warfare and German vulnerability were reaffirmed but more hesitantly. An all out effort was essential and Imperial resources had to be held to deny them to the enemy. But as blockade was slow and uncertain it was now to be complemented by the maximum effort of the armed forces.

The RN would have to be concentrated in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean and built up to be able to apply powerful versatile seapower in all phases of the war. The position in the Far East had to be held but the U.S. had to be relied on to take the lead. Only a small force for the Indian Ocean would be available; but, if the Japanese pressed Australia and New Zealand directly, the fleet would abandon the Mediterranean and charge to the rescue. The RAF would take the lead in Malaya but its own main efforts would be closer to home - home defence, theatre operations, and especially an all out strategic bombing campaign against Germany. Bombing was to give teeth to the blockade and directly reduce German cohesion and power; results were already seen as good but escalation deemed essential. The new role of the Army most clearly reflected the revised assumptions and direction of grand strategic thought:

> "The strength of the German army and air force preclude any possibility of land operations designed to inflict direct defeat on the main German armies, until such time as they have been undermined and weakened by blockade, air action, subversive activities and propaganda. The part that land operations play in the defeat of Germany is likely, however, to be a growing one... As the strength of our forces develops, we must aim at occupying outlying areas within striking distance of those occupied by the enemy, the possession of which will facilitate the actions of the other services, tighten the blockade and, wherever appropriate, encourage the inhabitants to oppose the enemy. Such areas should be chosen so as to enable the enemy to be engaged where he is not able to deploy his full strength... In the final phase, when enemy resistance is disintegrating as the result of blockade and air action, we must be capable of entering Germany itself, imposing our will on the enemy."

This last phase was to be spearheaded by mechanized forces, debouched by landing craft, under strong air cover, to ignite resistance revolts.

With service roles defined, the COS moved to control the more unconventional efforts. Detailed reviews of SOE's prospects found them favourable enough to warrant support, especially in Poland and Czechoslovakia, but with a strict new condition:

> Subversive operations must be regarded as a strictly supplementary course of action, and must conform with regular operations undertaken as part of our main strategic plan."

Tight central control by London was called for, to preclude premature uprisings and build up forces for the final phase "igniter" operations, as an essential auxiliary. Propaganda received lip service - formally agreed as essential but felt to depend on Allied success in the field. Diplomacy should conform by appeasing Japan, conciliating Spain, defining French policy, stirring Soviet-German trouble, and above all securing U.S. support. Structural mobilization was exhaustively reviewed. The calls to relate structure to strategy and tighten controls, and the fears of bottlenecks, were repeated. Important new views regarding U.S. supplies and overall prospects were expressed. It was felt that the Americans must be pushed not only to mobilize but also to consider American and British resources as one "common pool," with a body organized to harmonize efforts. This went **beyond** most current Whitehall opinion and reflected the COS pessimism regarding British capability. The production lag and uncertain expansion was so serious that they called for a prodigious effort to convert to war production, with labour intake half again as high as hitherto even to approach set targets. Draconian measures were needed, especially with manpower which was already seen, albeit uneasily and vaguely, as an ultimate limit of national power.

Service needs and Orders of Battle were linked to recommended overall strategy. Assuming U.S. credits and support, increased Japanese pressure, and uncertain Soviet and French moves, the U.K. was to be secured and a great buildup of power undertaken through 1941. Intermediate operations in the Mediterranean, to secure positions and overstretch enemy resources, were to complement constant attrition by bombing, blockade, subversion and raids. Opportunities for bolder action could be taken, but,

even if the U.S. entered the war, expansion should remain aimed at readiness to go on a loosely defined grand strategic offensive only by the spring of 1942 and only on strict terms - if efforts to "wear down" German power had succeeded enough first to escalate current efforts and later to secure conditions "when numerically inferior forces can be employed with good chance of success, to reestablish a striking force on the Continent with which we can enter Germany and impose our terms." Short term production priorities were to remain - aircraft, merchant ships and naval vessels. The RN was to have its suspended balanced program restored, to expand current strengths of 13 capital ships, 6 aircraft carriers and 57 cruisers to 18, 12 and 100 respectively by 1944, with equivalent increases in smaller units. The Army was to retain the original U.K.-Dominions-Imperial target of 55 field divisions, now seen as the maximum possible to equip. The U.K. was to provide 34. While the current emphasis on home defence was to be maintained,* four divisions were to be sent to Middle East Command, and two to Malaya, by spring 1941. Twenty one divisions were to defend overseas positions, leaving a global potential of under 30 for offensive operations. The overall composition of the Army was also tentatively laid out. The RAF was to expand four fold. By spring 1942, 420 squadrons of over 6,300 first line aircraft and ample reserves were to be ready, including 270 combat squadrons in the U.K. and 90 overseas. Fighter Command would more than double to 125 squadrons. Bomber Command would be the real power, its 600 odd aircraft to become 103 heavy bomber squadrons of 1,600 first line aircraft, all in the U.K. Only 336 aircraft were slated to ensure the defence of Malaya. Most of the rest were tagged for Middle East Command. Army Co-Operation squadrons were to amount to a mere token. Provided there was steady growth in U.S. supply, real progress in training capacity and no excessive operational burdens or bomb damage before 1942, success was assumed. A slow but remorseless Bomber Command buildup was the guiding aim. The thrust of the whole paper and its guiding assumptions as a grand strategic program were succinctly expressed in one revealing paragraph:

** See Appendix A*

> "It is, however, quite impossible to forecast with certainty the rate of decline of German strength and morale... It must obviously be greatly to our advantage to achieve victory as early as possible; we must therefore always be ready to take advantage of a favourable situation, and to seize really profitable opportunities as they arise, while avoiding commitments beyond our strength in the unjustified expectation of a short cut to victory."[78]

The reception of these strategic and structural outlines confirmed that a general consensus had been forged in Whitehall, but one which left scope for wide differences of emphasis. The COS paper was not taken by the DC(O) until 15 October. Churchill accepted its spirit and main conclusions but insisted it be regarded only as an informal staff study.[79] He resisted its caution and the attempt to lay down detailed grand strategy in a fluid situation; Beaverbrook flatly rejected the whole concept. The paper was accepted only as an informal basis. However on 30 September the full Cabinet had already approved the Morrison policy of all round tri-service expansion and maximum mobilization and the relation of structure to strategic need.[80] The result was an irreversible decision to launch a maximum effort in all areas, based on an unrealistic outline which suffered from sketchy intelligence and internal compromises. The whole COS paper was the result of multiple compromises which in the end ensured that all interests had a place in policy. The assumption of German vulnerability and the central role of economic warfare, coupled with expanded SOE operations, were accepted uneasily by the Staffs,[81] who exacted a high price. Their insistence on conventional buildup entrenched the services and more regular operations as the main thrust of strategy and reservoir of resources, to which all other efforts would be related. The Staffs thus reasserted their dominance, but accepted the basic assumptions of relative weakness and possible enemy vulnerability which linked the whole concept and ensured the extension of wide efforts. Nevertheless, the decision had been taken to defeat a militarily stronger enemy by fighting a war beyond British means while avoiding a decisive ground campaign.

Whitehall operated by making compromises to secure general support; also, the war continued and decisions on future direction had to be made. But this consensus was strategically artificial. This was partly due to belief in enemy vulnerability, but the

obvious missing link was the decision to gamble on U.S. alliance. Here was the logic behind an all out effort and a 1942 target for the offensive. If British power could be built up while intermediate operations succeeded, a stronger Britain could forge a new coalition and ensure that existing efforts were adopted as its grand strategy. Weakness, the decision to fight beyond their means, and an imperative need to settle structural policy all forced British leaders to adopt so early a policy based on so much uncertainty, in order to buy time. But this strategy now also called for an intense effort which demanded relatively quick victory to preclude national exhaustion, yet proposed slowly accumulating efforts to conform to national weakness. Inherited atrophy of power left the Churchill government with an insoluble dilemma. They addressed it by deciding to push beyond the limit and trust to fate. However, the perception of weakness deepened while the clashes over the balance of effort within "wear down" reinforced it as settled policy. This left British leaders with a real paradox: the momentum of their own early efforts entrenched strategic assumptions as fixed beliefs, which became impervious to circumstances which gradually eroded them. This was not yet clear, but it was to become the central problem of British grand strategy.

Through autumn 1940 into 1941 refinements and adjustments occurred in strategic perceptions and the "wear down" outline, but events remained dominated by the enemy. The threat of invasion receded, only to be followed by a sustained night bombing offensive, the infamous "Blitz." The "Blitz" dominated national life, threatened the whole war effort, and ensured that the direct threat to the U.K. remained the overall priority.[82] However, in response to enemy initiatives, the current operational focus shifted to the Mediterranean. Italian offensives in Egypt and East Africa soon bogged down. Far more urgent were Hitler's moves to bring Vichy and Spain into the war and expand German operations, and the Italian attack on Greece. Both failed but raised the spectre of more serious Axis efforts. This lent urgency to British efforts to press the Axis where they were accessible. From events and deliberations several decisions emerged - to continue to reinforce the theatre with air and ground forces, to form a Balkan bloc and regain a toehold in Europe, and to press tactical offensives to clear

Africa and the central Mediterranean. The Air Staff, supported by Beaverbrook, resisted calls to send out forces from the U.K.; but they were overcome by conflicting pressures. It was decided Middle East Command would be strengthened by the equivalent of 6 squadrons by replacing old aircraft with newer types and raising squadron establishments.[83] Italian troubles in Greece offered a chance to strike at vital Axis interests and the equivalent threat of German intervention. The COS considered the threat to the Middle East itself serious and warned that British weakness made it imperative to rally support in the area.[84] But weakness also hurt British diplomacy. The Yugoslavs resisted pressure to join the Allies. The Turks refused to activate the existing alliance and, demanding many more arms than could be supplied, adopted a cautious policy. Political pledges forced aid to the Greeks but only 5 squadrons, taken from Egypt, could be found. By year's end the British were at their wits end trying to press the Greeks to accept a piecemeal RAF buildup and risk German retaliation.

These developments reminded London the area was one linked theatre. The RN reinforced Malta for use as a base for light forces to attack Italian supply convoys, and on 11 November scored a major success with a carrier borne air attack on the Italian base at Taranto. But the central Mediterranean remained contested, which only heightened Churchill's desire for action in Africa before the Germans moved.[85] Eden was sent out to press Wavell and returned to report on 12 November that offensives to clear East Africa and disrupt the Italians in Egypt were being readied.[86] Churchill rejoiced, and agreed after long debate to accept the Egypt campaign as priority and settle for a cautious intent to exploit any success gained.[87] Wavell's attack, operation COMPASS, succeeded quickly in early December. This raised hopes for the rapid conquest of Libya. It clinched the decisions to press this offensive before all else and reinforce the theatre steadily in the first half of 1941. This escalation in the Mediterranean only aggravated the French situation. There were serious clashes in October over how to reconcile a serious blockade and support for de Gaulle with feelers to Vichy. Secret contacts with Vichy were pursued, supported by Halifax, who pressed for flexibility, and the COS, who wanted fewer burdens. But Churchill, Dalton and Attlee exploited a lukewarm Vichy attitude to insist on a stronger blockade. However,

friction with de Gaulle and a search for options led to covert approaches to induce Vichy to allow their northwest African forces to throw in with the Allies. By late December plans were laid to send 6 divisions - the whole overseas reinforcement program - if the offer came.[88] But support for de Gaulle was continued and the overtaxed RN could not enforce the blockade. Policy was as diffuse as ever.

Affairs were no better in the Far East. Tensions declined enough to allow the British to reopen the Burma Road in October, but the unusual appointment of an Air Marshal as Supreme Commander-in-Chief reflected the very low priority of the area. Churchill pressed hard to pare the area to the bone to help more active theatres. The unavoidable need of American assistance led to early November agreement for secret staff talks with them and the Dutch. It was decided to insist that Imperial positions had to be held for power and political reasons, but demonstrate how Imperial forces had been forced to concentrate against Germany. A minimum garrison was to hold any attack for three months but current forces needed to be increased, which made a USN commitment essential.[89] Matters rested on this makeshift basis, with no serious reinforcements slated before May 1941.

Continued pressure on the U.K. was the real impediment to overseas reinforcement. This was greatly escalated in late 1940 by the widening battle in the Atlantic. Stretched too thinly to cover Mediterranean and U.K. needs, the RN was unable to ward off reinforced surface raiders and U-Boats now in distant waters, and shipping losses rose steeply. The Admiralty asked on 3 October to be allowed to return escort vessels to convoy duty but the DC(O) granted only minor transfers.[90] As import rates had dropped to 43.5 million tons from 48 the previous year, an appeal was made to Cabinet, backed by the Ministries of Shipping and Food, but it too failed. But new night attack tactics by the U-Boats plus more raider sorties pushed losses even higher. On 21 November the Admiralty reported that it still only had 40 escorts in the vital Western Approaches and could only have 80 by 1941, which would make it hard to extend convoy further out to sea.[91] Only the fact that there were less than 20 U-Boats and only sporadic major raiders at sea saved the British from crippling losses at this time. The need to increase greatly naval and especially air forces to contest this now

serious threat was slowly becoming clear. However, the Metropolitan RAF also remained obliged to dance to the enemy's tune.

Fighter Command's buildup was slow and its night efforts to contest the "Blitz" ineffective. Coastal Command became the focus of an acrimonious debate when the Admiralty, supported by Beaverbrook, demanded it be strengthened and put under its control. The Air Staff objected to this as a diversion to "defensive" operations and a detriment to efficient control of airpower. Churchill was swayed by the "offensive" label of the bombing offensive and backed the Air Staff. On 4 December a compromise was reached which agreed to some expansion but conceded operational control only by the Admiralty.[92] This allowed the Air Staff to retain control of air resources and focus its efforts on Bomber Command. However, that campaign seemed to be having little effect and the Command seemed stagnant. The Air Staff responded to its critics by insisting more resources were needed, tartly observing, "When bigger bombers were available it would be possible to carry a more effective load."[93] But the need and desire to strike back at Germany increased pressure to escalate and broaden the offensive. The Air Staff held out for selective attacks but by late October accepted damage to inhabited areas as equal priority. Churchill led calls for deliberate, retaliatory terror attacks, which were debated by Cabinet on 12 December. The Air Staff argued this would ruin the "long term plan" of destroying choke points, but both cases were marred by uncertainty about the bombers' real effect on "morale" or oil targets. One large raid as a trial was accepted as a compromise.[94] To protect their desired strategy of selected attack on choke points, the Air Staff then proposed, in late December, an all out attack on oil targets. Their argument reflected the sense of urgency fostered by the escalation of the war and pressures to change strategy:

> "the period to June 1941 offers us not merely the best but perhaps the only real chance of so dislocating Germany's war economy through an offensive versus her oil resources as decisively to influence her strategy and hamper her war effort."

Success was pledged if all Bomber Command and SOE efforts were concentrated and 3,420 sorties mounted in four months. This assumed the attacks would be effective.

The COS were not fully swayed but generally agreed that concentration of effort was imperative.[95] The sense of time pressing seemed paramount.

The "unconventional" campaigns controlled from the centre experienced different degrees of upheaval in autumn 1940, depending on both events and the perceived role of the particular effort. SOE made no real progress at all, hampered by disputes over its mandate and resources. The COS tried, by a directive of 25 November, to entrench their view of SOE operations as subordinate and supplementary. The familiar theme of outlying operations, escalating bombing and blockade, and "wearing down" Axis resistance, limited by resources and the need to respond to enemy moves, was restated in full. It was hoped to knock out Italy first. SOE operations were to be "planned on a very big and comprehensive scale" and related to areas of prospective operations. SOE was to be ready to assist on all such areas, revealingly speculated as Italy, North Africa, Norway and North-West Europe, but its main tasks would be:

> "to prepare the way for the final stage of the war when, by co-ordinated and organized revolts in the occupied countries and by a popular rising against the Nazis partly in Germany, direct and decisive operations against Germany herself may be possible."[96]

Such ambitious prospects seemed unreal for an organization still struggling to establish itself in the field. This indicated the COS desire that SOE concentrate on the long term "igniter" concept and firmly grip continental resistance, and reflected the "wear down" assumptions and SOE's already declining role.[97]

Economic warfare also lost real ground in the field despite remaining central in thought, because of the serious relative weakness of British forces. Dalton remained convinced that the brittle German economy could be disrupted in "months, not years," but made this claim in a broadcast to the U.S. which acknowledged heavy reliance on bombing and a need for U.S. aid in this effort.[98] Rigorous blockade simply could not be enforced and diplomacy was employed in unsuccessful efforts to control the haemorrhages from the Soviet Union, Vichy, Iberia and Scandinavia. The blockade was maintained but slipped from MEW's hands as its bite diminished.

Combined Operations fared no better. Charged with planning raids under brigade size, many pinprick schemes were offered. But Keyes favoured big schemes, and his

first, a raid on the island of Pantellaria, off Malta, lost support as planning dragged on.[99] Keyes continued to struggle to establish his organization, battling service suspicions and retention of forces for contingency operations*. Several factors linked these disparate efforts - the general scarcity of all resources, the COS determination to control the balance of mobilization, and the COS natural preference for their own forces. However, even though "wear down" was evolving, its basic assumptions ensured a continued place for the auxiliary efforts while their roles were reassessed.

The attempt to reinvigorate propaganda efforts in late 1940 was another reaction to physical weakness and again raised the basic premise of war policy. Fears of public discontent under the "Blitz," and pressures from the Labour Party and the Ministry of Information to articulate war aims and a post-war vision to challenge Nazi concepts, encouraged focus on a long term vision. A committee was formed to report on aims "beyond the defeat of Germany," reinforced by calls for a directive to insert propaganda in grand strategy, to use "future hopes" to offset current weakness.[100] Then Chamberlain's declining health forced his resignation and a major political shuffle on 3 October. Churchill assumed the leadership of the Conservative Party. The War Cabinet was enlarged by the additions of Bevin and Anderson, the latter as Lord President to take over the "civil committees." Morrison moved into the Home Office. Later, in December, after Lothian's untimely death, Halifax was exiled to Washington as Ambassador and Eden moved into the Foreign Office and War Cabinet. The net result was to strengthen greatly the political positions of Churchill and Labour. This, the "Blitz," and an immense rise in Churchill's popularity further reduced vestigial calls for more moderate policy.[101] Beaverbrook's influence increased, through his own drive and Churchill's support; but his reckless style led to major clashes with Bevin which mirrored a wider clash between Churchill and Labour. While Labour hoped to fight the war and concurrently implement social reform, Churchill insisted that long term plans were premature and all efforts must be focused on the war. Propaganda was the first victim.

* *See below, p.112*

A compromise draft was submitted on 15 November which called for coherent efforts to weaken enemy fibre and strengthen friendly nerve, realistically linked to current strategy and with vague pledges of post-war reconstruction. Cabinet formally agreed on 20 November but ordered reconstruction visions to be muted and general.[102] The argument that a great opportunity to reorganize propaganda was missed[103] does not, however, seem convincing. Churchill's opposition to ambitious post-war pledges by a disparate coalition facing total war was a logical course. At the serious operating level the war demanded all efforts. The coalition, comprising extremes, could bear no more. Labour continued its effort to plan current and future reform but long term effort was relegated. As one scholar aptly observed, Churchill's new strength meant reform "would have to flow around him."[104]

Political divisions interacted with the multiple uncertainties of accelerating industrial mobilization under enemy fire to hamper efforts to revamp structural policy. Again, the main tracks were interlocked efforts to escalate conversion to war production and settle policies regarding U.S. aid. The complexity of the task and the strength of departments involved defied the efforts of central committees to reconcile claims for resources. This left departments who agreed only on the basic need for all out mobilization scrambling to impose their interpretation of priorities within parameters set by unavoidable needs and the "wear down" outline. The COS ruled that finished equipment should be allocated to the U.K. first, with 40%, the Middle East and all other overseas theatres second, with 50%, then finally to India with 10%; if feasible, 5% could be diverted to supply Allied forces.[105] Allocations for production were another matter, complicated by the crisis priorities adopted in June. Greenwood appealed for the lifting of exclusive priorities and reversion to balanced allocations. Beaverbrook as usual took an extreme line - MAP's absolute priority needed strengthening. Lindemann argued for a compromise: streamline priorities, but cover other needs by allocations. Churchill tried to split the difference in early September by ordering continued MAP priority but stronger central reviews.[106] This ambiguous effort failed, so Churchill drafted another directive to reconcile structure, strategy, and service roles. It reached the DC(0) on 15 October. Stress on high priority for technical development was repeated. MAP's

priority was to be reduced to "first but not exclusive." Escort vessels were now placed ahead of merchant ships. Major fleet units were to be delayed till 1941. The Army was to aim for 10 full armoured divisions, securing resources from naval cuts and increased U.S. orders, a provision protested by the other services but which Churchill insisted on as strategic necessity.[107] All these measures led to much greater equipment programs for all services, but production proved slow to respond to escalated conversion.* The shifts and turns of departments still trying to settle basic policy and improve their own information slowed it further still. Policy hitherto really amounted to little more than a settling of disputes and waiting to see what a reorganized war economy could do.

The ultimate limits to economic and political effort would depend on what society could bear. The government had to gauge accurately the public temper and discern what steps, given the nature of British society, would be beneficial and what counterproductive. But the government's own disparate nature and the blinkered upper middle class ethos of its antennae, the Ministry of Information, left it unsure whether the public would accept draconian measures and support total war. Morale, so important to the COS in May 1940, amounted to poorly defined jargon for public willingness to fight on. Whitehall's lack of comprehension of daily life was apparent in Information campaigns urging vigorous efforts, with a tone of exhortation and sheer bribery. It was even more clearly shown up by the overwhelming of civil relief preparations by the "Blitz," forcing government to cope with the mundane when it had spent years preparing for the apocalyptic. Morrison's arrival at the Home Office raised confidence, but the government was forced to learn as it went how to lead a society under attack. The curious result was that government ran behind public opinion, which prodded it to enforce greater compulsion and more equal sacrifice. As Information's confidence grew it turned more to efforts to **sustain** morale, but it remained a weak department in the Whitehall jungle.[108] The complex dialogue which empirically and incrementally shaped the massive state intrusion into daily life had only just begun by 1941, as Whitehall slowly realized the political scope for sterner measures.

* *See below, pp.47-49*

This political context was decisive regarding manpower policy, the ultimate limit to the balance and extent of national effort. The overall decline in heavy industrial skills and political cohesion wrought by the hard inter-war years set the tone for the new government's attempts to take firmer steps to obtain and better apportion manpower from the 20 odd million working population of the nation. All agreed on the need for much greater direction towards war production but important different priorities emerged. The Economic Section called for massive controlled transfers from civil industry and export trades. Statistical Branch urged more efficient use of current resources - more shifts, less restrictive practices, better co-ordination of allocations by Ministry of Labour.[109] Bevin, the new minister, was determined to use his power to prosecute the war and improve working conditions at the same time. As early as 4 July he appointed William Beveridge to survey the whole problem, and demanded wide powers to end the unregulated scramble for workers and the unco-ordinated location of capacity, and enforce the improvement of conditions.[110] The supply departments, led by Beaverbrook, all blamed their problems on inadequate labour supply and lax controls. Their calls for more dilution of skilled jobs, intense training, longer shifts, and tighter compulsion of individuals led to pressure on Bevin to adopt and enforce strong powers, in order to co-ordinate the allocation of workers and balance of programs. The September decisions, especially the large Army, led Bevin to warn that the new requirements could only be met by transferring men now reserved to industry.[111] Beaverbrook and Bevin openly fell out over the issue of conditions for and controls over individual workers. But already the pinch of overall supply limit was in sight, which only hardened both sides' views. As early as 6 December Bevin warned Churchill that as the pool of still unemployed "mobile" workers was now under 200,000, it would be necessary to adopt both stronger powers and better co-ordination to draw on and apportion hitherto untapped sources in "less essential" or non-employed sectors.[112]

It was as important to use manpower well as to obtain it and the three most crucial industries - aircraft production, heavy army equipment, and ship building - typified the problems that faced Whitehall in its efforts to maximize national power. The aircraft industry had long relied on government patronage and had a relatively solid

nucleus of capacity and expertise, but Beaverbrook's reckless short term focus and erratic management style greatly added to the problems of enemy attack which dogged efforts to expand its capacity. His relentless empire building and crisis focus upset long term design for nine vital months, poisoned Whitehall, and dislocated the whole industry. Beaverbrook's methods expanded production but at the price of industrial disarray. A long term program for all types was laid down in October, but it was based only on guesses of German strength and incentives based on extrapolations of current output, assuming MAP received all the resources it desired.[113] Little was yet known about ultimate capacity and efforts remained focused on current types. The real emergency indeed propelled this process, but Beaverbrook's contempt of committee compromises went too far and greatly weakened attempts to co-ordinate policy and allocations and reconcile departments' claims. As a result the emergency priority directives lasted too long and greatly worsened the problems the Ministry of Supply faced, especially the urgent need to produce more and better armoured fighting vehicles with a neglected industry.

Britain had invented the tank, but years of neglect left it with only a handful of experienced arms firms and forced a turn to general engineering firms to expand production. Matters were further confused by obsolete War Office doctrine which called for different types to fill different roles. All this plus too rigid an expansion by inexperienced firms resulted in underpowered under-gunned tanks. Churchill tried to grip the problem in the DC(S), but his sustained efforts resulted by November only in a Committee now aware of the problem of hasty expansion after long neglect and facing shortfalls in tank and all heavy equipment production. Fateful decisions to shorten design preparation and increase production of a new heavier "Infantry" tank were knee jerk reactions which led to unbalanced formations and a poor tank. By November 1940 Supply forecasts already relied on North America for nearly one third of total deliveries of tanks, the balance of "cruisers" to "infantry" tanks had been cut to less than one third, and the designer-producer-user chain was in disarray.[114]

Ship building was too specialized quickly to expand by outside firms, and had suffered the most from obsolescence, labour strife, rigid restrictive practices, the

Depression, and atomization. Links with the Admiralty were well developed but the new Ministry of Shipping faced a nightmarish task after the fall of France. Windfall gains from the Norwegian and Dutch fleets added to the merchant fleet which was still the world's largest; but the increased burdens on its carrying capacity from increased enemy disruption, and the need to escalate its own efforts far offset this gain, as the U.K. itself came under attack and its import needs came under closer scrutiny.[115] Cabinet was forced in September to acknowledge that given naval needs and overall capacity merchant production could not reach beyond 1¼ million tons a year. The ability of the railways to adapt to changed import patterns broke down under enemy attack, as Whitehall feared it would; the result was a bottleneck at the ports which put the whole transport system in crisis.[116] The crisis rendered all import estimates wildly uncertain and forced drastic steps. Above all, it was decided to rely on U.S. shipping production and reorganize import claims.[117]

Three basic themes ran through this whole effort to reorganize for total war. First, the economic structure was very uneven, with many industries dominated by small, cautious and ill equipped firms, riven by labour strife, and poorly positioned for rapid expansion. Second, the tightly knit governing elite strata had contributed to the decline in relative economic modernity by its atavistic contempt for technical training. Industrial life was dominated by the bias of the "practical man." Corelli Barnett convincingly demonstrated how class divisions, aristocratic atavism, and educational lethargy contributed to a decline in the general understanding that the Empire was a global economic and military responsibility as well as an asset.[118] The shock of 1940 drove the lesson home and brought out the third, and ironic, theme: the reliance on existing structure and practices as much as possible. The homogeneous nature of the dominant social elite actually fostered this, as scientists and professionals were absorbed into the formal machinery to reconcile the standing habits of their sectors with extended state controls. The result was an escalation of the perennial "battle of Whitehall," but slowly it became accepted that state control was necessary yet best employed as animator and referee. Necessity, more than philosophy, propelled the process of testing the limits to

find the right mix of controls and policies. In fact, the national war machine slowly made itself.

It should never be forgotten that Britain was the hub of a vast Empire, which Whitehall saw and treated as an inherent component of British power. The Empire's manpower, resources and strategic positions were vital factors in British grand strategy and its structural base. India and the self governing Dominions were more complicated assets but still regarded as British power factors. India, with its government and Army closely linked to British structures, was the Imperial strategic reserve. Its forces were rapidly expanded to meet the crisis and it was hoped to have nine field divisions for overseas by April 1941. But this exacerbated long standing political tension which from September made Whitehall acutely aware of the latent danger, not least to its own coalition, of Indian discontent, and fostered reluctance to rely too heavily on building up Indian industry.[119] Australia and New Zealand were more politically reliable and expanded their contributions steadily, but the former especially pressed for its voice in policy to increase commensurate with its efforts.[120] Their forces and Indian units were largely drawn into the Middle East and soon formed a major part of Wavell's command, which only increased Australian frustration. South Africa only barely entered the war and bitter political divisions kept the government tied to a policy of active deployment only in Africa. Canada also faced political limits on its war effort, held as the basis of policy by Prime Minister MacKenzie King.

King insisted on a war of "limited liability" and avoided pressing for an increased role in order to avoid domestic political divisions. But after France fell Canada became Britain's major ally. It was the only Dominion capable of serious industrial expansion, a major source of resources, and an important link to the U.S. Canada reacted to the crisis with a more serious war effort - doubling its field force, throwing its tiny air and naval forces into the U.K.'s battle, adopting unlimited industrial expansion aims, and improving bilateral ties with the U.S. But whereas Canada's voice in strategy did not increase, South Africa's did. The reasons were part general, part specific. First, British reaction to Dominion potential was belated and confused. Whitehall tended to act as if Dominion resources and forces were an extension of its own which, with "guidance,"

would conform to its policies. Second, Churchill personally restricted the circulation of vital information and saw the Dominions very much as junior partners who, like his colleagues, had to be cajoled and persuaded but would respond to his leadership. Consultation rested on occasional accurate but general briefings of Whitehall thought, usually to spark greater efforts.[121] South Africa was uniquely well informed but this rested on the personal long-standing connection between Churchill and Prime Minister Field-Marshal Smuts and the latter's prestige. Frequent Dominion Office efforts to increase consultation were rebuffed by the central machinery in general.[122] This was an important illustration of how Whitehall regarded its status as Imperial leader and how it made policy. The Empire was certainly an asset, but not an unalloyed one on either side.

The decisive fact was that Imperial power alone could not generate the remaining power needed to carry out British policy. It had already been realized that only U.S. aid could accomplish this, but Whitehall continued to be divided over what reliance to place on U.S. policy and how accommodating Britain had to be to secure what all increasingly agreed was vital support. Policy and machinery had to be reorganized, as departments scrambled to pick up French orders and boost their own. Churchill's intense pressure resulted, by December, in agreement to fold the at one point nine separate missions in Washington into a British North American Supply Council. Arthur Purvis, head of the British Purchasing Commission, was to chair committees uniting all departments' representatives.[123] Purvis was a good choice, an able man who had established important links with Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau. But Beaverbrook's refusal to place MAP under him hurt the new effort. MAP had taken the lead in staking out a really large order for aircraft, 3,000 deliveries a month from mid-1941, which had really propelled policy. Cabinet accepted this, feeling that bombers were now the core of strategy and this order would both secure them and promote larger U.S. war production.[124] This made nonsense of the current assumption that U.S. production should be relied on only for insurance and to "top up" British programs. It staked out reliance on a U.S. program which virtually rewrote MAP's target and made the whole question of types obsolete. Whitehall realized the new financial plane its policy implied,

but was only able slowly to accept the specific consequences. Departments clung to the desire to induce the Americans to tailor their efforts to British programs and produce British types.[125] The slow growth of U.S. production and American demands that British orders adopt their types, and not preclude their own expansion, soon created a real logjam.

Friction worsened when American officials told Roosevelt that British aircraft orders would delay U.S. expansion. As U.S. domestic political pressure intensified, and British need increased, Churchill shed his reluctance to divulge information unequally. Air Commodore J.C. Slessor went to Washington to make the RAF's case. A carefully floated offer to equip 10 full British divisions with U.S. equipment was seized on. On 29 October an RAF expansion program, accelerated to 100 new squadrons by June 1941, was approved. As it relied on U.S. deliveries for expansion only **after** that date, it cleared the way for Slessor to strike a supply deal.[126] This and the 10 division scheme laid the common ground needed to proceed. It also made possible a full Whitehall review, to sort out the new consensus that American desires would have to be addressed in order to secure the necessary supplies and finance. But this consensus was forged haphazardly by U.S. politics, slow U.S. expansion, and British ambivalence and internal debate. The result was patchwork policy. Departments retained strong direct links in Washington which played a key role in the new review.[127] New U.S. pledges, especially a "50/50" aircraft supply pledge, were simply verbal assurances from Roosevelt, vulnerable to American bureaucratic pressures.[128] It was still widely agreed that despite the decision to commit to orders beyond previous criteria, main reliance would still rest on "topping up" British programs. This was understandable, but unwillingness to accept that now that the U.S. government would have to pay for British orders it would call the tune was not. If British production lagged and no firm working basis had been laid with Washington, Britain would face a dilemma.

Against this backdrop of continued confusion and uneven progress, the reviews of overall structural and strategic policy continued. Home defence remained paramount, but the gradual relaxation of the invasion threat and turn of attention outwards led to important divergences within the "wear down" pattern. Cabinet attention to the

undercurrent of future strategy faded, and the loose circle of DC(O), COS, and Prime Minister and cronies took control. The COS machinery came more to the fore, strengthened by the accession of the very able Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Portal as Chief of the Air Staff; but Churchill also enhanced his influence. In November he shrugged off an effort by Ismay to control his information flow, stating "I like to chew my own food as much as possible."[129] The desire and need to define specific directions was propelled by Churchill's addiction to "offensive" efforts as well as the scramble to entrench production programs. This sparked the first serious clash over emphasis in the application of "wear down." The early result was a consensus which reflected continuity on basic principles but envisaged new directions resting more on diplomatic hopes than concrete successes.

Future grand strategic planning continued as an interlocked undercurrent to the conduct of current operations. From early September the JPC (henceforth referred to as the JPS) set to work to draft an outline of future offensive operations and the forces required. Their initial effort reflected the basic assumption of weakness and uncertainties of production, but also illustrated important perceptions of strategic prospects. It was assumed the U.S. would escalate aid to "all assistance short of war," and initial operations would be minor moves "in furtherance of the economic offensive." A quick survey considered that general operations to secure bridgeheads for further use was worth studying with regard to Norway, France and Spain, if German power was seriously weakened, and the Low Countries, if it had collapsed. Italy was favoured as the starting point, seen as ripe for a knock out blow.[130] Churchill urged more stress on vigourous moves to clear the way to attack Italy and on "igniter" operations on the Continent.[131] The JPS submitted a plan on 14 November calling for an offensive to clear Libya as a first step, itself to proceed by bombing, blockade, raids and a limited offensive to stretch the larger Italian forces. The COS desire to send it to Wavell as a general guide was superseded by his COMPASS plan and it was set aside. Nevertheless its obvious reflection of "wear down" in miniature illustrated the deep impression perceived weakness made on Staff thinking. Efforts to lay down long term plans continued, but were caught up in current events and the tug-of-war that now developed within the "wear

down" consensus. Divergence became open at a 31 October conference between Churchill, the COS and the Commanders in Chief of U.K. Commands. All agreed that through 1941 the enemy would dictate grand strategy and home defence would remain paramount, but Churchill added an important new twist:

> "For the moment, all that we could do was to bank on the pressure of the blockade accompanied by the remorseless bombing of Germany and Italy. By 1941, however, we would be in a position to take on medium operations of an amphibious nature; and by 1942 we should be able to deliver very heavy overseas attacks."

Churchill assumed successful structural expansion and defence at home, desired to retain minimum forces for "defensive" efforts, and aimed for heavy Mediterranean reinforcements and Bomber Command expansion for current and later efforts. The COS, however, wanted a very high minimum for the U.K.. Pound also warned that shipping losses would soon pose a fundamental threat to the war effort and needed more attention.[132] The beginning of a split was apparent - Pound, Dill and the Commanders in Chief still were concerned to secure essential positions, while Churchill and Portal looked a little more to tactical offensives but in different directions.

German intentions in the Mediterranean were a concern, as it was agreed to be the only theatre in which all three services could engage enemy forces. Churchill's turn to the theatre became pronounced in November. The reinforcement program aggravated competing claims for shipping between vital U.K. imports and overseas needs, making the issue of the size and role of the Army pivotal. The decision to retain the full 55 division Imperial field force set off a serious debate on claims to resources. Much pressure was raised to retain emphasis on the bomber program, seen as more capable of offensive action, at the Army's expense. The War Office defended its program in September. It argued that a general strategic reserve of 29 divisions could be ready by spring 1942. But only seven of these could be concentrated in the U.K.; the rest would be overseas or holding positions! Also, the expansion of armoured forces, and much higher equipment scales, meant clashes with MAP needs and a program that could not be met without large U.S. supplies.[133] The problems of tank and aircraft production intensified this debate. In December Portal pointedly noted that all the JPS schemes

envisaged combined campaigns which would depend above all on air supremacy, which rested on the RAF's expansion. Portal hoped to promote both the new "Oil Plan" and MAP's priority. But he also noted that current pressures precluded building up contingency forces.[134] The War Office responded with a pledge to submit a JPS paper on:

> "the probable role of the army in the future conduct of the war, setting out arguments for and against the building up of a large military force."[135]

The "wear down" consensus remained intact but now this divergent emphasis, propelled by Churchillian pressure, service ambitions, and direct conflicts for resources, could not be dismissed. This was reflected in talks in December with the Canadian Defence Minister and Chief of the General Staff, J.L. Ralston and Lieutenant General H.D.G. Crerar, in a briefing on grand strategy used to urge more Canadian support. The Allies were felt to be still very much on the defensive and in the building phase, forced to secure essential interests and respond to enemy moves. But it was felt essential and possible to hold all Imperial interests, the Mediterranean second only to the U.K.; in addition, bombing, blockade and tactical offensives in the Mediterranean could all be escalated.[136] The early success of COMPASS only encouraged this emerging "defensive-offensive do it all" tug-of-war within "wear down," with the U.K. still under heavy attack and the most serious questions about production still open.

Service ambitions, committee compromises and doctrinal dogma all contributed to this early divergence, but the crucial factor was the evolving perception of the role of the U.S. in grand strategy. Strategic conversations proceeded apace with those on supply. The American mission remained in London and in September thrashed out details on strategic and tactical co-operation which resembled a tacit alliance. Most important were understandings that in any common effort the U.S. would take the lead in the Pacific and assist in the Atlantic, but did not intend to use Singapore or deploy heavily in Europe.[137] FDR's reelection in November cleared the way for great accelerations in policy making all around. The early concept of "operational spheres" was caught up in a revision of U.S. grand strategy, set off by the submission of "Plan Dog" by Admiral H. Stark, Chief of Naval Operations, USN. This outline called for

recognition that British defence was a vital U.S. interest and British weakness obliged full deployment against the Axis in co-operation with the British, on the lines of **their** strategy. Stark hoped to gain Roosevelt's guidance and the support of Gen. George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff U.S. Army. He secured the latter, which cleared the way for serious talks on grand strategy.[138]

Lothian meanwhile had been recalled for consultations and on 8 November met with the COS. The COS called for talks on global strategy, but Lothian warned that the need to secure a new financial accord came first. He advised Whitehall to offer precisely defined requirements and try to build a "de facto" alliance.[139] Purvis had also been recalled but he found British thinking moving in different directions. While Whitehall clung to the "top up" and insurance concepts, fought a rearguard action over types and resented American pressure to disclose secrets and strip assets, its outposts in Washington now desired a different approach. Impressed by American insistence on producing their own types and by political pressures forcing hard lines with the British, but distressed by the slow growth of U.S. production and American administrative chaos, Purvis' colleagues now began to press for a **joint** structural program. American opinion still seemed unaware of the scope of the task facing the Allies. It was felt that a dramatic comprehensive statement of overall requirements to win the war, far beyond the current lists needed merely to fill initial British programs, would galvanize U.S. efforts and address British financial needs. This was truly new policy. It was reinforced by Lothian's warning on 30 November that the Americans now wanted to review financial terms and that no further aid beyond the 10 division program seemed possible.[140]

This stiffening resulted from the American services efforts to secure their own needs from the flow of aid to Britain then draining their stocks, and from political pressures to settle the financial issue. It brought up the broad issue of how urgently the British required full U.S. support and whether disclosure without strings of all strategic, economic and research secrets was necessary. There was some resistance and it was clear that while the sense of shared interests was strong so too was the perception of friendly but jealous competitors with overlapping but not identical interests. This would heavily influence whatever basis of co-operation evolved. But mutual need was by now

great, even overwhelming, on the British side. Cabinet accepted Lothian's advice to offer fairly complete information and to draft a letter from Churchill to Roosevelt urging a settlement of the financial question and a new basis of co-operation.[141] The British review formed part of a Whitehall wide review of strategy and structure which forged consensus views to be inserted in Churchill's letter. Advice came in from all quarters, but the final tone followed that of Lothian and Purvis. On 2 December Purvis suggested Churchill state the dimensions of British strategic and structural problems so as to imply that the supplies essential to immediate success and ultimate victory hinged on U.S. willingness to shoulder the finance burden, but leave specifics to Roosevelt.[142] This became the theme of the letter which Churchill finally sent on 8 December and which was undoubtedly the most important piece of their entire war time correspondence.

The letter covered every nuance of the war and Anglo-American relations. The main theme was a call for a de facto alliance. Churchill argued that a hostile fully mobilized Germany threatened the shared interests of an unmobilized U.S. and a British Empire at best half-way along a 3 or 4 year process. The new situation meant the British could not now face concentrated German power and needed safer areas to conduct operations. But meanwhile the U.K. faced slow strangulation from the air and sea blockades. Yet the British still hoped to build up the strength in 1941 to "lay the foundation of victory" and for this U.S. help was essential. Militarily, more active USN help in the Atlantic was especially desired. Also, British capacity to produce the necessary merchant shipping and equip the proposed 420 squadron RAF was now clearly inadequate without what amounted to a merger with a fully mobilized U.S. capacity. Heavy bombers, the weapon counted on to "shatter the foundations of German military power," were especially needed. Most imperative was a limitless expansion of general arms production; incredibly, a careful plea for the adoption of "proven" British types was included here. Finances, however, were the heart of the matter. On the dual grounds that vital shared interests were at stake now and a strong Britain was an essential factor for post-war economic stability, an emotional plea was made for ways to finance British needs without stripping her accumulated wealth. To leave Roosevelt and posterity in no doubt of his main point, Churchill concluded:

> "If, as I believe, you are convinced, Mr. President, that the defeat of Nazi tyranny is a matter of high consequence to the people of the U.S. and to the Western Hemisphere, you will regard this letter not as an appeal for aid but as a statement of the minimum action necessary to the achievement of our common purpose."[143]

Here was a warning which could not be ignored, reinforced by official claims that Britain could not meet even half of the $9.2 billion bill for existing orders.[144]

This missive caught the Roosevelt administration in the midst of its own review, which had been precipitated by the general agreement that aiding Britain was a vital U.S. interest. Roosevelt aired his own solution at a press conference on 17 December, suggesting that he would find a way to remove the exchange obstacle and finance British orders. The beneficial effect these were having on the expansion of American production swayed his subordinates to follow the President's lead, and a solution seemed inevitable. This new atmosphere dispelled Cabinet ambivalence about concessions. By the end of the year, with co-operation stalled while Roosevelt's new policy, to become famous as "Lend-Lease," took shape, Cabinet agreed that it was of "overriding priority" to aid its passage by concessions in all spheres.[145] In this atmosphere and under the emerging consensus of the need for much higher overall production and U.S. supply, on a new basis, positions for secret talks on grand strategy were defined. The talks were set for Washington and the British brief amounted to a comprehensive review of the current situation and the evolving vision of "wear down" now proposed.

Most themes were familiar - Germany at her peak, with the initiative; Britain half ready, trying to hold out and build up, hoping to knock out Italy meanwhile; the Mediterranean vital to Imperial power and strategy and facing probable German intervention. While the "Blitz" was hurting but did not seem capable of inflicting irreparable damage, the U-Boats were another matter. Imports had slipped to a rate of 37 million tons from 43 the year before, and of the 4¼ million tons of new shipping deemed necessary per year the Empire would only build 1¼. The RN's 13 capital ships, eight aircraft carriers, 41 cruisers, 166 destroyers and 47 submarines were fully stretched by Axis operations and fleets-in-being. Only 66 of the destroyers were active in the vital Western Approaches. The Army and RAF remained unable to reinforce overseas

commands properly, as the vast bulk of Imperial forces remained in the U.K.;* for instance, only two divisions were involved in COMPASS. The RAF, now the main force for the next phase, was no longer sure its 1942 expansion target was possible and knew that anyway it would not be enough unless German air force losses were heavier than foreseen. The Army would hold the U.K. and try to stretch the enemy in the only theatre it could operate, the Mediterranean. The case to be made was that massive U.S. aid in all respects, especially naval and air efforts, was essential **and** could be applied successfully. The basic theme remained constant:

> "We hope, by the continuation of our air offensive and our economic blockade, to undermine the resistance of Germany, to break her power in the air, and to reduce the mobility of her land forces to a degree which will eventually enable us to reopen the war on land."[146]

It was clear that some evolution of the "wear down" concept had taken place. Economic warfare was still stressed but belief in German vulnerability seemed more ambivalent and the trend towards conventional operations more emphatic. The success of COMPASS increased the momentum the Mediterranean exerted merely by existing as a theatre that both had to be defended and in which the enemy could be engaged on reasonable terms. Portal now openly intended to place Bomber Command in the lead. But in the best committee style, this mingled uneasily with the RN's great strain and its fears for the Atlantic lifeline. The Army's main build up remained in the U.K. but its commitments in Africa were to expand. The Far East burden seemed unbearable. This evolution of thought took place under the pressure of the "Blitz" and as British production seemed ever more likely to be inadequate regarding both speed and quantity. The German Army was not engaged, while naval and air struggles were faring badly. Above all, it was even more strongly agreed that the Allies could on no account contest the main force of unweakened German power in a decisive campaign. Yet here was "wear down" being interpreted more aggressively and expansively than in September. There were several reasons. First, invasion had been avoided; and although still a dominant concern, the prospect could now be faced with some confidence. Second, the "Blitz" was not crippling production or morale. Third, all keenly felt the need and desire

* *See Appendix A*

to press on in Africa. Fourth, Bomber Command was the only clearly "offensive" weapon and now the new "grinding agent" of strategy; there were doubts about its effect to date, but its potential could not be disproven. Finally and above all, there was the basic irrationality of the decision to fight total war beyond Imperial means. Because no programs big enough to promise victory could be envisaged by Imperial efforts, the services found it easier to stake out maximum and unreal claims. Into the gap this created, Whitehall deliberations placed the United States.

The amplification of the delegates instructions made this crystal clear. They were to persuade the Americans to accept a massive overall combined mobilization program scheduled so as to build the British, already far along, up to peak strength first. They were to secure agreement on co-ordinated global grand strategy which recognized Germany as the main enemy, to be concentrated against first. The U.S. should lead in the Pacific but adopt a containment strategy. Its forces in the Atlantic and Europe could first release British garrisons for operations then actively assist, especially in west Africa. This repeated stress on early USN activity clearly reflected a hope that clashes such as those of 1916 and 1917 would help hasten American belligerency. No large U.S. Army was needed, but massive air and naval forces were.[147] The theme was unmistakable: a full military alliance should be worked towards but, as Britain had tested equipment and forces, plus existing positions and plans, the American effort should merge into these. When the DC(O) confirmed all this on 17 December, Churchill merely added that the "Germany 1st" principle must be secured at all costs.[148] This understated the magnitude of the evolution grand strategic thought had undergone. Great ambivalence about detail and emphasis remained, but again consensus guiding principles had emerged. The services were now in control of grand strategy, the RAF leading the way. As the war effort could not be sustained without U.S. help or succeed without greater strength, full alliance would now be sought. But it would be sought on the basis of merging Allied and Imperial power with mobilized American power on British terms, extending British efforts on the "wear down" basis. German military power was, if anything, even more respected. The new idea was to secure mobilized American power not to be able to revise grand strategy, but simply to be able to execute current outlines. Meanwhile,

the British services would commit themselves to an operational and structural extent which in fact assumed that the U.S would accept "wear down," mobilize massively, and enter the war in a reasonably short time, and that the Allied position would by then improve.

Only the broadest framework of policy was even partly settled by 1941. Grand strategy dictated by perceived relative weakness would be pursued by strong defensive and buildup efforts, tactical offensives overseas, and escalated bombing, all to undermine and implode Axis power. Cooperation with the Americans would be sorted out empirically by sector, as it had evolved, guided by and hopefully clarifying overall policy. The critical missing factor was solid reliable information on what society would bear, the Empire could provide, the war machine need and especially what that war machine and military power could achieve. Also relevant was what the enemy could and would attempt and other powers might try. The decision to fight an unlimited total war had forced the structure of power to conform to strategic need. The firmer decisions to gamble on an American alliance showed Whitehall now realized that British power could not fulfil the national aim, but was still trying to understand what exactly its limits were. These did not seem promising. Beaverbrook had already termed MAP's incentive targets too ambitious and Supply reported and forecast shortfalls in all major items in the new higher program.[149] Shipbuilding and port traffic seemed in desperate shape. Contending departments had proven stronger than central forums, the bitter feud over labour policy worsened, and hard information on general and detailed problems in converting to war production was only slowly emerging. The many remedies proposed amounted to an eclectic call for root and branch reform of British political economy.[150] But it was far too late for such drastic action, so Whitehall drifted into the only real alternative - steady expansion of state control through existing channels and practices, while political clashes sorted out administrative power and connections.

The events of the last eight months of 1940 were among the most highly charged in British history. The whole British perception of their global position had been rocked by the collapse of its keystone: the belief that the Franco-British alliance was strong

enough to hold off Germany without a drastic upheaval in national life and policy. The moment had found the man, but this is a statement so pregnant with implications that it must be carefully dissected. Churchill's national war policy departed from Chamberlain's only by degree: the continued existence of a Nazi Germany was utterly incompatible with British survival in any meaningful sense. Churchill's greatness rests on his ability to realize this at the time, and reject "rational" calculations of forces. But this policy and those calculations forced a searching review of what type of war the Empire could and should fight. While final answers in the structural sphere remained unclear, a basic pattern of policy had to be laid down. This pattern evolved into a grand strategy which departed from earlier policy in only one sense, but this one point amounted to a complete transformation. Because an unbeaten German Army could not be faced on land anywhere it could concentrate, all other possible efforts would have to be escalated. Even though the military prognosis remained unrealistic, a basic plan nevertheless **had** to be defined, in order to set the basic guidelines for all out mobilization.

What was most important were the two anomalies that had emerged. While a clear consensus had been forged on fundamental assumptions, the two most powerful forces in shaping grand strategy, Churchill and the COS, did not interpret its balance and emphasis in similar harmony. This made for a co-ordinated basic approach which, when applied in specific efforts, seemed subject to be pulled in different directions. The missing link was hopefully to be provided by the harnessing of American power; but what would that mean for Imperial co-ordination? Also, while the decision to fight beyond Imperial capability eliminated structural power as a deciding factor in national war policy, it remained a vital influence on grand strategy. "Wear down," the only possible approach, required more power than could be supplied. Because the central government could not recreate structural power, it would have to focus on eking out every ounce of effort, then still secure outside aid. By 1941 the only real advance was that this had been perceived. It remained unclear what the enemy could achieve, and what the Americans, Japanese and Soviets would attempt. These questions came to the fore as the "wear down" outline, as a serious grand strategy, faced it first severe test.

Endnotes to Chapter 1

1. Dilks, D. "The Twilight War and the Fall of France: Chamberlain and Churchill in 1940", in Dilks. D. (Edit.) Retreat from Power, vol.2, London, 1981, 53, 58-59.

2. LSE, Dalton Papers, I/22, diary entries 8-10/5/1940; Dilks, 56; Lee, J.M. The Churchill Coalition, London, 1980, 31; Addison, P. The Road to 1945, London, 1975, 101-102; Costello, J. Ten Days to Destiny, New York, 1991, 37-51.

3. LSE, Dalton Papers, I/22, diary entries 12/5/40; Lee, 38; Addison, 93; Colville, The Churchillians, London, 1981, 47.

4. Churchill, W.S. Their Finest Hour, Boston, 1949, 43.

5. PRO, CAB 80/11, JIC reports of 23/5, 24/5/40.

6. Churchill, Their Finest Hour, 25-26.

7. Churchill, Their Finest Hour, 26, 100, 171, 177-178; Parkinson, R. Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat, London, 1973, 16.

8. PRO, CAB65/13, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annexes, 25-28/5/40; CCA, Hickleton papers, A4/410/4/1-3, FO to Halifax, 1/3/41, copy of 25/5/40 telegrams; A4/410/4.17, Halifax-Sargent correspondence, 9-10/42; Dilks, 60.

9. PRO, CAB65/13, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annexes, 28/5/40; LSE, Dalton Papers, I22, 28/5/40, diary entry; Churchill, Their Finest Hour, 99-100, 177-178, carefully concealed the depth of his differences with Halifax; Costello, 205-252.

10. Costello, 194-255, goes so far as to argue that but for Churchill, peace would have been made in June, 1940; Bell, P.M.H. In a Certain Eventuality, London, 1974, 27, 40-48. There also seems little doubt that important quarters of Whitehall saw armed German power period, Nazi or otherwise, as a threat that had to be checked once and for all. See Hoffmann, P. "The Question of Western Allied Co-Operation with the German Anti-Nazi Conspiracy, 1938-1944," HJ, vol.34, #2, 1991, 449-451, for this question and the argument that Churchill's position marked a definitive shift in British policy regarding an alternative German government; see also below, page 399.

11. Reynolds, D. "Churchill and the British Decision to Fight on in 1940: Right Policy, Wrong Reasons," Langhorne, R. (Editor), Diplomacy and Intelligence during the Second World War, Cambridge, 1985, 147-167; Cohen, in Kennedy, P. Grand Strategies in War and Peace, 49.

12. PRO, CAB80/12, COS(40)397, 26/5/40.

13. PRO, CAB80/11, COS (40) 390, 25/5/40; Hinsley, F.H. et al British Intelligence in the Second World War, vol. 1, London, 1979, 234. The MEW official later claimed such a paper should rightly have taken 3 months to prepare, as indeed the next one did.

14. PRO, CAB66/7, WP(40) 171, 27/5/40.

15. PRO, CAB65/13, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, morning 27/5/40.

16. Hinsley, 234-235; Butler, J.R.M., Grand Strategy vol.II, London, 1957, 213; Medlicott, W.N. The Economic Blockade, vol.1, London, 1952, 60.

17. PRO, CAB69/1, DC(O) minutes, 8/6/40.

18. PRO, CAB80/13, COS(40)440 (JP), 9/6/40.

19. PRO, CAB80/3, COS(40)462, JPS to COS, 14/6/40; CAB65/13, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 16/6/40.

20. PRO, CAB65/7, War Cabinet minutes 18/6, 22/6, 23/6, 24/6, 28/6/40; CAB65/13, confidential annexes, 24/6, 27/6, 29/6, 30/6/40; CAB80/14, COS(40)510.

21. Kersaudy, P. Churchill and De Gaulle, London, 1981, 76-86; Thomas, R.T. Britain and Vichy, New York, 1979, 52; PRO, CAB85/16, JPS to COS, 9/7/40; CAB80/14, COS comments, 16/7/40; CAB65/7, War Cabinet minutes, 11/7/40; CAB65/8, 25/7/40.

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23. Imperial Institute, The Mineral Industry:Statistical Summary 1938-1944, London, 1948.

24. Gibbs, N. Grand Strategy, vol.I, London, 1976, 409-419.

25. PRO, CAB80/13, COS(40)488 (JP), 25/6/40; CAB66/7, WP(40)234, 29/6/40; CAB79/5, COS minutes 1/7/40; CAB65/13, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 1/7/40; CAB65/8, 5/7, 10/7, 14/7/40.

26. PRO, CAB79/4, COS minutes, 17-18/6/40; CAB80/13, COS(40)469(JP), 17/6/40. The official historian was somewhat ambivalent here, claiming at one point that the Admiralty felt no anxiety about the position then later conceding that Pound's proposal had been raised - Roskill,S.W. The War at Sea, vol.1,

London, 1954, 241, 297.

27. PRO, CAB79/6, COS minutes, 8/8/40.

28. PRO,CAB 80/16, COS to Churchill and reply 10/8, Pound to COS 11/8, COS (40)624, 12/8, Churchill to COS 16/8, COS (40)644 18/8/40; CAB79/6, COS minutes 12/8/1940; CAB69/1, DC(O) minutes, 12/8, 21/8/40; CAB65/14, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 13/8, 15/8, 23/8/40; CAB80/17, COS(40)653, 23/8/40.

29. PRO, CAB80/12, COS(40)419, 2/6/40; CAB79/5, COS minutes, 6/8/40.

30. LSE, Dalton Papers, 7/3, minutes of meeting at Foreign Office, 1/7/40.

31. PRO, CAB79/6, COS minutes, 21/8/40.

32. Hinsley et al, vol.1, 278.

33. PRO, CAB80/18, COS(40)723,7/9/40.

34. PRO, CAB84/18, Leeper to JPS, 12/9/40; CAB84/2, JPS minutes, 18/9/40.

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36. PRO, CAB84/15, JPC draft, 2/7/40.

37. PRO,CAB66/7, WP(40)259,12/7/40; CAB65/8, War Cabinet minutes 13/7, 23/7/40.

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50. Ibid, 657.

51. Hinsley et al, vol.1, 63.

52. Ibid, 227.

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58. CCA, Hickleton Papers, A4/410/28.2, Londonderry to Halifax, 17/8/40.

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63. Hancock, W. & Gowing, M. British War Economy, London, 1949, 164; Gibbs, 315-317, 776; Postan, M.M. British War Production, London, 1952, 113.

64. Hancock, & Gowing, 164; Postan, 111; Parker, H.M.D., Manpower, London, 1957, 78.

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73. PRO, PREM3/483/3, Beaverbrook to Churchill, 22/8/40.

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75. PRO, CAB66/12, WP(40)339, 29/8/40.

76. Churchill, Their Finest Hour, 458.

77. PRO, CAB66/11, WP(40)352, 3/9/40.

78. PRO, CAB66/11, WP(40)362, 4/9/40.

79. PRO, CAB69/1, DC(O) minutes, 15/10/40.

80. PRO, CAB65/9, War Cabinet minutes, 30/9/40.

81. Stafford, D. Britain and European Resistance 1940-1945: A Survey of the SOE, 42; Hinsley et al, vol.1, 237-240.

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83. PRO, CAB66/12, WP(40)431, 1/11/40.

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85. PRO, CAB69/8, minutes of DC(O) meeting, 13/11/40; BL, Cunningham Papers, 52561, Cunningham to Pound, 21/11/40.

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100. LSE, Dalton Papers, 8/1, Dalton to Attlee, 26/8/40; PRO CAB84/18, JPC memorandum, 1/9/40; McLaine, I. Ministry of Morale, London, 1979, 59.

101. Lee, 145; Churchill, Their Finest Hour, 496; Fieldhouse, N.K., "The Anglo-German War of 1939-1942: Some Movements to end it by a Negotiated Peace," Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, 4th series, vol.IX, 1971, 302-305.

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107. PRO, CAB66/12, WP(40)416, 15/10/40; CAB69/1, DC(O) minutes, 15/10/40.

108. PRO, CAB66/12, Map Room Weekly Reports, 27/9, 3/10/40; McLaine, 60-78; Lee, 76.

109. CCA, E.A.G. Robinson Papers, 2/5/5, n/d [4 or 5/40], memorandum "The Labour Crisis in the Engineering and Aircraft Industries"; NCA, Cherwell Papers, H70, Lindemann to Churchill, 24/5, 3/6, 19/6, 28/6/40.

110. PRO, CAB65/8, War Cabinet minutes, 4/7/40.

111. PRO, CAB66/12, JPS minutes, 9/10/40.

112. NCA, Cherwell Papers, H71, Bevin to Churchill, 6/12/40.

113. Scott & Hughes, The Administration of War Production, London, 1955, 292-297.

114. PRO, CAB70/1, DC(S) minutes, 20/6, 16/7, 22/7, 4/11, 19/11/40; NCA Cherwell Papers, G364, Lindemann to Churchill, 22/11/40.

115. Costello, J. & Hughes, T. The Battle of the Atlantic, New York, 1977, 45; Behrens, C.B.A. Merchant Shipping and the Demands of War, London, 1955, 102, 111. The merchant fleet under British control increased from 18.7 million tons in March 1940 to 22 million in December.

116. PRO, CAB65/7, War Cabinet minutes, 28/5/40; CAB66/11, WP(40)365, 9/9/40; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F108/22, Lindemann to Churchill, 30/6/40; Savage, C.L. Inland Transport, London, 1957, 206.

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118. Barnett, C. The Audit of War, London, 1986, 183-209.

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123. PRO, PREM3/477/1, Churchill-Bridges correspondence 9-11/40; 3/483/5, Churchill-Bridges-Beaverbrook correspondence 12/40.

124. HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D21, Beaverbrook to Sinclair, 29/7/40; PRO, CAB66/11 WP(40)354, 355, 6/9/40; CAB65/15, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 6/9/40.

125. PRO, CAB115/3, Brand to Lothian, 23/10/40; PREM3/483/2, Eden to Duncan, 13/12/40. In London, Beaverbrook proved almost uniquely prescient on the types question.

126. PRO, PREM3/483/1, Purvis to Churchill, 2/10, Layton to Churchill, 26/10, Dill to Churchill 26/10, Churchill to COS 28/10/40; CAB69/1 DC(O) minutes, 29/10/40.

127. PRO, PREM3/483/5, Churchill-Beaverbrook correspondence, 11/12/40.

128. Leighton & Coakley, Global Logistics and Strategy 1940-1943, Washington, 1955, 37.

129. PRO, CAB120/9, Ismay-Churchill correspondence, 11/40.

130. PRO, CAB84/18, COS(40)1(O)(JP), 8/9, JP(40)(433)(S), 18/9, JP(40)470(S), 23/9/40. Note the absence of the Balkans. See chapters 9 and 11.

131. PRO, CAB80/106, Churchill-JPS meeting, minutes, 4/10/40.

132. PRO, CAB69/1, DC(O) minutes, 31/10/40. Global losses had risen from 405,000 gross tons in the second quarter of 1940 to 868,000 in the fourth quarter.

133. NCA, Cherwell Papers, F115, Lindemann to Churchill, 2/9/40; PRO, CAB66/12, WP(40)370, 14/9/40.

134. PRO, CAB80/24, Portal to COS, 20/12/40.

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137. PRO, CAB122/159, Bailey Sub Committee files, 9/40.

138. Skinner, 117-120; Leighton & Coakley, 43; Matloff & Snell, 25-28.

139. PRO, CAB79/55, COS minutes, 8/11/40.

140. PRO, CAB115/3, Brand to Lothian, 9/11/40; PREM3/483/2, Layton to Churchill, 12/11/40, Eden to Churchill, 30/11/40.

141. PRO, CAB65/10, War Cabinet minutes, 21/11/40.

142. NCA, Cherwell Papers, Purvis to Churchill, 2/12/40.

143. The final draft is included, with perceptive annotation, in Kimball, vol. 1, 102-109; Churchill, Their Finest Hour, 557-568.

144. Leighton & Coakley, 43.

145. PRO, CAB65/16, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 30/12/40.

146. PRO, CAB84/24, COS(40)48(O)(JP), 13/12/40.

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149. HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D327, Beaverbrook to Sinclair, 24/11/40; PRO, CAB80/24, JPS to COS, 20/12/40.

150. See for example, CCA, Robinson Papers, 1/9/1, Scammell to Dowding, 12/11/40.

Chapter 2

Strategy Evolved

"We do not visualise the employment of vast armies of infantry as in 1918. The forces which will be required will be mainly armoured divisions with the most modern equipment. It will not be possible to land even these until the fighting efficiency of the German armed forces has been sufficiently decreased. The impact of the Russian war does not change this fundamental concept."

- JPS, 19/9/1941

Whitehall entered 1941 confidently, satisfied with the overall improvement in Britain's strategic position and hopeful that both the intermediate campaigns and the overall buildup would continue to progress. These hopes were underwritten partly by the progress of COMPASS, but even more by the expectation of greater U.S. assistance. Events did not really live up to expectations. The course of the war forced Imperial forces onto a more beleaguered defensive on an escalated level. This exposed the inability of British military power to match the general guideline schedule laid down in the "wear down" outline. The buildup progressed, but in fact lagged behind the increased requirements generated by the escalation of the war. Closer co-operation with the Americans was achieved, but at a pace and with qualifications that did not match British expectations or needs. Then in early summer the war took a turn which radically altered the context in which grand strategy was made. The centre of gravity of that grand strategy shifted, in several directions. The focus of British policy became an all out effort to forge a "Grand Alliance." However, Whitehall reaffirmed its consensus that the only suitable grand strategy, even for a new coalition, was a revised pattern of "wear down." This experience is best traced by following the evolution of the internal and external influences on the central direction of the war before and then after the great shift in mid-summer. Through the twists and turns, the dominant fact was the essential continuity of British views on fundamental imperatives; the prime mover in all these turns remained the superior combat power of the German military machine.

Ironically the German victory in June 1940 brought out two serious weaknesses in an otherwise potent national power - the inability to compel the U.K. to come to terms or conquer it, and the lack of realistic well considered national war policy and grand strategy or machinery and personalities to develop them. The latter was a fatal weakness. At the operative levels of production and design and performance in the field, Germany was at the forefront in economic, industrial and military power. But this superb machine was headed by a demagogue with a fixed ambition to pursue imperial conquest to the east and with no clear idea how to resolve the standing German dilemma of facing hostile Great Powers on both flanks while attempting to expand the German imperium. Hitler's unchecked control of grand strategy resulted in a reckless decision to reduce British power and positions by tactical offensives while concentrating for a massive strategic offensive to shatter Soviet power. Germany was powerful enough to send strong forces to the Mediterranean, intensify the U-Boat campaign and maintain intense air attacks on the U.K. into May 1941. Sizeable forces were concentrated to clear the Balkans. These efforts restored the Italian position and kept the British off balance, but the decisive move in the first half of 1941 was the great transfer of forces to the east.[1] Hitler's decision to attack his uneasy Soviet ally was the undercurrent of events in this period. There was no organized responsible system uniting military advice and political authority in Berlin. Hitler's advisors were, by this time, executants of his will.[2] No reliable intelligence or considered analysis offset prevailing shallow preconceptions of relative power. Hitler was convinced an only partly mobilized economy could again sustain a larger "blitzkrieg" campaign and shatter his largest adversary. Much depended on how realistic British perceptions of the situation were, what German intentions proved to be and how capably they executed them.

British intelligence capability suffered, like most components of British power, from pre-war neglect and service rivalry, and was also forced to adapt to changing circumstances and learn on the job. The value of intelligence at all levels rested on the organization of many disparate sources to provide a constantly developing image of the enemy's situation, intentions, and capability, disseminated for practical application. The central organ was the JIC, but it suffered the same problems of multiple responsibilities

and friction that dogged the JPS. Its work was deemed so unsatisfactory that in November 1940 the COS established a separate section to try and forecast German plans by acting as a "shadow staff."[3] This did not solve the real problems which hampered intelligence - the paucity of reliable information, the strength of preconceived notions and the tendency to "mirror image" the enemy, or gauge his moves by one's own weakness. In March 1941 the COS accepted JIC pleas, scrapped the new section, reorganized JIC committees and established regular weekly consultations.[4] Organization improved, but preconceived images remained the real obstacle to accurate estimates of overall German power. MEW and the JIC continued to misunderstand German economic policy and underestimate the remaining margin of resources. Through the first half of 1941 they clung to the belief that German production was at full capacity and could soon run short of critical items.[5] Erroneous pre-war estimates of German mobilization also affected attempts to estimate the German Order-of-Battle. Lindemann's claim that the Air Staff grossly overestimated their opponents had to be settled by judicial review in January; the report "confirmed" that the German Air Force was stronger than the RAF but had been assessed as double its real size. This was not easily accepted, and the JIC continued to overestimate the German Army by as much as 20% by matching incomplete information with its flawed estimate of the overall margin of mobilization.[6]

Better information used effectively to break down preconceptions was necessary and there was some promise in this area. Pre-war developments in counter-espionage and signals intelligence began to bear fruit as they became better organized. The German espionage network in the U.K. had been cracked before the war, and a clumsy attempt to reinforce it in late 1940 enabled the British to sweep up the whole system in secret. It was decided to exploit this remarkable coup by a co-ordinated effort to feed disinformation to the enemy. A "Double Cross" or "XX" Committee representing all interested departments was set up to control efforts, overseen by the JIC. Through 1941 the network was built up and ran minor ploys to gain experience and establish credibility in Whitehall and Berlin. It was enhanced by an even more important coup, the organization of a network to expand and control the interception and decoding of Axis radio messages sent over the Enigma machine cypher system. Pre-war work by the Poles

and French was systematized in Britain at a major centre set up to intercept, decipher and control circulation of enemy messages, the Government Code and Cypher School (GCCS) in Bletchley Park. Organization and control were decisive, and evolved by trial and error. Cracking the many Axis cyphers was slow and uncertain work - often done incompletely, or too late, or lost again. The command machinery was also slow to appreciate the values and limits of this crucial but erratic source. By 1941 a viable system was operating which had had some success with laxer German Air Force cyphers that proved valuable in the defence of the U.K.[7] Internal messages explaining enemy intercepts, codenamed "Ultra," were circulated on a severely restricted basis. As more Air Force and SS cyphers, or keys, were broken and retained in 1941, a growing picture of the enemy's Order-of-Battle, dispositions, equipment and practices began to be built up laboriously. Better procedures to govern "Ultra" distribution and use in London and theatre commands were evolved. "Ultra" was clearly seen as a potentially decisive asset which could help to anticipate enemy moves and improve and economize British dispositions, but it was a mixed blessing. As a valuable but incomplete insight into the enemy mind, it needed to be used with great care and recognized for what it was - a valuable supplement which required constant attention and formed only part of the whole intelligence picture. "Ultra" could not win battles itself nor even often yet give accurate and complete warnings, but it improved to the point where reliance on it was increasing. Churchill seized on it early and again this was a mixed blessing.[8] Churchill's support sustained its growth, and personal access to it strengthened his criticisms of overcautious plans; but his tendency to overlook its limitations encouraged his practice of badgering his commanders to excess without adequately considering the real obstacles they faced. "Ultra" could help to improve the balance and break down preconceptions, but it was no deliverance - intelligence still had to correctly assessed and applied.

Intelligence most conspicuously failed in the attempt to assess German intentions in the east. As the German concentration in the east grew, Whitehall's preconceptions continued to hamper the effort to assess its importance. The cynical 1939 pact with Hitler and poor Soviet performance in the attack on Finland increased profound Whitehall aversion to Soviet policy and contempt for Soviet power. However, the sheer physical

size of this power and the ruin of the blockade after Stalin's agreement to supply Hitler with raw materials forced Whitehall to try to improve ties with the Soviets. Stalin rudely rebuffed the first ploy, the appointment of a noted radical socialist, Sir Stafford Cripps, as Ambassador. Attempts in November to improve relations on more cynical grounds fared no better. Stalin still hoped to find a formula which could deflect German ambitions or buy time to mobilize. In this atmosphere he came to regard all British feelers as attempts to embroil him in the war and his appeasement of Germany intensified. This had serious effects on mutual relations as, by April, Churchill was convinced that the Germans intended to attack the Soviets. The JIC disagreed. They traced the transfer of forces to the east but seriously misinterpreted the overall intent and the diversion of forces to the Balkans. In their view Hitler intended to knock out the British first, in the U.K. and the Mediterranean, and was merely trying to intimidate the Soviets in order to force them to increase their supplies.[9] Unfortunately, there were sharp disagreements both within Whitehall, and between it and Cripps, over whether, and how, to improve relations with the Soviets. Serious mistrust prevailed all around. As late as 29 May the JIC still felt convinced Britain was the prime German objective.[10] However, a week later, when German concentrations increased after their Balkan success,* Whitehall was at last convinced that a new war was imminent. Renewed warnings and offers of diversions were made, to no avail. Stalin seemed convinced that if he ignored it the German attack would not occur. Cabinet took stock on 16 June and the results were grim. Cripps was convinced the best case would be a Soviet armistice short of utter defeat. Warned by the JIC to expect no more than a two month respite, Whitehall faced the new situation in as much uncertainty as ever.[11]

This uncertainty was more desperate because the emergence of the Soviet quandary had been interwoven with a frustrating series of British setbacks, which called the original speculative time frame of grand strategy into serious question. Events also further enhanced COS control and contracted the supplementary efforts, with results that seemed to amount to near paralysis. Still ostensibly the central theme, but first to be placed in jeopardy, was economic warfare. Military weakness forced the British to lean

* *See below, p.82*

more on diplomatic pressure to try and staunch serious flows of vital raw materials from Scandinavia, Turkey, Vichy France, Spain, Portugal and the Soviet Union. Without the leverage of force there was little success. This left the blockade further at the mercy of other overstrained departments. Dalton did not have any better luck in his covert sphere, SOE. As SOE tried to expand its network and resources it found itself utterly at the mercy of the COS for supplies required to train and equip and liaise with its units and resistance forces and for aircraft to deliver and sustain its efforts. There were calls for SOE's help in attacking oil targets. In April its training syllabus was formally switched to the offensive. Despite this, SOE and resistance both grew painfully slowly, stifled by German success and the competition for resources.[12] The incitement of a coup in Yugoslavia in late March was an apparent success, but it was quickly swept aside by the German attack in response. Combined Operations remained equally unsuccessful. Keyes' pressure for more aggressive strategy strained relations with the COS to the point where in January Churchill tartly ordered him to obey orders.[13] Keyes' efforts to develop amphibious forces and launch raiding operations continued to be hindered by service suspicions, the drain of forces from the U.K. and especially the retention of forces for contingency operations. The COS advice to concentrate on small "butcher and bolt" raids in northwest Europe was accepted, but soon caught up in serious crises in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean.[14]

The same crises continued to relegate efforts to reinforce the Far East to a receding future. Despite increased tension there remained strong opposition to diverting forces from more active theatres. Further planned reinforcements were delayed or reduced and the policy of relying on U.S. support, to be won at the staff talks, was reaffirmed.[15] This held fast despite increased pressure during a visit to London by Australian Prime Minister Menzies and a European tour by Japanese Foreign Minister Matsuoka. Menzies' pressure was rejected by the COS, who cited American reluctance to concentrate at Singapore and their decision to approve the "Germany first" policy.* They expressed confidence that planned reinforcements could handle the threat, rating Japanese fighting power no greater than that of the Italians.[16] The DC(O) confirmed

* *See below, p.91*

a policy on 9 April which unanimously agreed that the very contingency which would call for jettisoning the Mediterranean, a direct attack on the Dominions, would also ensure U.S. support. Menzies' pressure was ascribed to his tight domestic political situation, which Attlee and Churchill described condescendingly as in need of "education." Churchill also rejected any guarantee of the Dutch colonies and insisted that British policy keep in step with the U.S. Matsuoka's talks in Berlin and a surprise Non-Aggression Pact with the Soviets stirred Churchill into warning Tokyo of the consequences of pressing the Anglo-Saxon powers, but Menzies received no satisfaction. The extent to which policy remained bluff and reliance on the U.S. was underlined by a directive by Churchill which announced, to the General Staff's consternation, that American support was to be assumed and Ministers would provide - how was not specified - ample warning of need to strengthen the Pacific area.[17]

Any chance of reinforcements for the Far East was wiped out by the serious escalation of the war in the critical Atlantic and Mediterranean theatres. Pound started out confident of being able to contain the U-Boats,[18] but Hitler's decision to escalate pressure on British commerce soon told. The number of U-Boats at sea tripled by March, surface heavy units sortied, and British shipping losses rose steadily. In response escorts were reinforced, a new integrated naval/air Western Approaches headquarters was set up in Liverpool and capital ships were deployed to screen convoys. But friction between the Services increased, as Portal criticized the drain on Bomber Command's campaign over Germany from increased calls to aid Coastal Command. Churchill intervened to order "absolute priority" for protection of the vital sea lanes. In practice this translated into accelerated naval production, the transfer of all remaining destroyers and six Coastal Command squadrons to convoy escort, and, on 6 March, a major new directive. Churchill's own account stated that he realized the mortal threat to the whole war effort posed by the attrition of shipping and disruption of imports and was spurred to action by the heavy losses. By declaring the "Battle of the Atlantic" and setting up another flexible top level committee he hoped to galvanize efforts and improve co-ordination. However, despite the detail, his true theme was the belief that hasty improvisations and a vigourous offensive by air and naval forces could overcome the

threat in months.[19] This quintessentially Churchillian faith in vigorous leadership and action underlined the fact that he and Portal were not yet convinced that the Atlantic threat called for an extraordinary sustained effort, that is for a reversal of grand strategic emphasis rather than a temporary response.

This decision reflected the lingering dogma that "defensive" and "offensive" campaigns could be compartmentalized and were of different value. This crippled serious inter-service co-operation. Offensive tactics disorganized efforts to increase U-Boat kills just as convoy close escort began to show results. Churchill described shipping losses as his gravest concern, yet then decided to reduce imports in order to expand overseas reinforcements.[20] Bomber Command could reluctantly be compelled to "divert" attention to efforts to destroy the German battlecruiser squadron which had docked in Brest, but only by Churchill, because the COS alone had no authority to compel the Air Ministry to change bombing policy or the balance of aircraft production. Shipping losses doubled in two months and the merchant fleet declined to 7 million tons active on convoy routes. There was a peak of sorts in May, as the Mediterranean strain reached its climax. The 15" gun battleship **Bismarck** sortied, and, at the cost of a massive sea hunt, involving Force H and the entire Home Fleet and the loss of the battlecruiser, **Hood**, was caught and sank on 27 May. This ended the surface raider threat but that could not then be known; what should have been seen was the importance of inter-service co-operation in dealing with her.

Bomber Command attacks on Brest prevented **Bismarck** from enjoying more than an 8" cruiser in support. The Fleet Air Arm's torpedo bombers struck the vital blow which forced **Bismarck** to reduce speed so that the fleet caught her. Yet the Air Staff's attention was riveted onto its private war over Germany and continued to see calls for other efforts as subsidiary and as threats to their strategic role. Nor was there any pressure from the top to increase development efforts on behalf of Coastal Command. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that the unspectacular "defensive" struggle was being shrugged off onto the Admiralty's shoulders. One false dawn emerged in intelligence, greatly improved by the maturing of the Admiralty's Operational Intelligence Centre. Its efforts to link plans and operations were now aided by the capture of an

intact Enigma machine and cyphers on U110, which made it seem likely that current and basic inteiligence on the U-Boats would improve.[21] But it was also uncomfortably clear to the Admiralty that better use of it could only be made if Churchill were persuaded to give more sustained support to its efforts. This was a grave misplacement of priorities which contributed to the serious debate emerging in response to setbacks in the Mediterranean.

While home and Atlantic defence and strategic bombing remained the basis of strategic thinking, the attempt first to preclude then to beat off German intervention in the Mediterranean emerged at the forefront of current grand strategy in the first six months of 1941. Through six confusing months, expectations went from expansive to desperate. Scrambled attempts to respond to enemy moves underlined three vital lessons: 1) British power was everywhere too weak to concentrate what seemed adequate force anywhere; 2) British ground forces were not a match for German ground forces; 3) modern war was integrated vertically and horizontally - decisions regarding one area affected others, campaigns everywhere depended on the efforts of all services to work in unison. The war escalated quickly into areas of great political tension and the pace of events seemed likely to overwhelm Cairo and Whitehall. It became clear that the enemy retained the overall initiative. Increased reinforcements drained the U.K. buildup and used up shipping needed for imports. Yet the lure of offensive success plus the fear of German response proved a powerful magnet. This seriously divided Whitehall and Cairo over the relation of current operations to basic grand strategy and relative priorities everywhere.

There was steady success wherever the Germans had not arrived. COMPASS turned into a rout. Two divisions shattered an Italian army of 14 divisions. An annihilating victory at Beda Fomm on 7 February capped the conquest of Cyrenaica, the eastern Libyan province. From January to June, Imperial forces cleared almost the entire vast East African theatre and broke 13 more Italian divisions. In May, mounting trouble in the virtual protectorate of Iraq exploded in a pro-Axis coup and an attack on British positions. Improvised forces quickly recovered and tightened control. German efforts to intervene, coupled with increasing Vichy collaboration, led to a decision to take Syria

and secure the vital Middle East oilfields from any threat. This led to further trouble with all French factions in a fiasco reminiscent of Dakar. However, after a few weeks heavy fighting, a favourable armistice was secured on 11 July. But all these successes took place against the backdrop of German moves which proved too powerful for Imperial forces.

Early German moves illustrated that the Mediterranean had to be seen as a single theatre, in which the Axis held the initiative. An air corps deployed in Sicily in January soon made it difficult for the Mediterranean fleet and its Malta forces to interdict the Italian supply lines to North Africa. This enabled the Germans to send an enlarged mechanized division under General Erwin Rommel to Libya in February, to prop up the Italians. A much larger buildup continued steadily in Bulgaria and Romania, obviously aimed at salvaging the Italian attack on Greece. British intelligence accurately charted these moves,[22] but Germans intentions and capabilities were badly misread. It was generally felt that all this activity indicated a strategic offensive to capture the whole British Middle East position. At this point overall weakness and conflicting perspectives on intelligence and logistics proved decisive. Staffs in London and Cairo were well aware that logistics, the ability to maintain and strengthen forces at the desired points, was the crux of strategy. They were also aware that the length of supply lines to and in the Mediterranean, and the dearth of facilities, greatly aggravated the difficulty of maintaining a successful defensive, let alone tactical offensives, over such a far flung area. But intelligence reports and considerations of German logistical obstacles seemed to promise a brief respite in which available forces could be concentrated at the most crucial point early enough to improve the overall position. In this atmosphere, it was decided to send Eden and Dill to Greece in late February to reconsider switching priority from finishing off Libya to a major redeployment in Greece. It was hoped to rally a new alliance and ward off the perceived threat to the vital Middle East before any serious threat could arise in Libya.[23] After an intense debate, with several twists, Cabinet in the end decided unanimously on 7 March to risk an Expeditionary Force. As it could only arrive in time if drawn from Africa, the Western Desert Force was placed on the defensive.

This was one of the most controversial strategic decisions of the war and is a case study of how domestic and international political factors, different perspectives, intelligence and military factors all impinged together on strategic decisions at the summit. Everyone accepted that the move was a gamble, especially as inadequate airpower was available, but several factors proved decisive: 1) Eden's confidence the Yugoslavs, if not the Turks, could be rallied and a Balkan bloc formed; 2) Wavell's confidence regarding Libya; 3) Dill's acceptance of the military risk; 4) the perceived threat to the Middle East; 5) and an unwillingness to abandon yet another ally.[24] But the three division Expeditionary Force could only be built up piecemeal, and efforts to forge a new coalition failed. Turkey proved reluctant to risk German anger and rejected RAF deployments.[25] Yugoslavia first bowed to German pressure; an angry coup in response raised British hopes yet came too late to co-ordinate any plans. British weakness left diplomacy helpless; this, plus logistic strain, virtually ensured failure.

At first the Yugoslav coup and a naval victory over the Italians off Cape Matapan, aided by signals intelligence, raised hopes that the whole strategic gamble would succeed. Then on 31 March the VCOS noted Cairo now felt the Germans dominated the central Mediterranean and were disturbingly strong in Libya.[26] When the German Twelfth Army and strong air forces attacked in the Balkans on 6 April, they crushed the weaker poorly co-ordinated Allied forces in less than two weeks. Imperial forces were successfully evacuated by the end of April, but it was bitter to see Imperial arms humiliated yet again and to face a now imminent threat to the whole strategic position. Rommel's actions were even less welcome. Lulled by "mirror imaged" intelligence and logistic estimates, Wavell allowed his best units to be sent back to refit or over to Greece. Rommel exceeded his instructions and caught the British off balance with an ambitious offensive by one and a half German and four Italian divisions. By mid-April he had destroyed 2nd Armoured Division, besieged sizeable forces in the port of Tobruk and regained the Egyptian frontier. Rommel's audacity and the superior combat power of his German troops faced the British with the ruin of their whole intermediate strategy. The implications were enormous, as Churchill saw:

> "Far more important than the loss of ground is the idea that we cannot face the Germans and that their appearance is enough to drive us back many scores of miles."[27]

London reversed priorities and called for all out efforts to roll back Rommel and cut his supply lines, even at the risk of the Greece evacuation or the loss of a battleship.[28] Tobruk held, but that was all.

The resumption of contact between Imperial and German ground forces altered the complexion of the war. The root of the problem was the inability to be strong enough anywhere. However, Churchill and the COS approached the problem from different perspectives. The COS invariably felt that as British combat power, especially on land, seemed relatively inferior, strict priorities and sound logistics were imperative. Churchill necessarily paid closer attention to political pressures, and also often rightly considered logistic complaints excuses for inaction. Churchill's pressure was often useful, but equally often he seemed too ready to assume that his general's legitimate respect for German combat power was overdone. In this case access to "Ultra" was a mixed blessing: intelligence could not often sort out the intangible question of relative combat efficiency. These themes composed from here a running argument in which both sides at times made more sense; but at this point, Churchill's illusions, not all his alone, proved detrimental.

Wavell was compelled against his will to divert forces to Iraq and Syria, which added to his burdens; then he was forced into an early attack, and was beaten off by Rommel. Real disaster followed in Crete, a valuable flank position held by the British since October but only belatedly strengthened. For the first time really consistent intelligence gave ample warning of a strong airborne and amphibious attack and London expected the Imperial forces to deal with it; the operation was codenamed SCORCHER.[29] But intelligence and seapower could not overcome airpower. In a vicious battle, the German airborne force was savaged but carried the island after six hard days. By 26 May another evacuation ensued and the unopposed German Air Force punished the fleet, sinking three cruisers and six destroyers and damaging one battleship,

one aircraft carrier, six cruisers and seven destroyers.[30] These setbacks were so costly that logistic and intelligence factors now impinged seriously on the grand strategic level.

Whitehall was reluctant to escalate reinforcements, because it still saw German grand strategy as a co-ordinated offensive against the U.K. and the Mediterranean. Even when it did the supply line was 12,000 miles long. In consequence all reinforcements dribbled in piecemeal, and heavy reliance was placed on Imperial forces. Wavell received six divisions before April, but only one was from the U.K. The COS felt trapped, reluctant to drain the U.K. but now aware local forces were not strong enough to succeed. Churchill's relentless pressure resulted in desperate measures and created the dangerous expectation of more aggressive action. Aircraft carriers repeatedly flew fighters into Malta. Churchill's insistence led, on 20 April, to a decision, over Dill's objection, to send out a whole brigade of cruiser tanks right through the Mediterranean.[31] In spite of the obvious strain of these efforts, Churchill's scrutiny of intelligence and logistic estimates convinced him that Cairo had misread German strength and intentions repeatedly and Wavell's forces were strong enough to defeat Rommel. However, not only were these forces troubled by overall weakness, they seemed unable to combine their efforts in the field. Early faith in inter-service co-ordination and sympathy for RAF deficiencies was eroded by its failures in Greece, Crete, Libya and the central Mediterranean. Coupled with the Army's inability to cope with German armour, this led to serious friction.[32]

After Crete the RAF's numerical weakness was subsumed by claims that its failure left Malta helpless and gravely affected troop morale. The services could not combine arms in battle well enough to match German combat power and did not have the numbers to offset this. Calls for direct naval and military control of designated squadrons arose, a desperate response to the problem of general weakness. Churchill, and several in the inner circle, disagreed. They felt that existing forces could and must restore the situation quickly. It was a deadly formula - not enough forces, not well handled, too many threats, friction at high levels - fuelled by increasing desperation that the assumption that intermediate operations could succeed, with reasonable force and

speed, might be wrong. The crisis thus brought current grand strategy right into another major review of the underpinnings of grand strategy and the limits of national power.

This review amounted to a wide ranging Whitehall debate on prospects and policy as the war situation changed daily. What emerged was a searching if scrambled audit of the components of national power in terms of the policy assumptions of 1940. The political leadership felt the strain of a wider war and several trends emerged. Churchili further strengthened his control of current strategy. Cabinet was closely involved in far reaching decisions such as the move to Greece, but the daily control of the war fell to Churchill and the COS. The "lowest common denominator" policy - victory and focus on the war - continued. The Reconstruction Committee formed under Greenwood was relegated to low level activity as his influence declined. In May a committee under Sir William Beveridge was formed to study social policy, but for now Churchill's policy governed.[33] Pressure for a "reasoned peace" continued, largely from circles disenchanted with Churchill's regime.[34] Serious disenchantment with Churchill's personal style and direction of strategy, particularly his daily telegrams to theatre commanders and idiosyncratic and relentless badgering of the COS, arose both in those same circles and among the Staffs. Lord Hankey, creator of the COS committee system but now relegated to peripheral ministerial tasks, became convinced that Churchill was surrounded by "yes" men and bullying the COS into unsound strategy in the "rolling seminar" that made strategic decisions.. Hankey intrigued steadily from April to June to challenge Churchill's conduct, but his campaign was weakened by personal resentment at Churchill's style and his own demotion and the fact that much of his support came from fellow ex-Chamberlainites.[35] Irritation with Churchill's style was serious enough to unnerve the PM, but he remained confident in his esteem in public opinion. Deliberately arranged debates in Parliament helped hold the critics in check.[36]

Mistakenly, it was believed that the string of defeats were the result mainly of Churchill's pressure on Staffs and Commanders for the maximum possible offensive. In a strategic defensive context Churchill's actions did too often cross the fine line between useful pressure and reckless badgering, but the real root cause was overall weakness.

This was too profound a problem for easy criticism, whereas personalities provided a more visceral target for reactions that reflected political divisions and frustration. Bolstered by his now immense popularity, Churchill turned aside the critics and even strengthened his own faction. Lindemann became Baron Cherwell, on whose office Churchill came to rely for the watching brief by which he relentlessly prodded military and civil bureaucracy. Beaverbrook's influence increased and in May he was moved to a War Cabinet post without portfolio, to act as a general troubleshooter. Portal emerged dominant in the Air Ministry and as the strongest force on the COS. Pound suffered from personal problems and Churchill's eccentric habits, Dill from the latter and worsening strategic disputes; both declined in influence. The Staffs were greatly strained by the escalation of what had to remain a defensive war and the cross currents this generated. It does seem as if Churchill's influence became excessive by early summer. This was less so in the civil sphere, by his own choice and due to the rising stature of Anderson and Bevin, who became powerful forces in structural policy. On the whole, the central machinery shook, but held.

The military components of power seemed plagued by greater and more endemic difficulties. All three services suffered before 1939 from neglect and their own often lax mental preparation, and after the outbreak of war from the dilution caused by belated expansion. The Army seemed particularly weak and its defeats in 1940 and 1941 were rude jolts. It had been politically the most vulnerable service and suffered worst in all respects. After the 1940 "lessons" a new force was planned, more heavily mechanized and tailored for multi-service "igniter" and overseas campaigns. Time pressed, however, and this sparked an unbalanced expansion based on the infantry, a citizen army learning on the job. They were led by a diluted officer corps which also largely reflected the national tendency to amateurism and parochialism, especially in the armoured corps. On the positive side, regular units performed well. Home Forces responded to the able command of General Sir Alan Brooke. Imperial forces, which had long shared British doctrine, outlook and methods, fitted in fairly easily. However, lingering debate over all aspects of the Army's role and establishment plus serious confusion over battle doctrine, coupled with the piecemeal drain on Home Forces, hampered its progress.[37]

German combat power was respected even to excess and after the Mediterranean defeats a serious morale crisis seemed likely.[38] The RN was more professional and self-confident, but under much greater overall strain because of its widespread tasks. On top of everything else the U-Boat threat became surprisingly severe, a situation aggravated by Churchill's pressure for "offensive" strategy. Despite the fact that the RN buildup would take the longest and even though its task was the most urgent, its program fell into general third priority. Only a conditional pledge to renew a balanced buildup could be secured. The most serious problem, shared by the Army, was the general inability to define ways to operate in unison at the sharp end. As demonstrated in Norway, France and the Mediterranean, maritime and ground campaigns now depended on strong airpower as an integral element. Even on a grand strategic level the RAF seemed best able to deploy still uncommitted force, and claims for its assistance were legion.

In responding the Air Staff faced several, some even legitimate, obstacles. The Air Staff sensibly insisted that airpower was an indivisible element best controlled and deployed as needed by expert unified command, at all levels. They less sensibly felt their own cherished autonomy and strategic vision demanded primary focus on campaigns in which airpower clearly led - i.e. those of Bomber and Fighter Commands. Lip service was paid to calls for more and better equipment for Coastal and Army Co-Operation Commands. The diversion of Bomber Command to "naval" targets resulted in no lasting enhancement of maritime airpower. Overseas needs raised the less avoidable problem of logistics. Airpower proved to be tactically mobile but strategically ponderous, bound by its heavy technical and supply needs to well organized ground establishments with ample reserves to sustain serious effort. Complaints about unco-ordinated campaigns and poor support reached the DC(O), but overall weakness generated extreme calls for divided command which only hardened positions.[39] Flexible empirical solutions to changing problems, not abstract divisions, were the answer. This was obscured by emotional competition for scarce resources and the strain of failure. In its component parts, and at the crucial point of united effort British military power was still developing. There is some truth to the stock answer that the cause was traditional peacetime neglect and confusion. There was also a deeper malaise of complacency in thought and

amateurism in practice, worsened by inter-service feuds. A new professionalism had to be developed, and the midst of a total war was not an easy context. Unfortunately, the need to settle structural balance and strategic roles only worsened this standing friction over resources and methods.

Through the confusion of events and the perpetual struggle to secure better information on production prospects, a revised view of the balance and emphasis of grand strategy seemed to evolve. It can best be traced through the evolution of the major factors - American supply, shipping capacity, and the structural commitments to the three services. Uncertainty about American policy and resentment at American attitudes lingered in Whitehall. Both seemed justified by the U.S. government's hard stance, forced on it by a public opinion divided over moving closer to war. But financial straits forced the British to relax their opposition to concessions. Churchill insisted the British "had to meet U.S. difficulties" and went so far as to proclaim publicly "give us the tools and we will finish the job."[40] The British were rewarded when Congress passed the Lend-Lease Act on 11 March, but the price was high. Morgenthau had to insist the British pay for almost all current orders, shed more assets, and negotiate an unspecified "Consideration."[41] The law empowered the President to lease or lend equipment to any nation whose defence he deemed a vital U.S. interest. The terms also made the U.S. government and thus its service departments directly responsible for foreign orders. This indicated that the policy was not merely a step towards alliance but also very naturally meant to further American interests and control of resources.

These were future concerns, but for now the policy allowed the British to overhaul policy on a long term basis and move for closer synchronization with the Americans. Purvis' lobby for a statement of total requirements had already resulted in the compilation of a "Balance Sheet," which listed current British programs plus estimates of the levels needed "to win the war." Roosevelt received it in January, followed by detailed figures forwarded in February which amounted to a value of $18 billion. Whitehall resisted commitment to specific figures, but Purvis and his colleagues insisted on the need to warn the Americans of the general scale of requirements in order to implant a desirable scale for Lend-Lease. Churchill rightly felt the numbers were

"astronomical," but this only began the process of raising American sights.[42] On the British side, the long term security of Lend-Lease did not offset growing concern over immediate deficiencies. Greater need, higher losses and better information now drove home the fact that shipping capacity would set ultimate limits both on national power and on how much of it could be deployed overseas. In March A.V. Alexander, the First Lord, warned that enemy action, port congestion, weather and many other strains were reducing carrying capacity and import levels.[43] Overseas reinforcements were also cutting heavily into U.K. imports, because unexpectedly poor relative combat power had forced an increase in the flow. The Import Executive had already warned that increased ship losses and Mediterranean needs made the 1941 estimate of 35 million tons obsolete.[44] This cast more doubt on the Army's future role, soon worsened by problems with its own program.

In January, noting that new overall needs were far greater than potential supply, the War Office called for a review of the whole 1942 target program. In February it complained that the stop gap policy of pressing "infantry" tank and two pounder gun production threatened essential introduction of new "cruiser" types and six pounder guns. Churchill refused to admit the danger and demanded even more armoured forces, citing clearer shipping and strategic constraints. The Ministry of Supply felt its capacity was being wasted on inflated ammunition targets and warned it could not accelerate new types, without cutting current output, without more labour. Because current output had risen, it was decided to extend it while a major overhaul of requirements and conflicts with other programs was conducted.[45] Churchill decided that recent trends now called for a redefinition of the Army's role and the effects on overall policy.

In three directives in March, Churchill tried to extend reorganization beyond the Atlantic emergency focus. On 6 March he set down a directive on "Army Scales." Claiming that new establishments after Dunkirk based the 55 division scale on excessive manpower claims, calling for forces too large to be shipped but too small to fight on the continent, he proposed the Army limit itself to two million men and reorganize them to increase its combat power. Up to fifteen armoured divisions should now be established by converting more infantry units. Home Forces should retain the bulk of British

divisions and organize a 10 division strike force for "igniter" operations. The Army should tailor itself to an important but secondary role in grand strategy, while the navy held the line and the air force took the lead. This directive, the Atlantic focus, and direct clashes between tank and aircraft programs led the COS to warn on 10 March that the whole vision of 1942 grand strategy would have to be reviewed. The War Office responded that it was dangerous to assume air operations alone could be decisive; although the future was uncertain, it might eventually be possible to launch a full 17 division strike force. This would call for a new manpower scale. Even now greater intake was essential, especially for the infantry. Churchill agreed a"coup de grace" scenario was still viable, but felt the War Office claims were based more on an **unrealistic** vision of a future continental role.[46] The debate did help him frame a directive on "Import Programs", circulated on 27 March. With new prospects of U.S. supply, 1941 imports were to be cut to 31 million tons. Supply was to bear the brunt in raw material cuts, and increase equipment orders from the nearest source, North America. It was agreed the War Office interpretation of the new scales as 59⅓ field divisions, including 12 armoured divisions and 9 brigades, could be accepted through 1942. Overseas reinforcements were to be increased. The RAF was to retain priority for its expansion. The next day a "Naval Program" was circulated. Existing capital ship orders were frozen at four battleships, and three 'fleet' aircraft carriers, subject to review in September. Strict plate armour limits were set. Escort vessels and landing craft were to be accelerated. Merchant ship production was cut, to be made up partly by greater repair capacity but mostly "It is to the U.S. buildup that we must look in 1942." Cabinet rubber stamped these directives, warning only that they would make destocking and manpower limits more serious.[47] A major shift in balance was gaining momentum, propelled by new optimism about eventual U.S. supplies and new pessimism about carrying capacity.

Subsequent developments accelerated the trend. In belated recognition of the integral nature of shipping and inland transport, Lord Leathers, an experienced industrialist, was named in May to head a new Ministry of War Transport. On 20 April Cabinet reaffirmed the Admiralty's program, reducing its priority and allocations but

accepting a balanced composition and long term basis.[48] The tank program was given higher priority, just as a serious controversy broke out over the whole Army program. The War Office complained that new and better equipment was essential, even though it sent confusing signals about just what types and how to organize them. Supply reported good increases in output in most categories, but the War Office correctly noted that target figures now bore little relation to new needs in quality or quantity. An acrimonious DC(S) session on 14 May broke up with Churchill railing against "striving for perfection," but events drove home the point that in all respects the 1940 crisis focus program was inadequate.[49] An explosion clearly loomed, soon set off by the external pressure of more serious talks with the Americans and the internal pressure of a concerted Air Staff lobby to entrench Bomber Command in the pivotal role.

The pursuit of a de facto alliance brought mixed blessings by mid-1941. One major gain was that the secret staff talks in Washington succeeded in forging an agreed basic consensus on grand strategy. Germany was acknowledged as the primary enemy. Allied power would be concentrated against it first, along "wear down" lines, while Pacific forces stood on the defensive, once the U.S. entered the war. This consensus, referred to as ABC-1, laid a basis for more formal, if still secret, military co-operation. On the other side, American views prepared fertile soil for future disputes within and between the parties. Strategically, the Americans warned that they considered ABC-1 binding on current British grand strategy, about which they had serious reservations. They feared that British determination to defend Imperial positions betrayed ulterior political motives, and was in conflict with American desires to concentrate forces as quickly as possible at the decisive area for a conclusive offensive. This view was broadly shaped by strategic dogma plus the desire to ensure that American efforts went first to expanding American forces, and that these forces went to war concentrated and under American control. British pleas for concentration at Singapore seemed to confirm these fears and exacerbated internal American disputes over strategic emphasis. Roosevelt, concerned as always to pace domestic opinion, gave only the vaguest of guidance, and let the ABC-1 accord proceed only as an unwritten understanding.[50] The American Staffs moved to formulate their own long term visions in hopes of securing

firmer guidance and paid closer scrutiny to new British proposals for Lend-Lease orders and the conflict between these and their own needs.

This closer scrutiny and general uncertainty over American interpretation and acceptance of British grand strategy raised great concern in Whitehall. A proposal to shift USN forces to the Atlantic raised fears in Dominion and Admiralty delegations in Washington that the deterrent in the Pacific would suffer. After being warned by Harry Hopkins, the trusted and powerful adviser of Roosevelt and advocate of American belligerency, that the American Staffs feared the Mediterranean campaign was not only badly handled but also a needless diversion, the COS called for a direct plea to Roosevelt to convince him of the imperative need to hold the position. Churchill, Attlee and Beaverbrook retained a firmer grip on the main aim. They insisted on full implementation of all closer contacts, encouragement of any American move to the Atlantic in hopes of an early incident, and close study of means to sway American opinion.[51]

American concerns about the Mediterranean worried everyone. Arrangements had evolved to the point where the theatre was now heavily dependent on U.S. materiel. Further talks in May increased general concerns. American liaison officers notified the COS of American expansion plans, Roosevelt's decision to send industrialist Averall Harriman to oversee British use of Lend-Lease supplies, and Washington's desire for more information on the whole Mediterranean issue.[52] Steps already in hand to improve Mediterranean logistics were approached with new urgency. Desires for early success in the field increased, as did serious talk of inducing American deployment in northwest Africa. But the greatest concern was over the American services' attitude to, and influence over, supply programs and strategy. Roosevelt's loose rein allowed the service departments to gain more control over foreign orders and it became likely that these would become part of their own programs. This, of course, made the "buildup versus aid" clash direct. The obvious military strain on the British, the continued need to galvanize slow conversion to war production and the fear of glutting the slowly expanding American forces kept supplies flowing. However, the services were able to entrench the principle of the priority of American expansion over aid to the British.

This was best expressed in a pivotal accord on aircraft allocations, termed ABC-2. It was agreed that until the U.S. entered the war, British orders would be a first charge on U.S. output. After U.S. entry, priority would be equal. The U.S. services would control all allocations and appropriate all orders. Both sides accepted this, as British orders were then the catalyst in raising production and some long term certainty seemed desirable. Whitehall did not ignore this formal notice that future prospects of receiving American supplies, and participation in British plans, depended on how the Americans viewed those plans in terms of their own. By May the whole course of British fortunes made this question critical. Churchill sent Roosevelt a telegram on 4 May which, for the first time, struck an almost desperate note about the course of the war and the need for greater American support, both to su in Allied efforts and bolster Allied prospects in neutral eyes. Yet that same day he told the COS that the U.K. could now only be considered a decisive theatre if a really large strategic bombing campaign was envisaged as the initial offensive phase.[53] This signal from the top coupled with concerns over "diversions," meagre results over Germany, the new Army role, American supplies and production clashes, tipped the Air Staff to bid for a leading role.

The changes in perceptions of the strategy and role in grand strategy of strategic bombing that occurred in the first half of 1941 are an accurate barometer of how the central machinery made decisions and what constraints it faced. Portal exploited Churchill's addiction to an "offensive" interpretation of "wear down" and their exclusion of everyone else from firm control over bombing policy to secure a favourable compromise. The RAF did not earn this in the field. Until mid-May the German attack on Britain remained heavier than the British riposte. Fighter Command attempted to exploit its supposed superiority by day sweeps over the Channel coast, alone on so called CIRCUS raids or with light bombers as RHUBARB sorties. Once separated from its ground control, it found the autumn conditions reversed. The effort proved a costly failure and took no pressure off Middle East Commands.[54] Bomber Command was already forced to operate over Germany only at night. Portal's lack of faith in the prospects of long range fighters, in the face of considerable pressure after Greece and Crete, kept it there. Unfortunately, its night efforts seemed fruitless. Churchill

approved the "Oil Plan" in January with considerable scepticism. He and the COS felt intelligence estimates were merely "intelligent guessing" and doubted Bomber Command would be able to maintain concentrated efforts while the British were on the strategic defensive. This very lukewarm support alarmed the Air Staff. Portal warned Bomber Command they would have to prove their ability to achieve decisive results.[55]

The sceptics proved correct on both counts and, by late February, there were calls to broaden the offensive, by attacks on inhabited areas to "ruin morale" and operations to assist the maritime struggle. The airmen were receptive to the former, but felt "diversions" like the latter would eventually unravel Bomber Command unless it had a fixed strategy to pursue.[56] Yet their specific target strategy stuttered, and calls for "morale" attacks escalated. Churchill dismissed protests of naval diversions and claims that they inhibited efforts over Germany as confessions of failure in both areas. The Air Staff's stock answer was that weather, diversions and teething delays in the eagerly awaited more powerful four engined heavy bombers were the obstacle, not flawed intelligence and strategy. Their "give us more and we will produce" case was supported by the continued low average of only 25 squadrons on operations.[57] Yet they could not deny tactical failure. However, a full reappraisal was forced by structural concerns.

By April the Air Staff felt that MAP's problems with development of new types and the disturbingly low total pledge of the ABC-2 accord threatened its whole vision of a mass strategic bombing offensive in the lead role. It now felt only heavy four engined bombers in even greater numbers would suffice, large U.S. deliveries were essential, and peak expansion could not now come before spring 1943. Churchill was asked to consider a larger program and a direct appeal to Roosevelt. He rejected the latter but considered the former desirable if its vast new claims did not ruin other programs. Encouraged by his attitude and by a JIC assertion that the German economy was still vulnerable to a more comprehensive attack,[58] the Air Staff made its move. On 21 May Portal submitted a strong paper calling for recognition that "wear down" was based on air supremacy and dependent on the success of strategic bombing. It cited Churchill's own description of the Army's role as secondary and squarely raised the issue of basic priorities and the futility of trying to be strong in all respects. If the RAF was kept

concentrated on the main task and its expansion unimpeded by the allocation of resources on a primary scale to a service with a secondary role, peak strength could be reached in 1943. The Army's claims were seen as so high as to make the case "either-or." Lord Trenchard, the revered retired mentor of the RAF, supported Portal by a paper claiming German morale was the weak link but it could only be snapped if Bomber Command were neither frittered away nor held down. Both labelled air efforts "offensive" and all other "defensive." Poor results hitherto were sidestepped by the implied willingness to broaden strategy and the uncritical expression of preconceived notions of a totalitarian enemy's political fragility.[59]

It was accepted that bombing had to be the "grinding agent" in "wear down" and agreed that sustained attacks on civilian populations now seemed the best strategy. Dill was able to call for attacks on transports systems to disrupt the economy, until a stronger force was active. But his easy acceptance of the "morale" claim was fatal. Even as the serious clash for labour and materials between bomber and tank programs emerged, this move and the claim that the Army would still be required to mop up German resistance conceded, perhaps inevitably, secondary status. This was implicit in the whole "wear down" concept, but Dill's arguments hurt his case. He could only qualify the point by asserting that MAP's needs should not threaten "defensive" minimums. Finally it was agreed that MAP and Supply would have to report on the consequences of an enlarged bomber program.[60] This brought the constant effort to maintain a clear outline of strategy and structure to another of its recurrent heads in early June.

As far back as March the JPS had been directed to review grand strategy in light of events and to reconsider the premises of 1940.[61] Hectic events and decisions since then seemed to indicate that neither pre or post May 1940 assumptions about the level of power required or feasible, or prospects of intermediate success, were correct. Shipping constraints were clearer. Previous general assumptions that American assistance would be necessary had become specific recognition of an imperative general need for full co-operation. It was still widely agreed that a strategic defensive with the U.K. as the pivotal position was necessary. But several developments had upset the internal balance. The Army's position was vulnerable. Its poor performance in the

Mediterranean, plus the General Staff's strong insistence on retaining large margins at home and rating Singapore over Egypt, all nettled Churchill. Also, Whitehall was, at last, accepting the need to secure the "pooling" of British and American capacity, because of the limits of U.K. capability and a better awareness of how hard it could become to secure enough American supplies. Finally, the Air Staff had gained the upper hand in its strategic lobby by agreeing to broaden its strategy and painting other efforts as "defensive," practically an obscenity in Churchill's eyes. Yet events in factory and field, and intelligence appreciations, reaffirmed the bleak basic relative power perception which underpinned the entire central perspective. The result was another sweeping overview representing all aspects, all departments and numerous compromises.

This time the JPS paper, submitted on 14 June, covered Britain's war in 39 pages. The familiar themes of overall relative weakness, enemy vulnerability and the need to pursue a "wear down" attrition strategy and build up strength in all arms, were reaffirmed. However, the original trial and effort basis launched in September 1940 also wrought important changes. Even with stricter compulsion the margin of manpower resources now seemed likely to force redistribution of effort in 1942. Imports now seemed perilously low. This required even greater contraction of civil consumption and conversion to war production. Only early American supplies and active aid could ease the shipping strain. This was so bad no new overseas burdens could be met until losses were cut. The defence of the U.K. was still priority. The new fear was that excessive overseas deployments would enable the Germans to exploit faster interior lines and concentrate enough power to invade. Brooke felt that he needed no less than 33 divisions to secure the U.K. All the COS could offer the Far East was exhortation: it had to be held "in order to win the war." The loss of the Middle East would be a "disaster," but the General Staff now feared for the whole position.

However, a German attack in Russia was now seen as probable. While German morale and economic power seemed stronger than first estimated, both seemed vulnerable to a heavier strategic bombing offensive aided by SOE sabotage. Now, though, the blockade seemed likely to at best prevent early German victory. A slightly more realistic appraisal saw co-ordinated bombing, sabotage, blockade and propaganda efforts as likely

only gradually to undermine German cohesion and power by a steady cumulative escalation. Bombing was the key. "Already heavy" [!], it had to be concentrated and escalated and only ever temporarily diverted outside Germany. Initially efforts would focus on transport systems; when the force was stronger, on "morale". It was expected that if a force of from 1,600 to 4,000 heavy bombers carried out this strategy, Germany's economic and political power would "wear down" enough to undermine its armed forces to the point where a strategic offensive could be launched. This phase was now relegated to the "Distant Future," utterly dependent on the progress of intermediate efforts and Bomber Command. It was still to be an "igniter" strategy - several invasions by armoured forces, penetrating inland, ignoring linear advances, setting off controlled uprisings by SOE's organized local forces, after German military power had been visibly eroded. But now the earliest speculation was autumn 1942.

An air of grotesque unreality still surrounded this vision. It stemmed from clear failures in all "offensive" efforts and the basic decision to continue to mobilize power beyond Imperial means. Even a 59⅓ field division Army for autumn 1942 could be pledged to meet only existing defensive and tactical offensive needs. So completely did the Staffs feel on the defensive that unless there was greater success in the field, they could only foresee dispatching two more divisions from the U.K. in 1942 if the invasion threat receded. The RN's strength could "never be adequate." Yet in spite of this grim vision and the reiteration that:

> "We cannot hope, therefore, even with full American help, to defeat the existing German Army in the field..."

it was still expected that target programs could be completed, essential positions held, German power eroded and an offensive launched. Again, this rested on intangibles - sheer faith; still flawed estimates of relative economic power; and the explicit confession that American belligerency was essential. Early American entry could ease the shipping strain and either generate a "sufficiently realistic outlook" regarding supplies or at least expand war production high enough to provide for all.[62]

"Wear down" had survi , but with three great changes. First, long and cumulative attrition was now accepted as unavoidable. Second, immediate American

entry was imperative. Finally, Bomber Command was to become the "offensive" grinding agent. SOE had a new lease on life as auxiliary to Bomber Command and the "igniter" concept. Blockade was still the formal core, but MEW now had more desperately to argue it could assist military efforts to "burrow away" the foundations of enemy power.[63] Initial assumptions that American entry would prove essential and that service control of strategy would increase were confirmed, but were offset by setbacks in the field. The whole vague time table became an even vaguer "late 1942-1943." Everything now depended on early American intervention, because it was now clear that Imperial power could not reach its ultimate potential, and the armed forces could not reduce German power, unless both were greatly strengthened. Above all, the shipping limits set by the armed forces inability to defeat German forces without numbers so large they used up ships needed for home production seemed finally to confirm the main point - American power must be fit into the "wear down" strategy.

The joint MAP-Supply review reported on 20 June. Their paper stated that direct clashes were minor enough to allow increases in both bomber and tank production, but the overall capacity of industry was now so stretched that any great expansion would take at least a year to complete and greatly disrupt all other programs. The obvious compromise answer was to point out that the U.S. was the only real source of increased supply and urge both needs be sought there.[64] This meant that if problems arose with American deliveries hard choices could be necessary. Here the Army was in bad shape in the eyes that really mattered, Churchill's. Dill had already been bested over strategic bombing. Pound and his staff mounted their own challenge to the new balance. They argued that attacking German cities meant less damage to naval targets and less resources for other commands. Estimating each U-Boat deployed to cost 10,000 tons of shipping, they called for one third of Bomber Command's efforts to go to "naval objectives". Portal argued the weather would in practice ensure this. Dill agreed with both sides. As a result the COS agreed to accept the JPS paper as a basic background outline, review production programs, and press for American intervention. All Dill received were two weak pledges, to continue equipping a large Army for a "secondary" role and to reinforce Singapore.[65] Events in Egypt made matters worse. After the TIGER convoy,

lulled by incomplete "Ultra" and pressed by American concerns, Churchill pressed Wavell into a premature offensive. Rommel had been forced to reduce Tobruk before advancing further and it was hoped to rout his apparently smaller force. A two division attack called BATTLEAXE began on 15 June. It was cut up in three days by superior German generalship, combat power and multi-arms tactics. The resulting stalemate left Churchill despondent, dangerously obsessed with Rommel, and desperate for visible success. In one of his most poignant notes he wrote:

> "Every single one of our plans has failed. The enemy has completely established himself in the central Mediterranean... Have we really got to accept this?"[66]

Although all three services felt the lash, the Army's attitude and performance was most resented. This could not have come at a worse time. The strategic review and Wavell's failure confirmed that the neglect of the pre-1940 years plus the improvised 1940 decisions had indeed saddled national power with a policy which, even in coalition, could force hard choices about strategic and structural balance. Unfortunately, that balance was everywhere upset. Germany had proven too strong and Britain too weak for anything but a "wear down" strategy. The armed forces' inability to overcome even secondary German offensives meant the 1940 "do everything" decisions could only be fulfilled if American acquiescence was early and complete. It had not been, so for the first time serious divisions on the balance of "wear down" had **not** been overcome. This left the nod to Churchill, and he had proven too susceptible to an "offensive" interpretation of a defensive situation. The balance had also been upset because plans and programs had expected American participation which was not forthcoming. What did happen, the massive German attack on the Soviet Union on 22 June, upset the balance and raised uncertainty even farther. The revelation that German efforts in the Mediterranean had been secondary deepened pessimism regarding relative power. The years of national atrophy could not be overcome by improvisations. Whitehall thought was in fact off balance. This was worsened, not relieved, by the prospect at last of a stronger ally, the implicit objective of the whole grand strategic philosophy. It was the wrong partner.

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The last six months of 1941 were the most crucial of what then became the Second World War. Hitler's failure to knock the Soviet Union out in one campaign and Japan's foolish decision to challenge the United States ensured that a long war would develop, in which the correlation of power would shift very decidedly to the Allied nations. The manner in which the new coalition came about proved crucial. An awkward coalition of powers long used to competition and suspicion was shaped by decisions of their enemics, not moulded on terms and times by considered planning. As a result Britain for six long months continued to conduct a coalition grand strategy largely by itself, under the same assumptions of relative power which had shaped its plans at the time of peak danger. Yet now the effort to reorganize strategic thought and emphasis was dominated by the need to adjust to the new coalition contexts. The constant dialogue by which grand strategy was made assumed more definite form. On the one hand fixed strategic and physical needs and limits compelled a continued comprehensive buildup and "wear down" focus. On the other hand structural and sharp end factors, and personal predilections, sparked adjustments and streamlining of strategy and the remaining margin of mobile resources. A preponderance of national effort was placed behind one element. The interaction of limits and preferences assumed more mature form. Freed from the strain of bombardment, with coalition at hand, grand strategy evolved into the basic range of choices which obtained throughout the long mobilization of Allied power. Britain's dilemma, seen fairly clearly by the end of the year, proved to be that for many reasons it could no longer afford the long total war its grand strategists were convinced was necessary. This is best understood by tracing, in ascending order of importance as perceived at the time, the evolution of the various campaigns and components of grand strategy and national power.

The over extension of British power was now worsened by a deterioration in the Far East. Ironically, a stronger U.S. stance, long a British desire, set off the sustained crisis. In response to Japanese occupations of positions in Vichy controlled Indochina, Roosevelt embargoed all oil supplies to Japan on 26 July. This was at last an explicit challenge to Japan's expansionist policy by a direct threat to its essential supplies, and it tipped the political balance in Japan towards war. However, the American move did

not result in firm guarantees of support for those Allied interests, especially Singapore and the Dutch East Indies, which were now under direct Japanese threat. Whitehall faced the nightmarish prospect of an attack on the Allies alone with possible political obstacles to any American support. Greater efforts were made to secure American support and strengthen British forces. The COS warned that Far East Command was still well understrength. Local moves to forestall the Japanese were recommended, but American support remained the core of the matter.[67] Cabinet refused to authorize any move without American support. Unfortunately the U.S. Staffs again rejected on "ADB" report calling for concentration at Singapore and Roosevelt resisted Churchill's call, at their first conference in August*, for a stern warning to deter the Japanese; political and diplomatic factors diluted the public pronouncement beyond what the British felt safe.[68] Pressure for reinforcements increased but again gave way to more active theatres. On 14 September Portal turned aside urgent appeals for more squadrons. Serious overall shortfalls and the need to accelerate Mediterranean expansion were blamed for the delay as the full reinforcement was now set back to the end of 1942.[69] Nor was the Army able to help. An idea to address Australian fears by exchanging three of their divisions in the Middle East for units in Malaya was rejected on grounds which boiled down to an unwillingness to strip Middle East Command.[70] This left only the RN and the result was one of the most misguided grand strategic decisions Churchill's government ever made.

From late August Churchill and Eden pressed the Admiralty to despatch a small force of modern capital ships. Ministers were convinced that this would hearten the Dominions, please the Americans and deter the Japanese. Churchill argued such a force could threaten commerce and tie down Japanese forces, as the Germans did to the Home Fleet; if deterrence failed, the force would be a potent offer for co-operation with the USN. The Admiralty preferred the original plan to build up slowly a balanced fleet based on the older "R" class battleships. It was felt that the best units were needed at home and that the force would fail as a deterrent, being too small and vulnerable. The flaw in Churchill's argument was neatly extracted - the British position in the area was

* *See below, p.118*

defensive and Singapore was no longer secure from air attacks as a base for a raiding force. Heated arguments in the DC(O) went against the Admiralty and in practice Pound gave in. Unable to ward off uncritical views, the Admiralty was forced to send out the new 14" gun battleship **Prince of Wales** and the battlecruiser **Repulse** as Force Z, to be bolstered in 1942 by the older units. Even worse, although Hong Kong had already been written off, it was decided to reinforce it with two Canadian battalions.[71] In November, Japanese-American talks in Washington deteriorated. This raised hopes that the ADB concept would be reviewed, but the JIC continued to warn of an attack on the Allies alone. As late as 1 December forward action was forbidden without firm American support unless Japanese attack was imminent.[72] There were sound military reasons for this. Far East Command suffered in quantity and quality, from service conflicts and cross purposes, poor intelligence, low priority for able personnel, a lax political atmosphere and Imperial wrangles. Only in November was it decided to send out a first class commander, then VCIGS General H. Pownall, as Commander-in-Chief. All this, especially the Force Z decision, illustrated Churchill's strategic leverage and addiction to "offensive" postures, and the complete reliance placed on effective U.S. support. Churchill and the Air Staff were directly to blame, but the real culprit was the overextension of British power, worsened by consistent underestimation of the Japanese. Even now, British policy remained little more than bluff.

The disparate irregular campaigns controlled at the centre fared little better. Economic warfare was given frequent obeisance as the formal hub of "wear down" but kept alive largely by MEW's continual underestimation of the uncommitted margin of German resources. The closing of the Soviet leak and more active American diplomatic assistance eased the context of blockade, but after July, Cabinet did not again consider it. At that point it was openly conceded that 1940 expectations had been too high.[73] From here the denial of resources lost importance as a general aim and became more focused on specific raw materials. SOE's fortunes were also mixed. By September training was advanced, early networks underway, and a good organization established in Norway. Dalton claimed growth was "remarkable,"[74] an exaggeration bred by desperation. A running debate on SOE's role seemed settled in August by a COS

decision not to support escalated equipment of secret armies. They were concerned about premature risings and production shortfalls and reluctant to strip the necessary aircraft from Bomber Command. SOE agreed to drop plans to equip Polish and Czech forces and concentrate on north west Europe. This won the JPS support but meant abandoning the best organized forces. Resistance on the continent was still embryonic, which did not help. Only the Army's new focus on "igniter" strategy and more active resistance once the Communists changed policy kept SOE alive in strategic thought.[75] The COS clearly meant to subordinate SOE to mainstream strategy and had the power to do so.

Two other developments emerged in early form to confuse the situation. In July Cherwell pressed Churchill to support a scheme for dropping simple fire starters for use in sabotage or uprisings. Development efforts were launched.[76] More seriously, by August Whitehall became aware that renewed resistance had arisen in Yugoslavia. Sparse information indicated two active groups - Communist forces, known as Partisans, under Josip Broz or Tito, and disparate forces under Col. Draga Mihailovitch of the Yugoslav Army. Early irregular contacts led London to support Mihailovitch as his policy of building up forces for a future uprising coincided with their own. They soon became aware of questionable working truce arrangements with Axis satellite regimes but may not have known of secret contacts with the Germans, after Mihailovitch decided to crush the Partisans to forestall a long term political threat.[77] Early Foreign Office efforts to escalate assistance and unite resistance collapsed when, in November, German attacks put the Partisans to flight and the SOE mission out of contact. The COS were able to insist all resources be concentrated on the imminent African offensive,* but the prospect of serious resistance in this area so vital to the Axis, for raw materials and as a hard flank, sparked renewed interest in SOE's future. It seemed that the organisation's grand strategic role might yet offset its political difficulties.[78]

The development of propaganda policy in 1941 was very ponderous. Some memorable efforts were undertaken, but there was still no systematic policy or co-ordination. Policy was being made by officials getting on with the job.[79] The cause of this sorry state of affairs was political - the arbitrary creation of SO1 and the dispute

* *See below, p.136*

over post-war visions between "left" and "right". In desperation Churchill set Anderson to devise a compromise, but his "Award" in May satisfied no one. SO1 retained "secret" propaganda, Ministry of Information "open" efforts, but no one defined a boundary between the two. When Churchill's cohort, Brendan Bracken, took over Information in July, Dalton tried to take over propaganda for overseas. He argued that in the new context an ideological crusade was more urgent than ever, and feared SO1 would be stifled. An unseemly clash erupted, driven by personal and political differences. By late August Eden and Bracken secured a new Political Warfare Executive, (PWE) comprising officials of the Foreign Office, SO1, the BBC and Information to co-ordinate and advise on all external propaganda. This was a blow to Dalton, who feared SOE as a whole could be eclipsed by a right wing cabal exploiting Churchill's aversion to post-war pronouncements.[80] There was an element of truth in this but also real difficulties and extreme motives on both sides.

While still clearly on the defensive it was difficult to mount credible propaganda with enemy and neutral opinion. This and real coalition imperatives forced PWE also to find its own way. Churchill was content to rely on the Atlantic Charter. It was so vague it had little effect on any opinion.[81] Yet it did incite PWE to attempt to enhance its role in grand strategy. In October Foreign Office officials met with the JPS and for the first time serious thought was given to how to define precise objectives and methods. Absurdly shallow estimates such as "the German Navy is the most 'Imperial' service and therefore the weak link" were offered, but it was agreed that a "crack" in German morale was an essential prerequisite to a return to the continent. PWE also supported bombing "morale" objectives.[82] It was a start, but further progress rested on better co-ordination, intelligence and reconciled political views. The latter seemed doubtful when, in December, Dalton insisted the continental "left" was the only patriotic resistance and only a strong post-war vision could rally it.[83] By now the COS were visibly disenchanted with the whole prospects and organization of these irregular efforts which, in 1940, had seemed so indispensable. This reinforced their instinctive turn to more conventional efforts. The centre had in practice become the supplement.

Current operations exerted even greater influence on the direction of strategic thought in the new context. Three salient points emerged from the converging pressures of a major new ally, ongoing operations and duels for resources and strategic emphasis: 1) there appeared less scope than ever for any change in the basis of grand strategy; 2) the new Eastern Front was an uncertain factor, only to be exploited to improve Britain's strategic position; 3) reliance on American assistance to meet the margin of needs in all aspects was now complete. The latter appeared most pronounced in the Atlantic campaign. On 17 June Churchill observed that now that convoy escort had been established along the entire Atlantic route, the U.K. ports were in hand, and greater American help likely, an acceptable loss level of 400,000 tons of shipping a month seemed feasible. This forecast, assertions in the JPS grand strategy paper and friction with the Air Staff brought forth a major Admiralty challenge. On 18 June Pound argued that the U-Boat campaign was an attempt to knock Britain out, not just mounting attrition. He also felt Germany was unlikely to weaken economically in 1942, especially if conquest to the east eased its general position and allowed it to escalate efforts.[84] This overestimated German focus on the naval war but did underline the point that the U-Boats were a mortal long term threat to Britain's very survival which required a sustained air and naval effort in response. Unfortunately, the success the RN began to enjoy at sea undercut the urgency of the Admiralty argument.

Despite a steady increase in U-Boats at sea, improved weather, better bases and more escort vessels on both sides of the route led to a drop in losses and a rise in imports. Intelligence organization, assessment and application were all improved. GCCS more consistently cracked several naval keys, which improved the use of forces and knowledge of enemy methods.[85] In the autumn the Germans transferred U-Boats to the Mediterranean and losses fell further still. The result was to break the focus of concentration and sense of urgency that had led to close interest in the rolling seminar. Shipping was consistently diverted to reinforcements or contingency forces. A feeling took hold that this was the Admiralty's problem and it was coping. This was especially clear regarding RAF maritime efforts and the American factor.

Air Staff and "rolling seminar" thought on air strategy and maritime efforts was dangerously fragmented. Coastal Command supported Admiralty fears and complained its strength in quantity and quality was unsatisfactory. The Air Staff saw these complaints as threats to Bomber Command's expansion, haggled over doctrine and tactics and warned no new purpose built aircraft would be ready before 1943.[86] Pressure on Coastal Command to escalate its "offensive" anti-ship and U-Boat sorties in coastal areas increased; these efforts proved fruitless and diverted attention from convoy escort. Churchill even "deplored" the allocation of long range aircraft to Coastal Command and was assured by Portal it had been an emergency measure.[87] The August conference with Roosevelt led to increased USN activity, which from September amounted to undeclared war. However, to Whitehall this was a major step toward American belligerency overall, and it is difficult to resist the conclusion that it was felt that USN assistance and U.S. supplies would soon settle the Atlantic issue. Cherwell reported in October that the 1942 import situation seemed promising.[88] Only the Admiralty resisted this new optimism.

Pound consistently warned that the RN's new escort burdens, including supply convoys to Russia, would offset any relief from the USN.[89] By October the Admiralty faced another problem - the U-Boats began more and more to exploit an "air gap," a zone in mid-ocean beyond Coastal Command's range, to make their attacks. The Admiralty now understood that by far the most effective anti-submarine strategy was continuous close escort by surface and air forces, including land based long range aircraft and improvised auxiliary aircraft carriers. "Offensive" operations should wait until forces were much stronger. Surface escorts were strengthened, but a real overhaul depended on broader consensus. Pound responded to a Cabinet query by warning on 21 October that losses were still too high and the Germans were known to be preparing around 200 U-Boats for an all out campaign. Hoping to meet Portal halfway, he called for Bomber Command to attack shipyards in Germany. The Air Staff still resented any "diversions" and also resisted more serious development for Coastal Command. Only the mining of harbours and sea lanes was willingly pursued, and that only because intelligence could be used to cite it as a major contribution and it could be done when

weather precluded "offensive" operations. Portal agreed the "air gap" was dangerous, but proposed to close it by securing more American aircraft for Coastal Command.[90]

The root problem really was this preconception that "offensive" and "defensive" campaigns were distinct, now aggravated by complacency. The respite was due to German problems in escalating the campaign and the untimely Mediterranean diversion. Experts on both sides realized the campaign would be a long inchoate struggle requiring intense effort and continuous improvements in all aspects. It would have to be seen as the very foundation of grand strategy. Despite other pressures, better equipped air and naval forces would have to be committed, better co-ordinated, and consistently maintained. The Admiralty made all this clear.[91] Unfortunately, Churchill and the Air Staff did not take these warnings to heart. Churchill never felt comfortable with the unglamorous statistical war of convoy escort and, it must be said, seized on the first indication that matters were in hand to divert his powerful scrutiny. The Air Staff missed a chance to destroy the U-Boat bases in France before they were complete. Once the battle seemed won, interest waned outside those directly involved.

The increasing attention paid to an American role underlined a new fact: the gain of a de facto American ally by increments, and a Soviet ally by default, was forcing Whitehall to take account of other agendas besides its own. However, the British agenda clearly came first. This was most obvious in the evolution of the Soviet alliance and its impact on British grand strategy. The onslaught of the bulk of the German armed forces, plus large forces from other Axis powers, rapidly became a major disaster. The Soviets were unable to stem the advance and unprepared to forge effective co-operation with their new ally. The British were equally unable or unready to establish rapid or effective co-operation. The only bond was a mutual enemy. Politically, both regarded the other's basic policies and intentions with suspicion. Churchill's pragmatic instant declaration of de facto alliance was generally supported, but basically out of self-interest. Stalin asked only for an alliance based on terms of no separate peace and undefined mutual assistance. This was agreed; clearly, yet another disparate coalition, able to function only on a lowest common denominator basis, had emerged. Churchill called for large amphibious raids and air operations from the U.K., to distract the German forces and help the

Soviets, on the grounds that if they could hold the bulk of German forces the war would be transformed. But Whitehall held Soviet combat power in contempt and German combat power in awe. It was predisposed to believe the worst and reacted cautiously. On 24 June the COS noted three broad options: 1) to take risks to prolong the Soviet struggle; 2) hurt the Germans by destroying Soviet resources, especially the oil fields, if the Soviets fell; 3) use the respite to improve the British situation. The Soviets were expected to collapse in two months, after which the Germans could rapidly concentrate against the U.K. Therefore, the COS were averse to any departure. They gave only sceptical approval to plans for cross-Channel raids. Clearly the Staffs saw the Eastern Front as only a brief respite, and preferred the third option.[92]

The German advance only increased the COS sense of caution. The Soviets were roughly told that their own policy had brought on disaster. There was much justice in this, but the real issue was whether the British, in their own interest, **could** help the Soviets. Churchill pressed hard, but the COS and Brooke continued to insist that the potential threat to the U.K. remained too great.[93] Keyes found, to his chagrin, that now that his organization was of real interest the COS could see no way to use it. In fact, the COS went through a series of manoeuvres designed to restrict all offensive efforts from the U.K. to an absolute minimum, such as the revival of CIRCUS and RHUBARB campaigns.[94] Their reasons emerged on a far more important point.

From mid-July, the Soviets pressed desperately for a "Second Front," a major ground campaign to draw German forces out of Russia. The COS rejected this in favour of escalated air efforts. Churchill telegraphed Stalin on 20 July offering these and naval air raids on northern Norway, misleadingly arguing that 40 strong German divisions were in France facing the British. In fact, intelligence reports already noted the massive German commitment in the east. It was known that fewer than 15 of the 40 divisions were first rate units and that many were being diluted to feed the Eastern Front. In the west the Germans were clearly on the defensive.[95] This intelligence and the German advance sparked sustained study of a "Second Front" from Norway to the Bay of Biscay. The COS summed up their position on 28 August and stuck to it steadfastly. What was wanted was a large raid or temporary bridgehead which would force the Germans to

reinforce the area yet not risk a serious British defeat. Landing craft scarcity, uncertain air cover and enemy buildup capability ruled out any place but Normandy. Moreover it was strongly advised that no landing be attempted until the British felt able to stay and launch a new campaign. The COS felt anything less would lead to military failure and serious political and morale repercussions. They were correct, but the real problem was that neither British power nor strategic thought were prepared for even a minor amphibious probe, let alone a departure from the whole "wear down" strategy. Training, equipment and assumptions were still on the strategic defensive. Only on 25 August did Dill even ask for a mandate for Home Forces to begin to consider continental operations.[96] The barriers of German power, preconceptions and unpreparedness were all real.

In September the German diversion to the south swallowed up over 500,000 prisoners in an annihilating battle and overran Kiev. In October, a powerful direct drive on Moscow was belatedly resumed. The changing situation further clarified grand strategic assumptions within Whitehall. "Wear down" remained the basis, but, while Churchill accepted its basic validity and defended it to the Soviets, he and other Ministers increasingly felt the Soviet situation required and allowed a far more aggressive tempo. Stalin became desperate in September, calling first for a "15 to 20 division Second Front" and then for 25 to 30 divisions to help his own front. The former was rejected on grounds already expressed. Cripps warned this made the already prickly Soviets even cooler and insisted their stand deserved support.[97] However, the second request was so absurd - it would have meant sending the entire Home Army - that it reinforced Whitehall impressions that the Soviets did not grasp the constraints on British strategy and had to be prevented from jeopardizing it. Stalin was offered two divisions, revealingly suggested for the Caucasus but at the cost of the supply effort then becoming the basis of aid to the Soviets.* However, his pressure made Churchill keenly aware of the cautious small scale operations the British intended as compared to the gargantuan struggle in the east. Churchill responded by calling for a six division lodgement in northern Norway, insisting further inactivity was politically and strategically unsound.

* *See below, p.119*

The COS were unmoved. Churchill's previous forays in support of allies in Norway and Greece hardly inspired confidence in his judgement. They also felt that draining the U.K. would be too great a risk for 1942.[98] But now for the first time Churchill's pressure forced a serious discussion on offensive options.

In early September Churchill approved Home Forces assumption of responsibility for cross-Channel raids. He also rejected Keyes' complaints about COS caution and declared it was time to review Combined Operations status. The COS seized the chance to argue that the need for a more offensive outlook called for a regular chain of command for eventual operations of larger scale. Combined Operations should stick to co-ordinating training, tactics and techniques. Keyes' complaints of intrigue were to no avail.[99] On 16 October Home Forces were authorized to raid northwest Europe. On 17 October a new Director of Combined Operations, Lord Louis Mountbatten, was appointed with the recommended mandate.[100] It appeared the COS were moving towards a tactical offensive posture, but there were limits. On 26 September the COS and JPS agreed the Eastern Front had altered the scope of current strategy but **not** the basic relative power balance on which "wear down" rested. It was felt the Mediterranean should be cleared while there was time. All were convinced Mediterranean operations would directly contribute to "wear down" by stretching Axis forces and easing shipping burdens, while all operations elsewhere other than feints would not help and were not safe.[101] There was no intention of risking a continental operation. Even feints were ruled out.[102] The COS also rejected any move on Norway and tried to deflect Ministerial pressure with alternatives. Churchill ridiculed a call for study of large raids on France in 1942 and tried an end run, asking Brooke to study the Norway idea. To his fury Brooke backed the COS with a report accentuating the real risks, especially lack of air cover, and the uncertain strategic value of the scheme. This returned attention to the Mediterranean,[103] the one area where action seemed possible.

The collapse of BATTLEAXE coincided with the launch of BARBAROSSA. This increased the desire to press hard in the Mediterranean, to aid a new ally whose absorption of German power was widely felt to have saved the whole position. However, staffs in London and Cairo expected a Soviet collapse. This shaped a

defensive outlook and resulted in an attempt to entrench the whole Mediterranean/Middle East position. The war seemed to be spreading eastward. This raised concern over the most vital resources, the oil fields, and coloured attempts to co-operate with the Soviets. Partly justified fears of German activity in Iran were cited to press for diplomatic and, by August, joint military action with the Soviets. Complex manoeuvres led, by early September, to British-Soviet occupation of the country; but neither trusted the other's motives and co-operation was awkward. The British were so concerned that the Germans would reach the Caucasian oil fields and bolster their supposedly fragile stocks that they gave serious consideration to paying the Soviets to wreck the fields or doing it themselves. Direct connections to the Soviets were the excuse. Securing oil fields and establishing a defended northern flank were the real objectives.[104]

North Africa remained the focal point. Churchill felt a battle of equal forces had been badly mishandled and made sweeping changes. Air Chief Marshal A. Tedder had already taken over as Commander in Chief RAF Middle East Command. He was joined by General C. Auchinleck who, as Commander in Chief India, had impressed Churchill by his eager aid in the Iraq affair and now switched commands with Wavell. Administrative appointments were made to clear up logistical delays and to reassure the Americans. In belated recognition of the complexity of the area, Oliver Lyttelton was appointed Minister of State resident in Cairo, to ease the political burden on the Commanders in Chief.[105] These changes, plus Churchill's convictions that commanders had extravagant logistic "tails" and BARBAROSSA provided an opportunity, led him to press for more reinforcements and an early offensive.

This opened a bitter three month debate. Staffs in London and Cairo insisted essential positions needed to be secured before any offensives could be mounted.[106] Auchinleck reported that he needed to reorganize and strengthen his forces and equipment reserves before he could move. Churchill considered this excessive.On 17 July, with Attlee's support, he overruled Dill's fears of Russian collapse and made Auchinleck's reinforcements conditional on agreement to attack in September. Ministers cited intelligence reports to argue a good chance to sever Rommel's supply lines and then defeat him was at hand, and rejected defensive concerns and stated requirements as

everywhere excessive. Theatre commanders countered that forces needed to be strengthened, logistic establishments were large because the area lacked infrastructure, and logistical capability set a fixed limit on how much strength could be maintained at the sharp end.[107] Tedder and Auchinleck were recalled to London for consultations.

On 1 August Churchill, Eden and Attlee insisted on an early offensive, citing the need to mollify the Soviets and impress the Turks and complaining on the length of time necessary to prepare for battle forces and equipment sent from the U.K. Auchinleck's staff had already submitted a paper arguing that until their minimum needs - two more battleships, four more divisions, 48 more squadrons - were in place and the Soviet situation clear, they had to remain on the defensive. Auchinleck refused to move before November and unless he had a two to one margin of forces.[108] Churchill accepted this with ill grace. Reinforcements were altered to include the whole 1st Armoured Division. On 25 August Churchill demanded Auchinleck's "huge army" exert itself and attack. While his pressure kept staffs on their toes, it could not overcome the obstacles of time, distance and logistics. Auchinleck saw no real choice but to reorganize; he and the COS stressed the danger of taking on German forces without being strong and fully prepared. Churchill's scepticism of the margins demanded and sense of alliance compulsions was justified, but his rejection of real obstacles was irrational. However, the sense of alliance compulsions only grew. This sparked further pressure and widened the difference in perspectives.

A direct linkage to the new alliance context first emerged in the western Mediterranean. Since May 1940, Spanish policy had been a dangerous unknown because of the close connections between the Franco regime and the Axis. Spanish weakness kept Franco out of the war but his policy could never be discounted. British weakness shaped a cautious policy of lax blockade and moderate economic inducements. The COS' great fear was Spanish aid or acquiescence in an Axis attack on Gibraltar. Recurrent crises forced retention of division sized amphibious resources posed to seize the Azores or Canary Islands to offset this.[109] This above all stunted the growth of Combined Operations. When Franco dispatched a Spanish division to fight the Soviets, tensions rose again. The COS agreed the Germans were unlikely to attack Spain but

feared Spanish acquiescence. When Keyes declared that only the release of the contingency forces would enable large raids on France or Norway, the COS decided the former took precedence. A belligerent speech by Franco incited the DC(O) to order preparation of a larger operation to take both areas, codenamed PILGRIM. The force gradually stood down as Madrid settled down,[110] but discussion on what to do with it heightened the whole "Second Front" debate. PILGRIM illustrated the COS firm conviction that no real departure from the "wear down" pattern had been made possible by the German attack east. Churchill agreed but deplored the COS caution regarding tactical offensives.

Events in the field further heightened the debate. The Germans transferred most of their airpower in Sicily to Russia. Rommel was forced to reduce Tobruk to clear his supply lines and became bogged down in a siege; Berlin ordered him to husband his forces while the Eastern Front was sorted out. Signals intelligence missed this but did help the reconstituted naval and air forces in Malta exploit the new situation and interdict Rommel's supplies.[111] A political crisis in Australia forced both the old and the new administration to demand the transfer of their besieged division in Tobruk. This was done, at the cost of a serious Imperial dispute and delay in Auchinleck's preparations. Lyttelton supported the Commanders' in Chief claims that logistical preparations needed extensive work. In the end, after an argument about the relative balance of forces present and required, Churchill grudgingly accepted delay. CRUSADER, a deliberate assault to destroy Rommel's forces and reconquer Cyrenaica, was set for late November.[112]

The DC(O) had already decided to press for vigorous exploitation and solicited views widely. Auchinleck and Tedder argued the grand strategy of "knocking away the props one by one " was still correct given the relative imbalance on land, and insisted the clearance of all north Africa was essential, to secure a base for further efforts.[113] The COS agreed and on 15 October urged CRUSADER be pressed to clear all Libya; this would also help open the Mediterranean and save shipping.[114] However, that same evening an urgent DC(O) meeting was called to discuss the German drive on Moscow. Beaverbrook and Churchill castigated the COS and called for far flung operations from

Norway to Libya. Attlee more usefully argued that if an operation strong enough to pull German forces from the Eastern Front was impossible, the most effective way to exploit their commitment there should be found. He and Eden cited a War Office (WO) survey of possible scenarios which included a plan to exploit CRUSADER by invading Sicily. The COS accepted Attlee's general point and seemed to support Sicilian operations to exploit CRUSADER and help clear the sea lanes. In truth they mounted a careful lobby which brought on the first open rift in the inner circle over the basic validity of "wear down."[115]

Close scrutiny of the debate indicates the COS used the idea of invading Sicily only to kill the Norway venture and never intended to proceed. A scratch plan was offered on 17 October - four divisions, including PILGRIM forces, could invade Sicily if CRUSADER clearly smashed Italian power and morale. The DC(O) approved but Dill noted the force could be switched to French African ports if the long sought invitation was sparked by success in Libya. Churchill ordered absolute priority for the new operation, WHIPCORD. On 18 October Dill noted it would drain all available shipping. The COS warned the Commanders in Chief that the DC(O) intended to press the scheme, for alliance imperatives. On 21 October, Tedder, Auchinleck and Cunningham duly urged no commitment be made until Rommel was smashed and the Soviets secure. Fortified by this support the COS now found WHIPCORD would require the Atlantic to be stripped of escort vessels. Citing a stupendous list of uncertainties, they urged CRUSADER be more directly extended in Africa. This infuriated Churchill. He threatened to order Cairo to cease all planning and send large forces to the Caucasus unless more ambitious plans were accepted. It was to no avail. The operation, as conceived, required forces great enough to curtail all other efforts. Churchill was angrily forced to accept WHIPCORD's demise in favour of a smaller effort requiring less shipping and facing no prospect of German escalation. CRUSADER was to be exploited by ACROBAT, a drive to conquer the rest of Libya. The four WHIPCORD divisions were to respond to any Vichy invitation that might result, codenamed GYMNAST. The COS case against WHIPCORD was reasonable but not the real point. Staffs in London and Cairo feared repeating the Greece fiasco by risking a new campaign before the whole

Middle East bastion was secure. The need to sustain the Soviets could not change this. Matters were as they stood in 1940. This so enraged Beaverbrook that during the debate he called "wear down" itself into question.

From early summer Beaverbrook resurrected his tendency to focus on one major aspect - now, all out support to the Soviets would be decisive and was necessary and feasible. Beaverbrook saw the COS position as unwarranted fear of the Germans. In a truculent debate on 20 October he denounced all and sundry as being more concerned to secure Britain's position than aid the Soviets and rejecting operations for ulterior motives. The latter point was incorrect. Churchill agreed regarding supplies but disagreed regarding strategy. As WHIPCORD was the plan at issue its collapse doubtless further angered Churchill, because all clearly realized that the first serious challenge had been made to the consensus that Allied power was too weak to confront German power anywhere except "across salt water" until "wear down" was visibly successful. Churchill and Beaverbrook papered over but did not resolve the dispute. It is important to understand strategic perceptions on this point. The COS were well aware of alliance and political pressures for escalated action. They now accepted the need to increase, within limits, the reinforcement flow to the Mediterranean.[116] However they remained convinced that the relative balance overall and in the Mediterranean required the Allies to stay on the strategic defensive and prepare tactical offensives carefully. Whereas Beaverbrook saw both need and chance to stake all to sustain the Soviets, the COS felt less convinced of both and prepared for the worst. Churchill shared Beaverbrook's desire to escalate action but accepted the COS view that any strategic offensive was premature. Because any operations outside Africa would have called for resources and risked German response large enough to be so defined, they were ruled out. Mentally, Whitehall and its satellites were still too uncertain to risk another strategic reversal. The slap dash improvisations masquerading as plans bore this out. CRUSADER was the only campaign for which forces and assumptions had been geared. By November it was the basis of current grand strategy. "Wear down" shook, but preconceptions, momentum and real weakness held it fast. The Soviets were placed into this outline because there was really nothing else the British felt they could do.

It is impossible to say whether had the Soviets collapsed the British could have survived another "Battle of Britain." But it can be stated categorically that no British senior staff officer was prepared to suggest that it would be better to risk fighting the Germans on a large scale with the Soviets than to sit back, carry on as planned, and work to harness American power to British policy. The Soviets were a fortunate respite; the Americans were seen as eventual salvation. While the Eastern Front dominated current grand strategic debate, the basic undercurrent became the effort to forge a comprehensive coalition policy with the Americans. However, while Roosevelt declared "an unlimited national emergency" in May, he remained reluctant to press a forward policy. British and American orders competed as American industry slowly retooled and Lend-Lease policy drifted. In July Roosevelt approved a War Department proposal for a joint review of the overall requirements needed to defeat the Axis. The hope was that this would harmonize "Allied" policy and accelerate conversion to war production. The COS were warned by their new Joint Staff Mission (JSM) in Washington to offer a more detailed explanation of grand strategy. The COS accepted the American proposal, on the basis of identifying the required general scale plus urgent items. They hoped to secure American approval of, and synchronization with, British plans and programs before making a firm commitment to specific programs and shares. A brief report warned that a greatly expanded combined "Allied" munitions program was imperative.[117] A more important COS paper updated the "wear down" outline, in order to secure American support on a more detailed basis than ABC-1.

Four important revisions were made to the recent JPS outline. It was argued that even if the Red Army warded off defeat the German Army was still too powerful to confront until the Allies had destroyed:

> "the economy which feeds it, the morale which sustains it, the supplies which nourish it, and the hopes of victory which give it courage."

Greater emphasis was laid on strategic bombing as the best way to grind down German power. It was now felt no limit should be placed on the force conducting this campaign, subject only to vital "defensive" needs. Thirdly, the "offensive" phase was now not expected before autumn 1942. Finally, coalition operations were discussed. Soviet

efforts could only accelerate the process. "Igniter" operations were still felt likely and useful. But the decisive factor would be American belligerency. It alone would enable really massive war production, accelerate "wear down" and ensure its success.[118] American support was still seen as able only to consolidate existing grand strategy. Decisions of wider consequence made this new lobby more urgent.

Domestic criticism, and a desire to exploit Britain's needs, shaped an American demand that Britain guarantee Lend-Lease supplies would not be used for commercial purposes and pledge to work for a formula for freer post-war international trade. This amounted, in practice, to demanding Britain jettison its export trade and consider a new and uncertain post-war stance in return for American supplies. The latter demand set off a three year debate but Cabinet accepted the export clause of this "consideration." Exports were, by now, minimal, and dependence on American aid very great.[119] As open alliance neared, it was obvious the Americans had their own agenda and intended to drive hard bargains. By late July a serious top level conference was clearly necessary. The American military were escalating their activity in both oceans, concerned about the Soviets, frustrated by political resistance to mobilization at home and anxious to grip the scramble for allocations. Whitehall now fully agreed with Purvis' old call for full scale joint policy planning and was desperate for American intervention. Churchill seized on a request from Hopkins to organize a full scale secret conference. On 4 August he set sail on board HMS **Prince of Wales** for a secret rendezvous off Newfoundland.

Churchill brought an impressive team along to try to tie Roosevelt to British policy - Beaverbrook, Cherwell, Pound, Dill, Freeman, the able VCAS, and Cadogan. Hopkins joined the party after a trip to Moscow, which had convinced him the Soviets would hold and should be supported. The conference, codenamed RIVIERA, took place afloat from 9 to 12 August. Although major decisions were taken, it signally failed to meet Churchill's full expectations. A public declaration of general war aims which underlined shared interests was the crucial event. While the vague principles outlined in this "Atlantic Charter" did not conceal differences between and within both governments on post-war issues, they were a very public signal by the U.S. of its intent to enter the war. The cordial personal relations established at the talks generated for the

first time a tangible general sense of genuine community of interest. But underneath, problems arose. Beaverbrook made little headway in pushing American mobilization; he also concluded British representation in Washington was too disorganized to be effective.[120] Fears of American service claims were worsened when Roosevelt decided to pursue aid to the Soviets along with joint planning with the British. Many in Whitehall supported supplying the Soviets but the Staffs were violently opposed, arguing their own needs were too great.[121] It now appeared, as competition widened, that a joint overall program could be a problem as well as necessary.

The Staff talks only worsened these concerns. After three wide ranging sessions, the COS reported the Americans were still far too concerned with their own buildup and American concerns regarding the Atlantic and northwest Africa to be ready for a serious commitment to British grand strategy. The COS brief was submitted but received only verbal reflections. Four observations were of great concern. The Americans cited mounting political pressures to insist the British services disparate claims be reconciled into one agreed strategic-structural program. This would allow the American services to exert control over programs in the name of proper distribution of resources. Secondly, it was feared that British emphasis on strategic bombing could hurt the Atlantic campaign while British aircraft orders hindered American expansion. Roosevelt's lukewarm warning to the Japanese was seconded by rejection of Singapore's importance. Finally, the need to secure the position in the Mediterranean was only reluctantly accepted, with the caveat that any major emphasis was misplaced.[122]

RIVIERA pleased the British for its stimulus to the vital Churchill-Roosevelt link, the acceleration it sparked in the USN activity in the Atlantic and the public solidarity pledge; but its signals were mixed at best. Churchill raised hopes of American entry by informing Cabinet Roosevelt had said "he would wage war but not declare it." Halifax and Beaverbrook put these words in context by warning that the President still faced serious political friction. This had its impact on British interests. New plans to supply the Soviets and expand American forces now threatened British allocations.[123] Roosevelt rejected both a War Department proposal which would have given the services control over Lend-Lease allocations in the emerging overall outline and an appeal that

Soviet supplies be taken only from British allocations. But he also called for a triangular program proposal, to be thrashed out at conferences in London and Moscow. The belief that British grand strategy envisaged piecemeal buildup and deployment of American forces to suit British interests began to concern the Americans. American missions in London warned the COS that firm British estimates of overall Allied needs were now essential. The COS tried to insist that agreed policy be confirmed before numbers were forwarded, but were forced to agree that expanded American production was imperative. Two series of unofficial estimates were offered in early September - an outline of "overall production requirements," listing very large numbers of all items, and a "Consolidated Statement" of Imperial production estimates.[124] Meanwhile, Purvis untimely death in a plane crash sparked an administrative reorganization. The JSM joined the inter-departmental committees, to ensure better co-ordination and better contacts above the American Staff level, but a resident Minister was again rejected. Fears of American service vetoes were very evident.[125] On 11 September Churchill informed Cabinet of the decision to "concert an overall program for victory," starting with Roosevelt's idea of linking estimated exportable American output through June 1942 to total requirements.[126] As it had already been decided, for political and strategic reasons, to supply materiel to the Soviets, the problem now took on a triangular aspect.

Preliminary talks were held in London to concert policy before a joint mission to Moscow led by Beaverbrook and Harriman was despatched. The Americans insisted that British allocations be adapted to the "new situation" - more for American and Soviet needs. Beaverbrook adopted the cause of Soviet aid and called for substantial British supplies, insisting they were both feasible and necessary. Three central decisions emerged. Firstly, British policy was to safeguard allocations from American supply but not by any strong protest over American policy. Secondly, American supply must bear the brunt of aid to the Soviets. Britain would offer only smaller amounts of specific equipment and resources. Finally, no closer grand strategic consultations would be sought in Moscow. Views could be offered if solicited.[127] Just before the mission left, on 22 September, an agreed statement on "Victory Requirements" was at last concluded. The American staff mission agreed to support the "wear down" outline and British

estimates that called for the U.S. to supply major margins of foreseen needs - 45% of escort vessels, 40% of tanks, 55% of heavy bombers. In return, they asked that priorities be **settled in Washington** and based on global grand strategic needs.[128] The COS resisted both the pledge to the Soviets and the American conditions, but were overcome by circumstances. Churchill realized it was politically imperative to help the Soviets, by Britain's own efforts and by sacrificing allocations. He wisely plumped for the middle course and rejected Beaverbrook's call for priority for Soviet supplies. The only real way to address the whole problem was to secure greatly expanded American production; Churchill and the Secretariat accepted this.[129] Therefore, the "Victory Program" was set out and the Beaverbrook mission launched before firm agreement had been reached on grand strategy and programs. This realistically recognized Britain's declining ability to make independent long term policy. The same realistic spirit made Beaverbrook's mission successful, but in a manner which deepened the serious differences evolving within Churchill's coalition.

Beaverbrook and Harriman found the Soviets in no mood or condition to haggle over terms or quid pro quos. Harriman and Beaverbrook concluded agreements to supply rising quantities of equipment and raw materials through June 1942. Beaverbrook even called for increased aid. Cabinet rejected this but agreed to accelerate the basic offer and convoy supplies through northern waters. This represented double loss as much of the American material was to be diverted from British allocations and much went to the bottom of the ocean.[130] Nevertheless, Beaverbrook convinced himself that Whitehall was deliberately avoiding the "correct" policy of giving "absolute priority" to sustaining those doing the "real fighting," the Soviets.[131] Cripps, on the other hand, claimed Beaverbrook missed an opportunity to establish a wide ranging alliance on a quid pro quo footing. His remonstrances were prodded by personal jealousy and were unfair. Beaverbrook had been ordered by Cabinet to limit himself to a supply offer.[132] Cripps did not understand that supplies were all Britain had to offer. The British also resented the surly Soviet attitude to the supply offer because of the real sacrifices it imposed on them. The Soviet question had implanted sustained controversy over policy. However, now that the Soviets seemed likely to survive into 1942, renewed controversy erupted

over the evolution of a joint outline policy. Roosevelt's consistent support of British emergency pleas had cut deeply into the American buildup. The War Department launched a concerted bid to entrench its own policy. Their vision of grand strategy entailed a remorseless even linear concentration of resources and forces on a clearly predictable and controlled basis. Shocked to hear that Imperial war production still seemed likely to pace American output through 1942, they submitted a draft program aimed to emulate the British and force structure to conform to strategy. Assuming the Soviets would be defeated, 8.8 million personnel were to be raised in air and ground forces, including 215 field divisions. After mid-1943, they would launch a concentrated grand strategic offensive.[133] This plan reflected the doctrine of the General Staff, its frustration at the drain of American supplies, and its growing uneasiness over British grand strategy. Increasing British dependence and problems in the field only increased that concern.

In July, Churchill and the COS were forced to defend British Mediterranean strategy in face to face talks with Hopkins and Harriman. The fact that the relative balance of logistical strain ran against the Allies was ignored. The only well made point, that to withdraw would cost more than to stay even if it could be done, smacked of desperation. Rhetoric about "Imperial meeting points" and calls for U.S. deployment in northwest Africa did not lessen suspicions.[134] Harriman and Hopkins now learned that more tanks and heavy bombers and firmer quantities of overall supplies were now considered essential to sustain current British efforts everywhere and fill necessary margins for all programs.[135] Their favourable reports on British strategy and organizational improvements helped sustain Roosevelt's support, but the War Department's irritation was not lost on Whitehall. Nor did it miss the dilemma now apparent in current and overall strategy - both now relied on the Americans to meet essential margins. This heightened British attention to northwest Africa, long seen by Roosevelt as an area in which American opinion could be weaned to forward policy, aggravated the London-Cairo discussions and further convinced Churchill to push for a more visible U.K. role in the Imperial effort. However, his call for more reinforcements was met with the reply that only two divisions could be spared and American ships would

have to help carry them; as soon as Churchill secured Roosevelt's support, the COS tried to substitute miscellaneous replacement drafts and delay the second division until 1942! This sparked Churchill into a rare overruling of the COS on 21 September, insisting on alliance and domestic political grounds that the divisions be moved.[136] The issue reflected the usual differences over logistical obstacles but also marked a deeper point. British independent capability was becoming seriously restricted. This was a vicious circle. British dependence made them desperate for American support. Their obvious dependence and Roosevelt's reluctance to define long term policy increased American services' fears of being pushed into a strategy they did not entirely support without firm control over allocations. By November, Washington supposed war to be imminent. Therefore, it seemed urgent to settle American policy and reconcile it with the British at once.

Roosevelt's "gradualism" policy left American policy unbalanced. The War Department entrenched its "Victory Program" as the basis for all mobilization and secured service control over long term allocations, but there was still no clear guidance on current national priorities. Both services were aware of British efforts to encourage Roosevelt's African inclination. They felt this would threaten their "concentration" strategy, which was desirable on its own merit and also because it would enable them to secure firm control of all production and allocation. In early October their formal response to the "wear down" outline was submitted, and it expressed serious reservations. ABC-1 was accepted as still valid but Singapore's claim to pivotal status was rejected. The Mediterranean case was reluctantly accepted. Several points were seen more clearly than in Whitehall. The Soviets were in the best position to sustain a land campaign in Europe and needed more support; the British overestimated both strategic bombing and the short term impact of American intervention. All in all, "wear down" and the idea of engaging the Germans in selected areas on favourable terms was accepted as currently sound. However, clear notice was given that when the relative power margin improved, the Americans wanted a far more powerful strategic offensive on land than the British envisaged.

It took over a month for the JPS to respond and their report ignored a crucial point. They were more concerned that the "wear down" argument had led the Americans to believe there was no need to escalate current aid, because no great offensive was foreseen, than over the call for an ultimate strategic offensive. They were also more optimistic about American readiness for war. There seems little valid reason for this. Clear reports were available of the continued piecemeal conversion of the American economy to a war footing.[137] The Staffs seemed blinded by preconceived notions and by a newly emerging shift in emphasis that was bringing strategic bombing right to the fore, a place it still had not earned by efforts at the sharp end.

The instinctive reaction to BARBAROSSA was to escalate the efforts of the U.K. RAF Commands. Here was a campaign which fit in with "wear down," might safely inflict real damage on the Germans and might even force recall of forces from Russia. As noted, even the objective of amphibious raids had become to provoke air attrition. However, all these efforts proved serious failures. CIRCUS and RHUBARB operations resumed, but proved so costly that from late August the Air Staff curtailed light bomber day raids. Churchill made a Freudian slip by complimenting 2 Group's efforts as reminiscent of "the Charge of the Light Brigade."[138] Similar troubles dogged Bomber Command. In July Portal warded off a Hankey plan to include oil targets and implemented the new "transport-morale" directive, citing the need for concentrated effort and two more specious grounds. The Air Staff felt civilian morale was vulnerable in relation to the scale of attack, citing German raids on the U.K. It also felt that German morale was both relatively and absolutely weaker than British. But it was also becoming obvious that large built-up areas were all Bomber Command could hit. Hankey understood the danger of underrating the Germans, but had no answer to the second point.[139] It was only from June 1941 that Bomber Command began to drop heavier loads than the U.K. had received, and there were now serious doubts about the efficacy of its efforts.

These were confirmed in August by the Butt Report, a Statistical Branch survey of aerial photos commissioned by Cherwell. It indicated only 20% of crews hit within 5 miles of the target, whereas 65% considered themselves accurate. The Air Staff

disputed details, but conceded the report was "a fair summary" and that Bomber Command's navigational skills were seriously inadequate.[140] Steps to develop new equipment and techniques and improve tactics and intelligence were all accelerated. By November there were high hopes that in 1942 new navigational aids and more heavy bombers would greatly improve results. However, by then Bomber Command had virtually drifted into an exclusive strategy of attacking built up areas, rationalized by uncritical views on morale and the continued misconceptions of the "practical men" of MEW but really the result of its own weakness. Losses became so heavy that Churchill, under Cherwell's influence, declared efforts a relative failure, urged accelerated improvements and expansion, and finally, on 11 November, suspended raids on Germany, in order to conserve the force for 1942.[141]

Ironically, on that same day the JPS comment on the American critique of "wear down" insisted that a vastly increased bomber force was the only way to create conditions for the ultimate offensive, so it could hardly impair overall plans. This reflected the basic assumptions of grand strategy in its newer form. The Air Staff blamed belated rearmament for their troubles, but ignored their own neglect. Glib assumptions had left Bomber Command unprepared to operate at night and with no real idea of the power and skill needed to inflict lasting damage. It began the war primed to fight off attackers but found it could not. Nor were there any long range fighters, so evasion became the last resort. By 1941 the RAF found itself able to win only that campaign it had been reluctantly pushed to prepare with some degree of realism, the air defence of the U.K. Yet strategic thought now asserted that the spectre of a larger more powerful bombing force could fulfil pre-war prophecies and should become the strategic core. The reasons are an abstract of the nature of British grand strategy and the influence of perceptions of power. Churchill was personally and politically addicted to "offensive" direct attacks on Germany. The Air Staff had invested decades of thought on strategic bombing. Intelligence promised it could be decisive. The weakness of the Army seemed to indicate it was necessary. The need to offer visible support to the Soviets reinforced pressure for direct attack. The "defensive" labelling of land and naval efforts and problems in the field weakened their stature in Churchill's eyes. The whole climate of thought compelled

continued bombing even though to date it had had little effect. The Air Staff's response to sharp end failure set off a debate which brought out every aspect of the power components on which grand strategy rested. It proposed to reshape structural power to produce a force big enough to overcome its weaknesses.

In early July Churchill complained that MAP's 1942 targets envisaged no large increase in heavy bombers. Cherwell reported MAP was suffering shortages in every resource, reorganizing its administration, and expected only 85% fulfilment of its targets, which were still based on an incentive basis.[142] In August he reported that whereas Supply output was up, MAP had been forced to lower its targets and was even running well below the reduced figures. These events brought a long running overhaul of the bomber program to the fore when, on 30 August, Churchill noted:

> "We cannot win this war unless we get more airplanes... The American production will only be a make weight. I regard this subject as a major factor in the war at the present time."[143]

The Air Staff and MAP seized this chance to bring their long evolved case to the DC(S) on 4 September, where Portal dropped a bombshell. He declared that it had been concluded that to achieve "decisive results" the RAF had to be double the strength of the German Air Force, which meant a force of 4,000 first line heavy and medium bombers. To achieve this 22,000 would have to be delivered by July 1943. The new MAP target of 11,500 plus expected U.S. allocation of 5,000 meant a shortfall of 5,500 even if all targets were met. Therefore, an all out program both in the U.K. and North America was essential. MAP wanted new capacity, much more labour, and a direct appeal to Roosevelt.[144] The implications were clear - such a program would absorb all remaining uncommitted labour and cut deeply into all other programs. Cherwell and Beaverbrook, the latter more heatedly, suggested better use of existing resources was also needed. Churchill was uneasy. He accepted higher targets and ordered a committee struck to investigate how to implement them, but asked Anderson to chair it and warned Portal to rely on British rather than American increases.[145] Prime Ministerial support raised the prospect that bomber production would become the primary U.K. program and sparked

a Whitehall wide review which forced every department to make a new case on current and future needs and prospects.

Cherwell and the Air Ministry made the bomber program case, with three main themes. Only strategic bombing could now carry the "offensive" but, because the balance of allocations had not been shifted enough after 1940, the Army was receiving too much. A stronger Bomber Command could achieve decisive results with less risk and resources than large land operations. American cuts in allocations threatened to reduce RAF expansion in all categories below the margin needed to sustain a successful offensive.[146] "Decisive", it must be remembered, meant not the defeat but the "wearing down" of German power, to the point where "igniter" operations posed acceptable risk. Nothing more than an extrapolation of damage suffered by the U.K. supported this claim. Anderson's first report claimed that by mid-1943 MAP could only increase its projected output of bombers from 11,500 to 14,500 and only on several conditions: 100% fulfilment of targets; new capacity; extending output of current types; and most dramatically, raising MAP's labour force from under 1.4 to over 2.1 million. Bevin told the DC(S) on 23 October that MAP could do more with its existing labour and warned such drastic increases would force fundamental shifts in manpower policy. Churchill complained about the small increase expected from a massive injection of resources; but Portal insisted the ratio of heavy bombers, and thus striking power, would rise dramatically. The labour claims frightened Churchill and he ordered further study. Subsequent reports confessed that the new materiel needs would collide with those of the tank program.[147]

This set the parameters of the debate - the whole war production program. Intense review followed of masses of statistics and projections but the crux of the matter was how to allocate and use labour. The debate did, indeed, force a manpower policy upheaval* and ran through confusing sets of overlapping schemes to the point where Portal insisted only the largest would prove adequate. Even then he warned more cuts in American supplies meant only in 1943 could really large numbers flow, and only if the new resources were allocated and existing types and new equipment both developed.

* *See below, p.130-133*

On 27 November it was finally agreed that the Air Ministry would reduce its ancillary needs and offer two courses for final decision. The complexity and uncertainty of the whole venture overwhelmed Churchill. Beaverbrook warned him that the decision would ruin the tank program, to which he could only reply:

> "I am hopeful there will be enough for both bombers and tanks. I do my best."[148]

The result was grim. Strategic pressures kept Bomber Command to the fore but its own weakness sparked a claim on resources so large that it threatened to consume the "wear down" vision because of the failure to fulfil the "do everything" prospectus. As long suspected, British efforts would have to be adjusted and kept at full intensity everywhere but would still need U.S. help to meet full requirements. The bomber question crystallized this, but it was confirmed by the evolution of structural effort overall.

It is fair to say that by late 1941 British economic and structural policy was largely in order.[149] Maximum possible conversion to total war production was to be pursued by incrementally and empirically reorganizing the existing structure by direct controls and revamped financial policy. Political divisions and efforts to improve information and statistics continued to influence the direction of policy. The impossible "do everything" decision and the lowest common denominator focus continued to set its parameters. Despite real progress by December 1941, two seminal points were clear. Imperial power could be made strong enough to pursue a streamlined "wear down" strategy but no more. A comprehensive guiding framework could only be defined and pursued with some assurance when a solid working partnership in full alliance had been concluded with the U.S.[150] 1941 confirmed what had been established in 1940. National mobilization to maximum war capacity was to have been completed in 1941 to allow the services to reach peak power in 1942. It was not nor could it have been, but in the attempt Whitehall made real progress in understanding the potential of national power and organizing it.

Two main weapons were used - financial policy and direct controls. For the first time, a systematic effort to grip the national economy was evident.[151] The expansion of state controls became the more direct means of reorganizing for war, but wisely

proceeded on a politically empirical basis. Public support was largely retained, even paced policy, as the life of the individual slid gradually under state control. Stark necessity was the prime mover and did much to overcome the attendant frictions which even a careful policy faced. Because measures such as rationing were seen as both necessary and basically fair and counterproductive calls for excessive austerity were resisted, sustained acceptance of total war policy was basically secured.[152]

As the situation evolved, needs became clearer. The basic factor became the need to cut imports and channel them to war production. The success of rationing and domestic harvest set the limit to food import cuts. None now disputed the need for the maximum mobilization, but there were very serious differences regarding what this required and how to achieve it. These were reflected in the evolution of central machinery. In January, the Production Council gave way to a Production Executive, meant to enable the relevant departments to act on consensus. It proved no more effective at reconciling autonomous departments, but Churchill continued to resist a centralized Ministry. As a result, friction over jurisdiction left a vacuum soon filled by the LPC and the DC(S). The LPC was bolstered by the experienced trusted hand of Anderson and the statistical work of the Economic Section. It emerged as the main forum for reconciliation of domestic policy. The DC(S) became even more the court of final appeal.[153] This extended consensus approach was clinched by Churchill's selection of Anderson to define the crucial bomber production issue. However, the LPC and Churchill could not prevent serious running disputes - priorities, exports, capacity expansion, labour policy - from hampering efforts. They represented basic divisions over the prospective long term consequences of war time mobilization and proved serious enough to weaken consensus on the direction of policy. They also represented different opinions on what the nation could achieve.

On 29 June Beaverbrook was made Minister of Supply, in order to apply his "shock treatment" to ground equipment production. In July, Beaverbrook, in his new hat, appealed for "1a" priority for tank and anti-tank gun production. Resentment at the lingering strength of the priority directive exploded. Bevin expressed the general feeling that the whole crisis improvisation approach was obsolete. Beaverbrook secured his

priority at the price of a general review intended to devise a new orderly system of allocation of labour and materials, with priorities reserved for specific problems.[154] Beaverbrook tried to exploit Supply's control over common equipment to demand return of control over raw materials (delegated to the Executive in January) and water down the priority revision to a reorganization of what was now an unwieldy list. Beaverbrook's refusal to relinquish any autonomy was cynically supported by the other supply departments.[155] The running debate reached Cabinet in late October. Churchill sided with Bevin, insisting department prerogatives be reconciled with orderly control.[156] In practice, Bevin had already won. Changing conditions made ultimate capacity and manpower limits more urgent. It was realized that once initial expansion was complete, programs would need adjustment.[157] For this, longer term and more balanced administrative policy was necessary. This sense of urgency amid changing conditions was part of and increased by the bomber debate and the nature of overall output. It became clear that the priority regime had aggravated an inadequate performance.

There was some quantitative progress. "Warlike stores production", on an index of 100 for 1940 averages, rose to 240 by late 1941. Tanks in service in the U.K. rose from 833 of all types in January to 2,167 in December. Bomber production had risen from 680 in the first quarter to 950 in the fourth.[158] However, no targets had been met. Beaverbrook increased Supply output, but again at a price. Cherwell predicted that despite changing needs the Army program would be complete by June 1942 and 50 division equivalents could then be maintained overseas.[159] However, armoured fighting vehicles remained a weak point. As early as January the WO were aware that doctrine and equipment might need drastic revision. Heavier guns and more versatile types capable of improvement seemed essential. How to do this was another story. Neither the WO nor Supply were able to reorganize doctrine and administration, or offset the long atrophy of development, before the whole program fell into disarray. All three main types deployed - Matilda, Valentine and the "Cruiser" family - proved unadaptable and fell behind their German counterparts. More problems with Churchill development induced Beaverbrook to extend existing types yet again in September, then forced the WO to reclassify Valentines to fill "cruiser" needs in Home Forces.[160] Most critics

ascribed the problem to administration. There were some grounds for this feeling, but on investigation Hankey found that the whole program, from inexperienced firms, through pressure for rapid output, to confused doctrine, was in such a state that "the marvel is that there are any tanks at all." By December the WO was at last on the right track. It called for an adaptable 6 pounder multi-role design (which became the Cromwell family), but did not expect it before 1943.[161] In this vital area, structural power had fallen short.

Time and neglect created the problem but Beaverbrook's style prolonged the confusion. The need for numbers and the general conviction, after the July discussions, that American supplies would increase, won him Churchill's support. As the "Victory Program" took hold, American supply became slated to meet all increased, unforeseen, or unattainable needs. Tanks and bombers were followed by landing craft and naval vessels. As the prospect of eventual amphibious operations rose, a larger landing craft program was urged even though production was in arrears.[162] In October and November two critical decisions were made. It was assumed British production, especially of tank landing craft (LCT), would have to double to provide for even "igniter" landings; this would still not be enough but any more meant halting merchant ship building. New techniques and designs were to be studied but a large program, including 1,000 LCT, was to proceed. Even more were to be sought from overseas.[163] Similar revisions were made in the naval program in November. All categories were increased but the bulk of smaller vessels were to be sought from North America. All this meant maximum efforts still depended on outside aid. Obsolescence in plant and method was now aggravated by manpower problems. Bevin stated that if landing craft were made by more modern methods than those of the troubled shipping industry, labour could be saved.[164] This held true throughout the bulk of war production. Ironically, manpower now became at once the ultimate limit and the most effective method of control of the national effort.

Manpower was also the most "political" factor of production. The experience of World War I helped shape a more sophisticated approach to its uses, but social and statistical uncertainties hindered policy. Bevin firmly grasped his portfolio in 1940. In

1941, his careful policy of maximum possible general co-operation and improvement of conditions emerged triumphant. In return, he accepted the need for increased enforcement of controls in measured steps. In January Cabinet approved his proposals to tighten the system of reserved occupations, increase conscription by degrees and assume powers to declare sites "national work" and insist on improved conditions before supplying labour.[165] Demand increased with new service scales and capacity extension, but Bevin continued to call for more attention to labour supply in locating capacity and for welfare improvements. Through Essential Work Orders and department compromises progress was made in many areas. Bevin's policy retained workers' support, but to many his insistence on industrial co-operation went too far. He had already blocked fixed wage controls, insisting as a central theme that maximum results would only accrue if deliberate efforts were made to overcome decades of industrial strife and improve conditions. In other words, to win the war the nation's structural flaws had to be nurtured and redressed. Heated criticism that this policy hindered full mobilization, and cries for stricter controls and sterner measures to break down union practices, soon arose. Beaverbrook felt drastic improvisations, exhortations to workers and draconian controls were all that would obtain the maximum effort and avoid excessive dependence on the U.S. Bevin insisted that this approach would waste resources and embitter industrial relations. He felt his approach was more likely to forge a durable consensus behind what would clearly be intense effort and great upheaval.[166] The debate really was over the social climate in Britain: what limits it set and what price it demanded for total mobilization. Bevin and Beaverbrook led broad spectrums, but their own personal feud became so intense it crippled the Production Executive and dominated structural policy.

This was the same basic argument of 1940 but now an irreversible decision loomed. In July it became clear Bevin's voluntarist emphasis had led to clashes over recruits and serious shortfalls of coal miners. Cabinet commissioned Anderson to study the whole problem.[167] Beaverbrook mounted a relentless campaign to convince Cabinet that Bevin's reluctance to coerce workers or unions was starving war industry. The issue of shift work epitomized his case. In September Beaverbrook complained night shifts

were so meagre that vital machine tools imported from the U.S. were being wasted. The Production Executive had already agreed a drastic solution was impossible, and decided to increase training and dilution and press for more shifts only for problem areas. Bevin made a strong case that his balanced approach was far more likely to increase output and save resources.[168] The new bomber program returned the issue to Cabinet, where Anderson supported Bevin. On 27 October he reported the new claims were so high they could only be met by serious cuts in civil production and by exploiting untapped sources. Women, especially married women, were the only large source left whose use would allow the necessary adjustments; but in order to meet war needs, maintain minimum standards, and address the resulting social concerns, Bevin's approach would have to be supported and tighter controls enforced.[169] In the resulting sustained debate, Beaverbrook won a battle but lost the war. Voluntarism fell short in the mines, output fell, and the long term situation was uncertain. Only 5,000 of a necessary force of 720,000 coal miners were needed; but this margin was decisive and they were sent back from industry.[170] On the other hand sorely needed welfare and efficiency proposals were approved. A similar process evolved overall. Bevin and Beaverbrook fought out the basic issue and the question of conscription of women until, on 28 November, Cabinet accepted a new policy.

Service and war industry increases were approved but would now be distributed by central allocations controlled by Bevin. Reservation was tightened to each individual's personal status. Conscription was extended from ages 18 to 50 in theory, to 30 in practice for women. Married women were liable, on conditions, for industry, and women had a choice between vital industries or the services, to be revoked if an imbalance arose. Bevin was left in firm control of the execution of policy, which vindicated his philosophy. In return he accepted tighter controls. The result was an overall manpower budget, to be used to control the balance of the whole war effort.[171] Beaverbrook tried to derail it on the issue of the bomber program. On 8 December he insisted MAP had been given enough resources in the October 1941 program and merely needed more labour and better management, a view he told the DC(S) the next day was supported by his old "practical men" still there. However, it was correctly observed that

the types now to be produced were larger and more complex than those of the 1940 program. Beaverbrook's stance was inherently contradictory and reflected deeper reluctance to allow central control by Bevin. He could not disprove Bevin's claim that only better standards would improve output or prove his own that stricter crackdowns would not embitter industry. Churchill trusted Bevin's estimate of the labour factor, which was now also supported by Cherwell. Even though Churchill could not be sure of anything but Bevin's general advice, he approved a larger MAP program. The target was now to deliver nearly 18,000 bombers, including American supplies, by December 1943.[172] Bevin's policy to approach manpower from a balanced perspective was astute but reinforced the ultimate limits it represented. All allocations were raised; and MAP's share, 860,000 additional workers, terminated overall flexibility. Cabinet also decided, in a debate on the post-war ramifications of controls, that the state would take all steps necessary to prosecute the war but proceed only on a case by case basis. This solid pragmatic decision maintained coalition unity, but recognized that the weakness of the existing structure would force continued state intervention as well as co-operation.[173]

Despite much uncertainty, it was clear British industrial structure and practice was too weak to meet the ambitious objectives of 1940, let alone those of 1941. Beaverbrook disagreed and feared Bevin's approach would socialize industry and unnecessarily increase dependence on the U.S. Churchill's position was decisive, but he had little choice left. Politically, maximum British effort was essential; diplomatically, even more so. Bureaucratically, only large programs all around would retain general support. Military, large forces in all elements were necessary. But structurally, which included social factors, it could not be done. At the price of irreparable rift, it was accepted that a long balanced effort required well balanced policy.[174] The overall decision to escalate the national effort and to rely on the U.S. for the vital margins was reasonable, the balance of that effort and hopes of detailed aid less so. The bomber program would absorb remaining margins to the point where only Bomber Command would be capable of real growth from British efforts, and even that relied on American help. This convergence signalled a new strategic dilemma. Structurally, vastly greater resources than foreseen in 1940 were now deemed necessary to generate adequate power. Socially,

painstaking reforms, not inspirational rhetoric, would be necessary to call out supreme effort from a suspicious society. Strategically, one clearly British dominated campaign had to be seen succeeding and soon, both to win Allied confidence in "wear down" and prevent ultimate national exhaustion. This simply confirmed the instinctive reactions of 1940, but the readjustment in philosophy and internal balance that had emerged was crucial.

This was confirmed by developments in strategic thought and at the sharp end in November and December. The basic defensive focus remained but the drift towards tactical offensives continued. By early November there was real optimism the Soviets would hold.[175] However, more serious attention to tactical offensives was again influenced by doctrinal battles and concerns of relative weakness. This produced only a cautious turn to tentative offensive plans at home and piecemeal reinforcements overseas. In consequence a gap opened between basic assumptions and posture and current objectives. On 6 and 7 November the COS ordered Home Forces and Combined Operations to prepare raids over the winter to harass German forces, providing these were not reinforced. The JIC reasserted on 11 November that the Germans would try to knock out the Soviets and then drive for the Middle East and could not threaten invasion before the spring unless the U.K. was "unduly weakened."[176] Another 170 tanks were slated for Egypt and it was decided to eliminate Home Forces tank reserves in order to top up Auchinleck's forces by the spring.[177] Given the landing craft pinch, it was decided to retain the strategic reserve in the U.K. and make raids and training equal priority; but only two divisions were expected to be ready by April.[178] Strategic thought had begun to turn outwards, but much reorganization would be necessary before even minor moves beyond existing efforts were pursued. Existing efforts meant the air "offensive," naval "defensive" and the Mediterranean. The new thoughts were but the first steps of a toddler as far as a general strategic offensive was concerned. Inter-service efforts well underlined this fact.

One timely and revealing advance was the development of strategic deception. Wavell had established the very successful Force A to conceal his moves and confuse

the enemy. In September the COS emulated him, approving a JPS call for study of systematic deception to play on German preconceptions. Soon a report was produced, calling for an organization under one commander taken into the COS confidence, integrated into the machinery, and given the task of making cover plans and deception schemes. Deception was seen as:

> "particularly important in our case since, we, unlike the Germans, have not troops, shipping, or the interior lines necessary to give threats the full backing of reality."[179]

The COS approved the conception in early November. They were unable to learn another worthwhile lesson emerging in the Mediterranean regarding combined service co-operation.

Airpower was again the crux of the matter. The airmen had to fend off more calls for fixed detachments and patrols from army and naval staffs unable to operate without strong air support and convinced the airmen's theme of central control was a blind for autonomous strategy. But stark necessity forced commanders to define methods by trial and error. By October working arrangements which improved mutual trust, by pledges of willing support by specially trained units under air command, had emerged, although the need for full integration of all elements was still not crystal clear.[180] Without the same stark necessity, London lagged behind. Coastal Command was treated as interference for Bomber Command. The more desperate the General Staff became to carve out a future offensive role, the worse off Army Co-Operation Command became. Dill's demand in June for 109 purpose trained squadrons set off a serious dispute over effects on training and production. Dill offered to settle for 54. Portal offered 20, arguing more would weaken overall fighting power whereas central control of airpower would allow it all to be deployed if necessary.[181] The problem was how to define "if necessary" and whether special training and types were essential. This was an ugly dispute, fuelled by dogma, suspicion and simple inability to produce enough for all needs.

Churchill intervened but was told in August by Portal that the RAF would help the Army "as our resources and other duties allow." This provoked the accusation that

the Air Staff had deliberately neglected the whole problem for ulterior reasons and thus had fallen behind the Germans. This "rocket" was justified, as a Portal-Tedder exchange in September revealed. Tedder reported that ongoing practical steps illustrated the RAF provided the decisive punch and could best aid ground forces by commanding the air while intervening in direct support with versatile "fighter bombers." Portal insisted the land victory was the main task but undercut this by describing air-land efforts as a clear sequence, which reflected distorted Whitehall thought and strategic doctrine in miniature.[182] Clearly the Air Staff did not desire to ponder the concept of integrated battle very closely. In despair, Dill repeated his demands in October for 109 squadrons, arguing that the Army would eventually face the Germans and must match their methods. This played into Portal's hands. He argued Tedders' ideas were superseding German methods and current operations could not be reduced to train either for 1942 amphibious efforts or eventual offensives. By December, Portal cited the long list of requirements overall and placed Army Co-Operation Command at the bottom.[183] Neither case was very sound. Besides the inability to produce enough aircraft for all needs, the problem remained one of perception. To too many in both the General and Air Staffs, integration was interpreted as subordination. Instead of emphasizing the demonstrated strategic need for close co-operation in thinking and practice, the two fell out over proposed roles in grand strategy - at least as far as the main forces in the U.K. were concerned.[184]

Churchill was not satisfied. Some offensive aspect of "wear down" now had to be seen to succeed, to encourage the Soviets and impress the Americans. Because the unity of the COS had broken down beyond the basic "wear down" consensus, his leverage on the issue of balance became decisive. Pound and Dill failed to secure consistent support because their efforts did not seem likely to succeed or fail decisively. This was especially true of the Army and it above all relied on CRUSADER, which the COS had themselves insisted remain the major British operation, to resuscitate its fortunes. As it turned out, from preparation to exploitation, CRUSADER illustrated the limits of British combat power. It took Auchinleck five months to prepare to engage six divisions, only three German. Obstacles of distance and terrain were aggravated by sloppy equipment handling and cumbersome acclimatization. The Germans were so well

respected that absolute strength, rather than relative balance, became the real gauge of preparedness. Intelligence was again a mixed blessing. A serious dispute over relative air strengths nearly led to Tedder's replacement. Information on Rommels' situation was steady but incomplete. This led to greater pressure and scrutiny from Churchill. On the other hand, timely intelligence helped the reconstituted light naval forces at Malta wreak serious damage to Rommel's supplies, which proved decisive. Intelligence did not reveal that many German tanks had face hardened armour, exactly how powerful their 88mm gun used in the anti-tank role was, and especially how superior German tactics were to the compartmentalized Allied approach.[185]

Eighth Army found out the hard way that it did not have the combat power to knock out Rommels' forces and a brutal battle of attrition developed soon after the initial attack on 18 November. Auchinleck had to take over when his hand picked subordinates' nerve broke. Superior numbers, better air support, and naval interdiction finally wore down Rommel's forces; but in the process they severely mauled Eighth Army's armour. Churchill put the best face on events, applauding the "wearing down" of the enemy and encouraging relentless pursuit,[186] but success sparked dangerous illusions. By 9 December Rommel was in full but orderly retreat and Churchill and Auchinleck foresaw the full exploitation termed ACROBAT. However, naval success provoked Hitler to divert U-Boats and an entire air corps from Russia, to restore the supply lines. This was grand strategic success but it proved disastrous for the RN. By mid-December, Axis efforts cost the RN most of Malta's Force K, one aircraft carrier and one battleship sunk, two battleships damaged and left only three cruisers and light forces still active.[187] The tide had turned again. This made it imperative to keep Rommel's forces on the run even as logistic strain forced Eighth Army to reorganize. The COS, though, had launched CRUSADER with one eye over their shoulder from the start. The threat to the Middle East oilfields and organization of a defensive barrier remained their basic concern.[188]

The incomplete success of CRUSADER combined with further friction with the Soviets to make Whitehall more desperate to retain some initiative but more concerned about wider consequences. Stalin's demands for assistance and political concessions

escalated as the Germans neared Moscow. Cabinet found these demands, especially recognition of frontiers and declaring war on minor Axis satellites, unpalatable. Serious concerns arose over the basic ambitions of their enigmatic ally. It was decided to offer the declarations but send Eden to Moscow to discuss frontiers and press for improved co-operation overall. The question of what line he was to pursue sparked another policy review in the midst of daily changing events. On 2 December the JIC forecast the Soviets would hold Moscow and stabilize the front any day, but the Germans would press for the Caucasus and release forces into reserve.[189] This summed up the dilemma. Churchill, Eden and Beaverbrook were determined to press CRUSADER-ACROBAT and arrange direct assistance for the Soviets. The COS insisted this would again risk attempting too many different efforts while still on the strategic defensive. The issue restored a stronger COS consensus, enhanced by a major personal change. Dill and Churchill were now seriously at odds over the Army's repeated setbacks and Dill's cautious interpretation of the "wear down" outline. Dill also likely paid for Churchill's apparently instinctive belief that most of his generals were not "thrusters," as opposed to his Air Marshals - a belief better termed prejudice. Churchill had to be persuaded to accept Brooke as the new CIGS and the man who could revitalize the COS. It was a fortunate decision, given Brooke's great general ability, strong character, and clear grasp of essentials and determination to adhere to them. Given his previously narrow caution at Home Forces, Brooke's quick adherence to the broad "wear down" vision and its interlocked nature reflected both its strength and his vision.

Even before Eden left, Brooke and his able VCIGS, Nye, convincingly demonstrated the folly of sending inadequate forces to Russia at the risk of falling short in ACROBAT. Memories of Greece pressed against the relative scales of British and Soviet campaigns. CRUSADER tipped the balance. Brooke cited discouraging reports about the ground battle to warn against further diversions of U.K. stocks:

> "The Libyan battle was an illustration of what happened when equal forces of British and German tanks met in battle."

Cabinet agreed to offer only a small increase in supplies and a limited pledge of 10 squadrons, contingent on success in Africa.[190]

However, great events now again overwhelmed plans. On 6 December the Soviets counterattacked in front of Moscow. On 5 December a pledge of American support in the Far East was at last received,[191] but on 7 December the Japanese pre-empted Far East Command with a wide ranging surprise assault on American and British positions. Their startling initial success worsened a now truly global problem but also at last brought the U.S. into the war. This basic aim of British war policy at last came to pass. The way seemed clear for the reorganization on a firm basis of full coalition war policy and grand strategy. Churchill, immediately and revealingly, decided to repair to Washington. This was, unusually clearly, the end of a phase. In retrospect, it remains to assess how well national power had been understood and mobilized, how well laid grand strategy had been and where strategic thought and prospects now stood.

In September 1941 military theorist Basil Liddell Hart reflected on a calculation he had made as the war began of relative power prospects and their relation to strategy. He had considered relative power strong enough to secure favourable terms but inadequate to pursue total victory. Liddell Hart considered his estimate had been justified and the "victory" strategy proven wrong and dangerous.[192] In fact, the results were ambivalent. Progress was evident in most aspects but nowhere were the results unalloyed. Absolute gains were easiest to grasp. The collapse of the initial alliance had been overcome and survival assured. A much improved national political climate and resolve had been fostered. Great strides had been made in understanding how best to mobilize national power and in converting resources of all kinds to war purposes. The Empire had rallied and placed strong forces in the field. No critical Imperial position had been lost. Imports had been reduced yet production increased. The absolute limits on power, manpower and shipping capacity, and their effects on the balance of grand strategy, had been identified. It had been correctly understood that relative inferiority ruled out a grand strategic offensive against an unweakened Germany. The problems and ambivalence stemmed from the context in which power had to be assessed and grand strategy made.

From the first serious considerations in 1936, grand strategy had been seen in a coalition context. The first coalition and its uncritical assumptions crumbled, but enough of both remained to confuse the reconstruction of strategic thought. Three more coalitions emerged in succession, each of which influenced grand strategy. The internal coalition settled onto a Churchill-Labour axis, based on the total victory policy, the acceptance of intangible limits to national effort and a pragmatic progressive mobilization policy. This did not go unchallenged, but the lowest common denominator basis held. The American coalition evolved steadily but far too slowly. Whitehall consistently underestimated the obstacles to forward American policy and overestimated its leverage on that policy. The Soviet coalition emerged overnight but did not evolve at all. A very awkward relationship of convenience emerged, held in place by circumstances. In consequence, the British fought a coalition war without strong partners for far too long. Once the victory policy was adopted, they had little choice. The French collapsed to the status of an irritant. The Americans could not be rushed. The Soviets wanted to be left alone. The Greek fiasco proved that the Empire alone could not prevail. But in order to provide the right level and type of power for eventual needs, decisions could not be delayed.

Forced to remain on the defensive, under direct pressure for a long period, and obliged to focus on basic mobilization, no patient orderly buildup, planning or deployment was possible. Pragmatism and improvisation were the rule, related where possible to basic guiding principles which offered only a general framework. The basic 1940 decisions were confirmed even though their rationalizations, massive compliant U.S. assistance and German vulnerability, now seemed ambivalent at best. The ominous American attitudes regarding strategy and post-war policy, the Soviet struggle, and Imperial friction all made it vital that Britain be seen to lead a successful grand strategy. This was hindered at both ends. Structurally, war production was greatly increased, but fell too far short in too many aspects to sustain still greater military effort. Each program required more resources than were foreseen or available. In the field, intermediate campaigns proved less successful and required more resources than estimated, but attracted greater emphasis than was really wise. This all made the balance

and emphasis of strategy and structure crucial. Here, personalities and perceptions proved decisive.

The formulation of grand strategy in Churchill's "rolling seminar" was a constant process, dogged by uncertainty, preconceptions, competition and personal friction, but held together by good basic personal relations and a root consensus. Beaverbrook challenged both with his insistence on compartmentalized strategy and taking greater risks with national power. His style had advantages in 1940 but none in 1941. His erroneous estimates of power potential and how to use it confronted strategic and social reality and proved ill suited to the consensus focus by which alone Whitehall could operate. A live wire was useful, but his shocks were counterproductive. The COS remained united on basic strategy but under intense pressure fell out over detail. This had two serious consequences. It worsened the services' inability to see each other's campaigns as interlocked from tactics through grand strategy. It also eroded united advice to Churchill. This contributed to serious errors - the underestimation of the U-Boat threat, the confusion over the Army's role, the dispatch of Force Z, and above all, the grand strategic role of the RAF. Disunity and the tendency to share Churchill's flawed perception of "offensive" distinctions left him a decisive voice which resulted in a decision to gamble the remaining margin of British power on an unproven air offensive. There were real limits to choices here. Modern war and Whitehall procedure demanded strong forces all around. The problem was not basic but balance. The balance between decision makers tilted too far. The result was an unbalanced long term decision. The catalyst, as always, was the inability to overcome German forces as and when expected.

The fact that "wear down" made almost no progress in the field had several consequences. It obscured real gains in relative power accrued not by British but by German actions. Churchill's command machinery was proven far better at gauging national power and prospects than Hitler's capricious unchecked will. By December 1941, Hitler had rallied against him a coalition of far greater power; Churchill enjoyed the reverse. The magnificent German industrial machine was not yet organized for total war and was now paced by Britain alone in total war output. Germany had only one strong ally, Japan, with whom it shared only common enemies. Britain and the U.S. had

developed competitive but profound mental solidarity, thought of plans and policies in unison and intended to fight that way. Time seemed Germany's enemy and Britain's friend. However, the tumult of events from May 1940 really allowed only basic principles to be seen clearly. The general consensus that only the "wear down" grand strategy was possible seemed confirmed. No serious thought had been given to its political implications, either in terms of dealing with a German governmental collapse or American unwillingness to conform and sustain British power. When the need for greater effort surpassed the 1940 decision, "wear down" was merely adjusted, not abandoned. Whitehall was convinced that in overall British interests it had to be entrenched as the means to execute the ABC-1 policy. The great failure of 1941 efforts was the lack of progress in the field to help assure this. Basic strategic thought and posture could not surmount the defensive, so Churchill went to Washington to persuade where events had failed. This showed where British priorities rightly lay. The U.S. was the only powerful congenial state with whom the British would ever have been able to concert basic policy after May 1940. Beaverbrook's error was to think that the need to sustain the Soviets would overcome reluctance to do so after it was clear it could only be done by abandoning "wear down." His opponents' error was the very belated recognition that the Soviets, not the U.S., would engage the bulk of German power. Uncertainty and preconceptions played a part here, but by December 1941 the Soviets clearly were in the field for at least another year. They were the wrong ally, but an essential one. Eden continued his mission but co-operation was little better than that of the Germans and the Japanese. The two briefing papers he carried reflected this and left a record of how "wear down" had now been redefined.

One full set, kept private, listed current Orders of Battle and theatre targets. The other pitched "wear down," with some special pleading. The two priorities were: 1) to convince the Soviets "our strategy is based on military and naval necessities, not merely selfish interest"; 2) it was fully realized "the Russian front was a decisive campaign." Manpower was seen as the ultimate limit. It and shipping capacity would restrict the Army to peripheral and secondary roles. The RAF's expansion had been delayed by

delays in production and American supply and expanded overseas needs, but it would develop:

> "a vast bombing force we can rely on... together with the great strain of the Soviet campaign and the cumulative effects of the blockade, to wear down German efficiency and morale until we can resume the general strategic offensive in collaboration with our Allies."

The familiar refrain of retaining the bulk of forces to secure the U.K. for fear of quicker German concentration was depicted as in the Soviets' interest. So too were intermediate efforts. Together with holding a so called "ring" of positions from Libya through the U.K. to the Caucasus, this would allow escalating pressure on Germany. The ludicrous claim was made that British forces were currently undertaking more "offensive" action than the Soviets. In fact the Soviets "defensive" efforts were engaging over 50% of the German Air Force and nearly 75% of the German Army. Only three German divisions were then engaged by Imperial forces. Even Bomber Command was almost stood down over Germany. If this claim is to be taken seriously, it illustrated the depth to which compartmentalization had affected strategic thought. In return for all out Soviet effort, the British would engage the enemy by:

> "striking with growing severity from the air, starving him of raw materials, harassing him by an increasing scale of raiding operations, and extending him in the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern theatre."[193]

This meant the Soviet and Allied campaigns would remain interlocked only to the Germans. But against this, British survival had laid the basis for a coalition potentially powerful enough to prevail. This was a decisive fact. Another was that in the process the "rolling seminar" had settled on "wear down," revised and fully under service control, as the only viable grand strategy not only for Britain but for the new Grand Alliance. That coalition was seen as the means to press that outline, not to change it. The war itself had forced the British to adopt this eclectic attrition which made little military sense as a plan to defeat Germany. But it had also made improvised decisions fixed policies of great momentum. This was clearly an entrenched grand strategy, one that went far beyond "get the U.S. in." The very nature of this point continues to cause confusion. One scholar argued that there were no accepted grand strategic plans, because

of Churchill's reluctance to confirm the great papers of September 1940 and June 1941. Yet in the next breath the same author admitted that there were "basic ideas which left deep impress."[194] This is a more accurate assessment. The difficult months of fighting "alone" had forged a deep rooted consensus on the fundamental parameters of British, and Allied, grand strategic choices. Whitehall was now keenly aware that consensus had to be "sold" at the coalition level. The task was now both to survive and to retain control of war policy. The approach to both was now embedded in the "wear down" consensus.

Endnotes to Chapter 2

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13. LHCMA, Ismay Papers, IV/Key/1, Churchill to Keyes, 24/1/41.

14. PRO, CAB80/57, COS (41)52(0), 7/3/41; CAB79/55, COS minutes, 19/3/41.

15. PRO, CAB79/8, COS minutes, 23/1/41; CAB79/9, COS minutes, 6/2/41; CAB65/21, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 6/2/41; CAB80/25, Linlithgow to COS, 10/2/41.

16. PRO, CAB80/57, COS (41)44(O), 25/2/41.

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25. CAB65/21, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 3/2/41.

26. PRO, CAB65/18, War Cabinet minutes, 31/3/41; CAB79/10, COS minutes, 31/3/41.

27. PRO, CAB69/2 Churchill to Eden, 3/4/41.

28. PRO, CAB79/10, COS minutes, 4/4, 9/4, 10/4, 18/4/41; CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 13/4, 14/4/41. For a thought provoking argument which places more emphasis on Italian success at sapping British strength, see Sadkovich, J.J. "Of Myths and Men: Rommel and the Italians in North Africa 1940-1942," IHR, vol.13, #2, 5/1991, 293.

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31. PRO, CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 13/4, 20/4/41. This was termed operation TIGER.

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46. PRO, CAB66/15, WP(41)69, 26/3/41; CAB79/9, COS minutes, 10/3/41; CAB80/26, COS(41)175, 19/3/41; PREM3/55/1, WO to Churchill, 22/3, reply, 25/3/41.

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49. PRO, CAB70/3, DC(S) minutes, 19/3, 29/4, 14/5/41.

50. PRO, CAB84/3, JPS minutes, 30/4/41; CAB80/27, COS(41)291, 8/5/41; CAB80/28, COS to JSM, 19/5/41; CAB80/22, COS(41)371, 12/6/41; Skinner, 384; Leighton & Coakley, 51-55; Matloff & Snell, 28-38.

51. PRO, CAB79/11, COS minutes, 28/4, 1/5/41; CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 30/4,19/5/41.

52. PRO, CAB79/11, COS minutes, 22/5/41.

53. Churchill, The Grand Alliance, 235; PRO, CAB80/57, Churchill to COS, 4/5/41.

54. CCCA, Portal Papers, 9/10, Portal-Peirse correspondence, 5/4, 9/4/41.

55. PRO, CAB79/8, COS minutes, 7/1/41; CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 13/1/41; CCCA, Portal Papers, 9/6, Portal to Peirse, 15/1/41.

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57. CCCA, Portal Papers, 9/20, Churchill-Portal correspondence, 4/41.

58. HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D21, Beaverbrook-Sinclair correspondence, 4/41; D52, Churchill to Sinclair, 4/5, Churchill to Bridges, 5/5/41.

59. PRO, CAB80/57, COS(41)83(0), 21/5/1941, Trenchard to Portal, 28/5/41.

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62. PRO, CAB80/58, COS(41)115(0), 22/6/41.

63. LSE, Dalton Papers, 7/2, Dalton lecture to MEW staff, no date/41.

64. PRO, CAB80/28, COS(41)389, 20/6/41.

65. PRO, CAB79/12, COS minutes, 18/6/41; CAB80/58, COS(41)115(0),22/6/41.

66. PRO, CAB80/58, COS(41)113(0), 20/6/41; Churchill, The Grand Alliance, 343; Sadkovich, 296-297, again disputed the role of Axis forces.

67. PRO, CAB65/19, War Cabinet minutes, 7/7, 21/7, 28/7/41; CAB80/59, COS(41)152(0), 28/7/41.

68. PRO, CAB80/59, U.S. Staff Mission to COS, 6/8/41; CAB 69/2, DC(O), minutes, 8/8/41; CAB65/23, War Cabinet minutes,confidential annex, 18/8/41; Churchill, The Grand Alliance, 439-440.

69. PRO, CAB80/59, COS(41)569, 14/9/41. This is the most damning of many records which clearly repudiate the legend spread by Churchill and others that the commitment to Soviet supplies prevented timely reinforcement of the Far East. That was only true from October 1941 and it is clear that there was no intention in any case of accelerating the program. See LHCMA, Ismay papers, I/14/72, Ismay to H.C. Jackson, 18/2/59, for a typical example.

70. PRO, CAB80/59, COS(41)214(0), 22/9/41.

71. PRO, CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 17/10, 20/10/41; CAB80/30, VCIGS report, 1/10/41. Technically the destination of the new Force Z was to be reviewed when it reached Cape Town, but this was never done. The appointment of VCNS Admiral T. Phillips to command and the deliberate publicity surrounding the Force's journey surely indicate that there was no real intention to do so. It is, of course, also true that HMS **Indomitable**'s accidental grounding deprived Force Z of integral air cover, but it nevertheless proceeded. The desire to mollify Dominion pressures was a prime factor, decisive in Attlee's case.

72. PRO, CAB79/53, Churchill to COS, 5/11/41; CAB65/24, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 11/11/41; CAB79/15, JIC(41)439, 18/11/41, 79/16, COS minutes, 28/11/41; 79/55, COS minutes 1/12/41. This last decision was a response to Australian pressure in which Canadian reluctance to pressure Roosevelt was rather cynically exploited, citing their "superior knowledge of American views," a point London would never have conceded in any direct issue.

73. PRO, CAB66/17, WP(41)175, 19/7/41.

74. LSE, Dalton papers, 7/3, Dalton to Churchill, 24/9/41.

75. PRO, CAB79/13, COS minutes, 14/8/41; Stafford, Britain and European Resistance, 61-66.

76. NCA, Cherwell papers, F39, Cherwell to Churchill, 22/7/41.

77. Wheeler, M. Britain and the War for Yugoslavia 1940-1943, New York, 1980, 67-69, 89.

78. Principal War Telegrams and Memoranda 1940-1943, (PT), Lichtenstein, 1976, vol.4, COS-C's in C, Middle East, 15/10, 29/10/41; PRO, CAB79/55, COS minutes, 5/11/41; CAB79/15, 27/11/41; Stafford, "The Detonator Concept", 28; Wheeler, 106-119. This is a controversial point, as many critics, especially those involved in wartime SOE or partially SOE efforts, felt its politics and

administration fatally handicapped it. Stafford was convincing. It should also be noted that the emergence of Yugoslav resistance was the real, albeit mixed, benefit of the Balkan campaign. The case for a delay in BARBAROSSA as decisive is weak. But in December 1941 this was by no means clear.

79. Balfour, 215.

80. LSE, Dalton papers, 18/2, correspondence and notes on PWE, 8/41; Cruikshank, C. The 4th Arm, London, 1977, 21-27.

81. Balfour, 233; Calder, A. The People's War, London, 1969, 263. See below, p.117.

82. PRO, CAB84/3, JPS minutes, 2/10/41.

83. LSE, Dalton papers, 18/2, Dalton papers on propaganda, 6/12/41.

84. PRO, CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 17/6/41; CAB80/58, COS(41)109(0), 18/6/41.

85. Hinsley, vol.2, 170; Costello & Hughes, 165. Shipping losses on a global scale rose from 429,000 tons in the second quarter to 606,000 in the third, but dipped back to 503,000 in the fourth. Imports remained well above 2.5 million tons per month from June through October. Statistical Digest of the War, London, 1951, Tables 155, 161.

86. CCCA, Portal Papers, 8/12, 8/16, Portal-Joubert-Peirse correspondence, 6-8/41.

87. PRO, CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 21/7/41.

88. NCA, Cherwell Papers, F146, Cherwell to Churchill, 17/10/41.

89. BL, Cunningham Papers, 52561, Pound to Cunningham, 3/9/41.

90. PRO, CAB80/60, COS(41)239(0), 21/10/41; CAB80/32, COS(0)698, 23/11/41.

91. NCA, Cherwell Papers, G108, Watson-Watt to Cherwell, 5/3/41.

92. PRO, CAB79/12, COS minutes, 23/6, 24/6/41.

93. PRO, 79/12, COS minutes, 7/7, 14/7/41; CAB79/86, COS minutes, Secretary's Standard File, 23/7/41.

94. PRO, CAB79/13, COS minutes, 1/8, 25/8/41.

95. PRO, CAB66/17, Map Room Weekly Report, 3/7/41.

96. PRO, CAB80/59, COS(41)183(0), 28/8/41.

97. PRO,CAB79/14, COS minutes, 5/9/41; HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D90, Cripps to Eden, 15/9/41.

98. Churchill, The Grand Alliance, 455-465; CAB79/14, COS minutes, 3/9, 16/9, 29/9/41; CAB80/59, COS(41)199(0), 12/9/41.

99. PRO, CAB80/59, COS(41)192(0), 6/9, COS minutes, 9/9/41; CAB80/30, COS(41)589, 27/9/41; LHCMA, Ismay Papers, IV/Key/1, Keyes-Ismay correspondence, 10/41.

100. PRO, CAB80/31, COS(41)630, 16/10, COS(41)629, 17/10/41. Mountbatten's appointment was made for "political" reasons; that is Beaverbrook's intrigue and Churchill's desire to inject energy into the system and impress the Americans with a keen charismatic royal. The COS were leery about what was a grossly accelerated promotion, with reason. See Villa, B.L. Unauthorized Action: Mountbatten and the Dieppe Raid, Toronto, 1989, 163-165.

101. PRO, CAB7/14, COS minutes, 26/9/41.

102. PRO, CAB65/23, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 5/9/41; CAB79/14, COS minutes, 8/9/41.

103. PRO, CAB65/23, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 7/10/41; CAB79/14, COS minutes, 8/9/41.

104. PRO, CAB79/12, COS minutes, 11/7; 28/7/41; 79/55, COS minutes, 28/8/41; CAB65/19, War Cabinet minutes, 28/7, 31/7/41; CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 7/8, 18/8, 20/8, 3/9, 8/9/41; CAB 79/13, COS minutes, 14/8/41; CAB65/23, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 21/8/41; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F142, Cherwell to Churchill, 20/8/41; Gorodetsky, G. Stafford Cripps' Mission to Moscow 1940-1942, Cambridge, 1984, 209-215; Beaumont, J. "Great Britain and the Rights of Neutral Countries: The Case of Iran 1941," JCH, 1981, vol.16, 221.

105. PRO, CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 17/6/41; CAB65/18, War Cabinet minutes, 30/6/41.

106. PRO, CAB79/12, COS minutes, 21/6, 25/6/41; CAB80/28, COS(41)395, 22/6/41, 80/58, Dill to Churchill, 2/7/41; CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 25/6, 3/7/41.

107. PRO, CAB80/28, Dill to Churchill, 6/7/41; CAB79/12, COS minutes, 17/7/1941; CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 17/7/41; CAB65/23, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 24/7/41; CAB79/13, COS minutes, 30/7/41; CCA, Alexander Papers, 5/6/8, A.V. Alexander to Churchill, 19/7/41; BL, Cunningham Papers, 52561, Cunningham to Pound, 25/7/41; Churchill, The Grand Alliance, 399-403.

108. PRO, CAB80/59, COS(41)154(0), 31/7/41; CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 1/8/41.

109. Smyth, D. Diplomacy and Strategy of Survival, Cambridge, 1986, 160-161, 220.

110. PRO, CAB79/12, COS minutes, 24/6/41; CAB69/8, DC(O) minutes, 21/7, 1/8/41; Smyth, 230.

111. PRO, CAB65/23, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 7/10/41; CAB80/59, COS(41)229, 12/10; CAB80/60, COS(41)232(0), 15/10/41.

112. PRO, CAB65/23, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 24/9/41; CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 20/10/41.

113. PRO, CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 2/10/41; CAB80/59, Dill to COS, 3/10/41.

114. PRO, CAB80/60, COS(41)233(0), 13/10/41.

115. PRO, CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 15/10/41; Kennedy, J. The Business of War, 174.

116. The WHIPCORD debate can be traced in: PRO, CAB79/15, 79/55, 79/86, COS minutes and Secretary's Standard File, 18-29/10/41; CAB69/2, 69/8, DC(O) minutes, 15-27/10/41; BL, Cunningham Papers, 52567, COS-Cs in C telegrams, 18-29/10/41; HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D419, D425, Beaverbrook-Churchill correspondence, 23-26/10/41. Churchill's description in The Grand Alliance, 540-541, bore little relation to fact.

117. PRO, CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 25/6/41; CAB79/12, COS minutes, 3/7/41; 79/13, 18/7/41; CAB84/3, JPS minutes, 4/7/41; 84/32, JP(41)549, 17/7/41.

118. PRO, CAB84/33, COS(41)155(0), 31/7/41; CAB79/13, COS minutes, 31/7/41.

119. PRO, CAB65/19, War Cabinet minutes, 4/8/41; Dobson, 50-57, 131.

120. PRO, PREM3/483/7, Beaverbrook to Churchill, 17/8/41. This report was filed after a post-conference mission to Washington. Beaverbrook's call for strong central co-ordination reflects poorly on his obstruction of the same in December 1940.

121. PRO, CAB65/19, War Cabinet minutes, 21/7, 24/7, 7/8/41.

122. PRO, CAB80/30, COS(41)504, 20/8/41.

123. PRO, CAB65/19, War Cabinet minutes, 19/8, 25/8/41.

124. PRO, CAB79/14, COS minutes, 28/8, 29/8/41; CAB80/59, COS(41)186(0), 4/9/41; Hall, 327.

125. PRO, CAB79/14, COS minutes, 1/9/41; CAB66/18, WP(41)211, 1/9/41. Purvis' death and the loss of his extensive personal contacts were serious setbacks.

126. PRO, CAB65/23, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 11/9/41. This new program subsumed all previous arrangements.

127. PRO, CAB65/23, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 18/9/41; CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 19/9/41; NCA, Cherwell papers, F144, Cherwell to Churchill, 16/9/41.

128. PRO, CAB80/59, BH(41)14, 19/9/41.

129. PRO, CAB80/59, COS(41)215(0), 22/9/41, Hollis note; CAB79/15, COS minutes, 29/10/41.

130. PRO, CAB70/4, DC(S) minutes, 4/10, 5/10/41.

131. HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D425, "not sent" file, 10 or 11/41.

132. HLRO, Beaverbrook papers, D90, Cripps-Eden correspondence, 9-11/41, Beaverbrook to Churchill, 2/11/41; Beaumont, J. Comrades in Arms, London, 1980, 55; Gorodetsky, 240-248, 262; Churchill, The Grand Alliance, 850-854. Gorodetsky was correct in saying that Beaverbrook attempted to entrench his own policy and cut out Cripps, but unconvincing in suggesting Stalin would have been receptive to a different approach.

133. Skinner, 351-355; Leighton & Coakley, 127.

134. PRO, CAB79/13, COS minutes, 21/7, 22/7, 24/7/41; CAB79/55, COS minutes, 24/7/41; LHCMA, Ismay papers, 3/176, Ismay to Churchill, 17/7/41.

135. PRO, CAB70/3, DC(S) minutes, 22/7/41.

136. PRO, CAB80/59, COS(41)188(0), 31/8, COS(41)200(0), 14/9, COS(41)210(0), 19/9, COS(41)213(0), 21/9/41; CAB79/14, COS minutes, 16/9/41; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F144, Cherwell to Churchill, 19/9/41.

137. PRO, CAB80/60, JSM to COS, 9/10/41; CAB79/15, COS minutes, 11/11/9141; CAB84/3, JPS minutes, 11/11/41.

138. CCCA, Portal Papers, 2/20/2, Churchill-Air Staff correspondence, 29-30/8/41; Terraine, 283-284.

139. PRO, CAB79/12, COS minutes, 14/7/41; CAB80/29, COS(41)462, 28/7/41; CAB69/3, DC(O) minutes, 21/7/41; CCA, Hankey Papers, 10/12, paper on "morale" strategy, 13/8/41.

140. CCCA, Portal Papers, 2/24/2, Churchill-Portal correspondence, 8-9/41; Frankland & Webster, vol.1, 178.

141. CCCA, Portal papers, 2/13/3, Churchill-Portal correspondence, 11/41; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F149, Cherwell to Churchill, 20/11, 30/11/41; PRO, CAB79/15, COS minutes, JIC(41)412, 23/10/41; Frankland & Webster, vol.1, 280-299.

142. NCA, Cherwell Papers, F138, Cherwell, to Churchill, 9/7/41.

143. PRO, CAB70/3, DC(S) minutes, 5/12/41, has DC(S)(41)149, a report summarizing the detailed course of the debate.

144. Even at this late date MAP preferred British types, as the RAF found its American supplied B17 and B24's poor night bombers. Indeed that was the only reason Coastal Command retained the B24, an accident which had far reaching implications discussed below, Chapter 5. See CCCA, Portal Papers, 2/15/2, Churchill-Portal correspondence 7/41.

145. PRO, CAB20/3, DC(S), minutes, 4/9/41; CAB65/19, War Cabinet minutes, 5/9/41. Uneasiness best describes Churchill's changing attitude to strategic bombing at this time - less convinced of detailed projections or ultimate impact, but still disposed and compelled to pursue the effort.

146. NCA, Cherwell Papers, F143, Cherwell to Churchill, 4/9; F144, Cherwell to Churchill, 12/9/41; CCCA, Portal Papers, 2/2/3, Portal to Churchill, 25/9/41; PRO,CAB80/59, COS (41)207(0), 17/9/41. Again, "margin" was the key word here. Portal argued that cuts in planned total expansion to June 1942 of 13% of bombers and 15% of fighters, because of diversions to the USAAF, the real problem, would cripple RAF plans: COS(41)208(0), 18/9/41.

147. PRO, CAB70/4,DC(S)(41)133, 21/10, DC(S)(41)135, 30/10/41; CAB70/3, DC(S) minutes, 23/10/41.

148. PRO, CAB70/3, DC(S) minutes, 27/11/41; HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D149, Churchill-Beaverbrook correspondence, 28/11/41.

149. Hancock & Gowing, 343.

150. Scott & Hughes, 433.

151. Sayers, 59-65, 92.

152. PRO, CAB65/18, War Cabinet minutes, 7/3, 27/5/41; CAB65/19, 11/9/41. See Cherwell Papers, F141, Cherwell to Churchill, 8/8/41, for a good example of the pragmatism behind civil conversion.

153. PRO, CAB65/19, War Cabinet minutes, 24/7/41; Scott and Hughes, 415-419, 427-429.

154. CCA, Robinson Papers, 1/2/1, 1/2/3, Production Executive minutes, 9/7/41.

155. PRO, CAB70/4, DC(S)(41)112; CCA, Robinson Papers, 1/2/1, 1/2/3, Production Executive minutes, 23/7, 13/8, PE(41), 144, 30/8/41; HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D345, Beaverbrook to Bevin, 30/8/41.

156. PRO, CAB65/23, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 27/10/41.

157. NCA, Cherwell Papers, F149, Cherwell to Churchill, 25/11/41.

158. PRO, CAB80/107, Cabinet Office Graphic Summary of the War; CAB70/3, Tank Return, 10/1/41; 70/4, Tank Return, 4/12/41.

159. NCA, Cherwell Papers, 6504, Cherwell to Beaverbrook, 10/41.

160. Fletcher, D. The Great Tank Scandal, London, 1989, 62-67; PRO, CAB70/4, Tank Return, 6/11/41.

161. CCA, Hankey Papers, 1/7, diary entries, 27/10, 2/11, 27/11, 1/12/41; 10/13, tank file, 11/1941-1/41.

162. PRO, CAB80/28, COS(41), 5/7/41; CAB79/14, COS minutes 8/9/41.

163. PRO, CAB79/14, COS minutes, 3/10, 8/10/41; 79/15, 14/11/41.

164. PRO, CAB66/20, WP(41)280, 20/11/41; CAB65/20, War Cabinet minutes, 24/11/41.

165. PRO, CAB65/17, War Cabinet minutes, 20/1/41; Parker, 109, 136.

166. CCA, Robinson papers, 1/2/1, 1/2/3, Production Executive's minutes, 11/6, 26/6/41; Bevin Papers, 2/2, Labour and Manpower, 7/41; Inman, P. Labour in the Munitions Industries, London, 1957, 369; Bullock, A. Ernest Bevin, vol.2, London, 1967, 19-22.

167. PRO, CAB65/19, War Cabinet minutes, 10/7, 28/7/41.

168. PRO, CAB65/23, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 18/9/41; CCA, Robinson Papers, 1/2/1, Production Executive minutes, 13/8/41; Bevin Papers,

2/2, "20% Increased Production on Present Manpower," 10/41.

169. PRO, CAB66/19, WP(41)247, 27/10/41.

170. PRO, CAB65/19, War Cabinet minutes, 18/9/41; Court, W.H.B. Coal, London, 1951, 111-120, 143.

171. PRO, CAB70/3, DC(S) minutes, 30/10, 4/11/41; CAB65/20, War Cabinet minutes, 10/11, 13/11, 28/11/41; CAB66/20, WP(41)285, 24/11, WP(41)289, 26/11, WP(41)291, 27/11/41.

172. PRO, CAB70/3, DC(S)(41)152; DC(S) minutes, 9/12/41; CAB65/20, War Cabinet minutes, 25/11/41; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F147, 30/10, F148, 8/11/41, Cherwell to Churchill; Bullock, 107.

173. PRO, CAB65/20, War Cabinet minutes, 3/12/41. Another clear example of this evolved tacit consensus was the July decision on reorganization of the railways, which can be found in PRO, CAB65/19, 24/7/41, or Savage, 290.

174. If there is any doubt of the seriousness of Beaverbrook's qualms about structural policy, consult HLRO Beaverbrook Papers, D82, Beaverbrook-Churchill correspondence, 11/41, for instance the call to "draw a clear line" of priorities, 7/11/41.

175. PRO, CAB79/13, COS minutes, 18/7/41; NCA, Cherwell Papers, 6[illegible]5, Singleton Report, 1/8/41; CAB65/20, War Cabinet minutes, 11/11/41.

176. PRO, CAB79/15, COS minutes, JP(41) 915, 6/11, JIC(41)433, 11/11/41; CAB80/60, COS(41)248(0), 7/11/41.

177. PRO, CAB80/31, COS(41)676, 17/11/41; CAB79/15, COS minutes, 7/11/41; CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 17/11/41.

178. PRO, CAB79/16, COS minutes, 3/12/41; CAB80/52, COS(41)726, 5/12/41.

179. PRO, CAB79/14, COS minutes, 22/9, 9/10/41; CAB79/15, 3/11/41; CAB80/60, COS(41)245(0), 31/10/41.

180. CCCA, Portal Papers, 12/5, Tedder to Portal, 17/9/41; 3/5/3, Portal to Churchill, 6/10/41; BL, Cunningham Papers, 52561, Cunningham-Pound correspondence, 9/11/41.

181. PRO, CAB79/12, COS minutes, 30/6/41; CAB80/58, COS(41)129(0), 6/7/41.

182. CCCA, Portal Papers, 2/18/2, Churchill-Portal correspondence 8/41; 12/4/ Tedder-Portal correspondence, 9/41.

183. PRO, CAB80/60, COS(41)242(0), 22/10/41; CAB79/15, COS minutes, 13/11/41; CCCA, Portal Papers, 11/11, Barratt-Portal correspondence, 11-12/41.

184. Jacobs, W.A. "Air support for the British Army 1939-1943," MA, vol.46, #4, 1982, 175-176.

185. BL, Cunningham Papers, 52566, Pound-Cunningham telegrams, 23-26/11/41; Hinsley, vol.2, 709-711.

186. PT, vol.5, Churchill-Auchinleck telegrams, 22/11-26/11/41; vol.4, Churchill-Auchinleck telegrams, 26/11/7-12/41.

187. PT, vol. 4, Churchill-Auchinleck telegrams, 7-9/12/41; BL, Cunningham Papers, 52567, Pound-Cunningham 2008A, 27/11, Cunningham-Pound, 1747B, 2/12/41; 52561, Cunningham-Pound, 4/12/41; Roskill, vol.1, 534-539.

188. PT, vol.4, COS#195-196, 7/11, Dill to Auchinleck, 12/11, WO-Wavell, 54875, 29/11/41.

189. PRO, CAB79/16, JIC(41)452, 2/12/41.

190. PRO, CAB79/16, COS minutes, 1/12, 4/12/41; CAB79/86, Secretary's Standard File, 4/12/41; CAB65/24, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 4/12/41; BL, Cunningham Papers, 52561, Cunningham to Pound, 4/12/41; Kennedy, J. The Business of War, 181.

191. PRO, CAB65/24, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 5/12/41.

192. LHCMA, Liddell Hart Papers, 11/1941/62, book notes, 6/9/41.

193. PRO, CAB80/60, COS(41)269(0), 5/12/41.

194. Cohen, in Kennedy. P. Grand Strategies in War and Peace, 49, for a familiar and narrow dismissal of pre-1942 grand strategy, on the grounds that as it was militarily unrealistic, it was not a settled program; Ben-Moshe, 506, for the last observation.

Part 2

Balance

Chapter 3

ARCADIA - False Start

"...there must be a design and theme for bringing the war to a victorious end in a reasonable period."
- Churchill, 18/12/1941

The manner in which the U.S. at last entered the war proved a mixed blessing for the British. Clearly a coalition potentially powerful enough to achieve victory could now be organized. However, its immediate strategic position was not favourable. The Japanese surprise attack rallied American public opinion behind war, but also sparked a clamour for concentration in the Pacific. It also caught the Roosevelt administration still divided over war policy and three months in arrears of its initial mobilization program.[1] These factors could seriously affect the evolving "wear down" grand strategy which in any case now needed to be recast on a formal coalition basis. Churchill was wise to repair immediately to Washington as it was imperative to persuade the Americans to expand and accelerate their mobilization. It was also essential to convince them to place their power behind a coalition policy tailored to British interests.

The British team that went to Washington pursued three main ojectives, all related to harnessing greater American power to a British shaped coalition policy. Machinery had to be set up which would allow the Allies to fight with a fully integrated war effort. That machinery had to adopt the policy that resources were to be treated as a "common pool." Finally, it had to be committed to implementing a grand strategy based on the "Europe first" agreement and the "wear down" approach. The series of talks that came to be labelled the ARCADIA conference evolved in three stages, from 14 December 1941 to 14 January 1942. In the first stage, the British thrashed out a consensus position to present in Washington. In the second stage, initial efforts were made to sort out the questions of machinery, grand strategy, and mobilization. These efforts were, however, heavily affected by other developments, especially the course of the war itself. This raised, in the third stage, two parallel dilemmas for the British: the relationship of the Imperial partners to the new Anglo-American alliance and its emerging grand strategy, and the divergence of basic approach to that grand strategy that emerged between the main Allies themselves. Throughout a very confusing and fast moving period, the root

consensus on fundamental imperatives articulated in the "wear down" outline helped the British reorient and focus their efforts. However, those efforts were also dogged by serious ambivalence regarding the real prospects for a favourably balanced integrated war effort with their new ally. The result was that ARCADIA was at best a very incomplete British "victory."

One of the great strengths of British policy making was that the "rolling seminar" never lost sight of the importance of concerting and pressing a unified position to press in coalition debates. The British were not always able to use such a consensus to set the agenda, but this was not the case en route to ARCADIA. The party on board **HMS Duke of York** was keenly aware of the chance to set the direction for Allied policy by presenting a carefully crafted position to an American government scrambling to sort out its own priorities and practices. The starting point was a series of three papers drafted en route by Churchill. With a chance for unhurried reflection, Churchill surveyed the entire sweep of grand strategy in an essay that was perhaps his grand strategic tour-de-force.[2] His vision remained recognizably the "wear down" strategy but offered further refinements and the usual aggressive interpretation. For 1942, tactical offensives to clear the Mediterranean and open up sea lanes and further offensive prospects were to be coupled with a forward defence to hold the Japanese while naval power was concentrated. In 1943, major "igniter" operations in Europe would set off the strategic offensive. Throughout, bombing was to be escalated, to advance the "wear down" process. Above all, a controlled American buildup in the Pacific should be accepted, in return for adherence to the "Germany 1st" policy. The prospectus overall was not unsound, but in detail it rested on familiar overoptimism of current prospects. Churchill foresaw the clearance of North Africa within two months. This cast GYMNAST as the focus of current operations and the best way to draw American forces into action. He also felt Allied airpower would now become strong enough to ensure heavy enough attrition on Germany to secure "decisive mastery of the air" before summer 1943. This would pave the way for larger "igniter" operations, up to the equivalent of 40 armoured divisions. Japanese power, especially airpower, was felt to be capable of only one great

offensive. Singapore should hold for six months, which would enable a scratch battle fleet to be ready by May. A larger Allied fleet, concentrated by the autumn, could regain the initiative. Despite the fact that GYMNAST was executed and the Japanese held, the claim that Churchill's outline charted the course in detail is excessive.[3] The situation at the sharp end greatly deteriorated. This moved the course of events in a clearly different direction and pace than Churchill envisaged. Obvious examples were the delay in assembling an Eastern Fleet, and the greatly altered vision of a 1943 offensive in Europe. This essay was almost the last undiluted vision of "igniter" operations, and events veered too far off course to credit Churchill with a blueprint. However, his broad sequences were more relevant. The real strength of the paper was its persuasive case on how to reconcile the Americans to a refined "wear down" strategy and thus avert the two mortal threats to British plans - a massive unbalanced buildup of U.S. ground forces and an excessive swing to the Pacific.

The COS had to be shown the nuances of Churchill's case, in a week long shipboard dialogue. Their outline was noticeably more cautious regarding current prospects and overall latitude. It stressed defensive concerns, the need to continue overall mobilization and above all the need to put American power on a war footing. Continental operations were made contingent on "wear down" progress and limited by landing craft to 17 division equivalents.[4] In essence, the COS argued that American intervention left the fundamentals and emphasis of "wear down" unchanged. Churchill accepted the basic assumptions but insisted more specific visions of 1943 strategy and more careful assessments of American difficulties were necessary, to win American agreement.[5] He described his own concept as a three phase strategy: "closing the ring," "liberating the peoples," and "the final assault," and insisted that the COS graft a more offensive posture onto their paper. Subsequent discussions forged agreement on all points but strategy against the Japanese,[6] the question of American attitudes regarding Singapore remaining a problem. A more offensive cast to 1942 and 1943 plans was drafted. This became the consensus British position, encompassing the familiar "wear down" assumptions and the more aggressive tactical and strategic offensive intentions pushed by Churchill.

Churchill's vision was influenced not only by personal predilection but also by concern about American plans and hopes of mobilizing massive American power. Beaverbrook had been brought along to realize those hopes by persuading Roosevelt to place the U.S. on a total war footing and to secure a generous supply arrangement for the Empire. It was hoped to capitilize on Beaverbrook's demonstrated ability as an animator, his North American connections, and his experience in the mobilization of production. Beaverbrook expressed the general consensus by his conviction that American potential was yet to be seriously tapped and if it could be, and harnesssed to a "common pool" policy with truly shared control, there would soon be resources enough for all needs. Beaverbrook's plan was to offer a preliminary list of the most urgent British needs, especially for firm promises of shipping assistance. That would be followed by a comprehensive list, designed to jolt Roosevelt by its magnitude. The final thrust would be to insist that Allied prospects rested on the maximum possible British war effort, which itself rested on Imperial and especially U.S. assistance, strained to the utmost, to meet the margins beyond U.K. capacity.[7]

This paper illustrated how clearly Whitehall had grasped the basic structural fact of Britain's position. Integration with the American economy had already and would continue to allow Britain to mobilize its own power to a far higher level than otherwise possible, but this made satisfactory combined policy a matter of life and death. American belligerency now meant the task was much broader - to forge a combined war economy.[8] On this basic point, clear perceptions were to prove decisive. So too did the equally clear understanding that structural power and policy underpinned grand strategy, well illustrated in the consensus reached on the desired conference agenda.

It was clear to all that stable and favourable coalition war policy would depend on defining the correct machinery. The COS were certain the first principle was to relate all programs and allocations to strategic plans and advised Churchill to propose an "Inter-Staff Committee" to discharge this task. Churchill agreed and on 18 December sent Roosevelt a telegram which defined British priorities for the agenda: 1) fundamental basis of joint strategy; 2) immediate steps including deployment of forces; 3) allocation of forces (as per #1); 4) long term programs (as per #1), including "forces to be raised

and equipped, required for victory"; 5) joint machinery to implement all above.[9] However, British views on the desired machinery reflected ambivalent perceptions of their position vis a vis the U.S. which were to confuse policy definition quite seriously. British mobilization in all aspects was far ahead of American efforts, but American potential was far greater. However, the British sincerely believed their greater general experience and superior organization would offset their ever increasing material dependence on the U.S. Brooke called on Cabinet to insist on machinery which would draft global strategic policy and allocations but delegate executive control to the ally whose forces were predominant in a given theatre. This would include theatres which were heavily supplied by the other ally.[10]

Cabinet agreed and advised Churchill on 19 December it favoured the system of co-ordinating policy by existing departmental contacts, telegrams and occasional conferences. This amounted to a demand that the Americans underwrite the British war effort while London maintained an equal voice in formulating grand strategy. Cabinet accepted the "simple reality" that control of allocation and production would inexorably shift to where the margin of resources was available, Washington, but insisted on several points. The process must be gradual, to allow the Americans to improve their machinery. It must also be firmly related to strategic plans and to Brooke's concept of operational spheres.[11] The British had the bulk of forces in contact, and intended to secure agreement to "wear down," so the comforting assumptions were obvious. Here seemed a real opportunity to exploit some advantages of position and imprint a British stamp on the functioning of the coalition.

This contrasted with the clear grasp of the essential and future reality of relative structural power in almost reckless fashion. This may have been mainly due to inherent self confidence, but it was made more feasible by the prevailing chaos in Washington. Only Churchill seemed able to look beyond American disorganization and wonder whether British experience would really be seen as meriting a position their power could not enforce. But even he seemed lulled by the compelling strategic logic of "Germany 1st" and Beaverbrook's conviction that the American economy had so much latent power

its serious exploitation would solve all problems.[12] Before that could happen the long running debates over American mobilization policy had to be settled.

As yet the Victory Program remained a paper outline.[13] The dominant force in American policy was, as ever, the President; his priorities were as always shaped by concern for domestic unity. Roosevelt was well aware that the massive support for intervention after Pearl Harbour did not mean public opinion yet understood either the need for total national mobilization or the danger of emotional overcommitment to the Pacific. His acute sensitivity to public opinion brought him to realize that for once his disposition to let events spur thoughts would have to be replaced by concrete steps to win support for ABC-1 and serious mobilization. U.S. production had to be converted and harnessed to strategy. Lend-Lease had to be transformed from a procurement device to an instrument of coalition warfare. Ironically, it was clear to everyone concerned that the growing extent of British dependence regarding supplies was off-set by American dependence on overall coalition power, which ruled out unilateral allocations by either side.[14] However, Roosevelt and his Staffs had not yet defined a grand strategy, so there was no framework to which production could be related. The existing machinery was shaken by the Pacific debacle and confusion in the USN ranks, as Roosevelt lost confidence in Stark and turned to Admiral Ernest King for advice but delayed the formal shuffle.[15] As a result the Roosevelt administration had no clear consensus on strategy or structure or agreed channels by which to define any. Under these circumstances, British ambitions were fostered and Presidential weight enhanced.

Churchill and his coterie arrived in Washington on 22 December. The second phase of discussion, now Anglo-American, ran from that evening until Churchill went to Florida for a working break on 6 January. Churchill had a busy fortnight, speaking to the U.S. Congress, making a flying visit to Ottawa, continuously consulting the COS, Roosevelt and Hopkins and barraging London with telegrams. His stay in the White House allowed him to cement the personal relationship with Roosevelt which set the tone for the entire coalition. The conference discussions were fairly disorderly, as principals were forced to deal with a daily barrage of problems of every imaginable variety in

addition to making a de facto alliance a defined entity. At the risk of imposing artificial order on complex events, it can be suggested that the discussions between the two service bodies, the COS and the newly formed Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), became the hub of the conference. Beaverbrook's lobby formed a major parallel strain. Daily huddles between Churchill, Roosevelt and Hopkins attempted to knit it all together. But this conference above all its successors was influenced by events at the sharp end, especially in the Pacific. Out of them emerged the command framework by which the coalition would try to function.

The Staffs wasted little time. At the first session on 23 December the COS tabled their draft strategic outline and set the basis for a discussion from which emerged the dominant themes of coalition strategy: the nature of operations in the European theatre, the scale of U.S. deployment, overall U.S. force levels, timing and scope of 1942 and 1943 offensives, and shipping constraints. Stark queried British concerns about a massive U.S. army buildup. Dill warned an eventual "Second Front" campaign was contingent on the prior visible success of "wear down" and restricted by shipping constraints to an initial 17 divisions, rising to perhaps 40. Marshall agreed to participate in GYMNAST if a French invitation ensued.[16] All points were referred to the planners for study, but clearly the basic issues of grand strategy and the British consensus had already been joined. On Christmas Day, an American proposal for theatre command joined the issues of machinery and strategy.

The American services found it even harder than their British counterparts to develop attitudes and practices that led to smooth co-operation in theatre command. That predisposed them to favour unified command rather than committee consensus. They also found their forces unexpectedly hard pressed in the Philippines by the Japanese. Hoping to counteract this by calling Allied forces into the area, they proposed to name a Supreme commander of all Allied forces in the southwest Pacific. This arose out of a discussion on reinforcements. Portal suggested that the real need was to co-ordinate all plans in order not to waste forces; this could only be done at the centre.[17] Indeed it was clear that the whole question of reconciling conflicting claims on a continuing basis would have to be solved throughout all levels of policy. The debate revolved

around machinery to control strategy and balance overall, between and within theatres and allies. Pressed by the relentless Japanese advance, the basis was settled in six days. The decisive factor was Marshall's strong stand, supported by Roosevelt. Portal again noted the crux of the matter - the theatre commander's responsibility to higher authority.[18] This directly linked central and theatre machinery and set off an internal British dialogue which distilled the essence of their grand strategic approach.

On 26 December Churchill proposed as basic principles: 1) Germany to be recognized as the main enemy; 2) the general direction of operations in the Pacific theatre should be done from Washington; 3) the general direction of operations in the European and Atlantic theatre to be done from London.[19] He then connected this to theatre command by suggesting that level be made responsible to a "joint body" under himself and Roosevelt, providing dual supervision. Marshall, hoping to secure greater Imperial attention to the Pacific problem, nominated Wavell as commander of the new area. The COS had hoped to secure USN aid and avoid the stigma of likely defeat by naming an American, but Churchill wisely insisted American good faith be respected. He also stressed the need to focus on the main issue, the "Joint Body."[20] Brooke and the VOCS advised Cabinet on the 29th to accept the new command, to be titled "American-British-Dutch-Australian," or ABDA, but also stressed the importance of a central organ. Churchill telegrammed a description of the "Joint Body in the U.S." which indicated it would supervise ABDA but ignored any wider task. Cabinet felt this raised a clash between operational spheres and dual control, and asked for clarification.[21] The COS had already accepted ABDA but proposed to update the mutual liaison system by **duplicating** "combined" Staffs and planners in London and Washington, to reconcile theatre command, operational spheres and dual control. The British all feared that any unique body in Washington would eclipse London's leverage. Brooke was very reluctant to agree to a central body in Washington, on the grounds that the Americans were still so unprepared in all aspects. Dill shared the feeling, told Brooke that American sentiment towards Britain was ambivalent, and asserted:

> "In time the Americans will provide a great war machine, but it will take a lot of time."[22]

What the British really wanted was American agreement to arrangements which would provide joint control over resources and agreed grand strategy, but British control over operations in the main theatre. On 30 December Wavell's directive was settled. In return, Marshall agreed to exclude all smaller allies from executive bodies and that a special body only to supervise ABDA was inadequate.[23] From this compromise a consensus emerged - a body to unite the Staffs in combined advisory and executive responsibility for overall strategy, under Roosevelt and Churchill. However, the COS did not relinquish their hope of retaining control of the focal point. They argued that as the Americans refused to delegate authority the "Joint Body" should only co-ordinate "subjects of common interest." The actual conduct of campaigns, everywhere but Wavell's area, should be vested in the capital of the country controlling those operations. If "Europe first" were reaffirmed, London's influence would be preserved.[24] This become doubly urgent when, on 31 December, the British grand strategy proposal was approved, after desultory discussions, for formal submission to Churchill and Roosevelt as an outline of coalition grand strategy.[25]

The proposal, now known as WW1, was by no means a profound consensus on ultimate grand strategy. Indeed, as the British Official Historians noted, it was "a form of common words but not common strategy."[26] With no existing consensus, the Americans focused on the current crisis in the Pacific and accepted WW1 by default. They were concerned about the vagueness of ultimate offensives but comforted by the feeling that the Allies were, in any case, still on the defensive and the vague terms allowed almost any interpretation to be placed on ultimate campaigns. American planners simply were not ready to consider details, so the scheme slipped through. However, British plans and motives were not accepted at face value. The War Department, including Marshall, felt that Churchill's influence on Roosevelt posed a threat to its ultimate plans. Therefore it placed on record its vision of concentrated buildup of forces for a concerted grand strategic offensive, when conditions were ripe.[27] Thus the contrasting visions of "wear down" and "decisive concentration" were **both** written into the grand strategic charter. This gave the coalition a framework to which to relate mobilization and allocation, but served notice that consensus was a veneer.

Gradually the threads of a coalition policy emerged, and Beaverbrook knit another with his relentless mobilization lobby.

By this time Britain's basic situation was clear: almost all its resources were fully committed or spoken for but this was not enough to secure victory without massive assistance from the U.S., on whose systematic co-operation the British economy now relied. Beaverbrook's problem was that, as yet, the American political atmosphere had prevented Roosevelt from allowing a clear definition of national policy. The Victory Program had not yet been given political substance as a serious scheme to convert the American economy to a war footing. Beaverbrook had to convince Roosevelt to give the necessary impetus which would begin to bring the massive latent American power into play. He began by soliciting reports from the departmental missions and found some ambivalence on the Admiralty side. Admiral Dorling was so discouraged by the disorganization and caution in the USN that he still felt able only to call for urgent items to fill out British programs.[28] Beaverbrook reacted impatiently to this obsolete "insurance policy" approach and insisted that the need was for a new American commitment to a vastly greater scale, which would transform British programs and forge one all out combined effort. Dorling took heed and coupled his next list of rush items with the conclusion that the most urgent need was to spark a serious increase in overall American capacity by their vaunted mass production methods.[29] The MAP delegation was more in tune with the situation. Sir Henry Self urged Beaverbrook to argue that air superiority was the foundation of grand strategy and should be the focus of structural effort. He concluded that the Americans still did not grasp the intense effort total global war required. He suggested Beaverbrook shock Roosevelt by a blunt statement of the full Allied estimated requirements.[30] This summed up the British consensus and perfectly suited Beaverbrook's style. Gathering together the department lists, he launched a personal lobby of Roosevelt and Hopkins.

On 27 December Roosevelt received a paper on "U.S.-British Production Program 1942," which warned that munitions production was "entirely inadequate," with deficits so large an immediate massive general capacity increase was required.[31] This defined the question and was followed by a paper on 29 December which set it out in detail: the

Allies faced global war; potential American capacity was three times greater than British but largely untapped; British structure was now completely tied in to U.S. supply; therefore, only an early massive American increase would increase Allied power. British military programs and the production targets set by Canada, with much smaller capacity, indicated American targets were much too low. A general war footing was essential, with great increases in tank, aircraft, anti-aircraft and anti-tank gun output as first steps.[32] This put clearly the British consensus that Allied current and overall grand strategy relied on converting the American peace economy into a war machine. Britain could and would offer an example and an outline, but Roosevelt had to convince American official and public opinion to accept total war if the Allies were to win. A structural commitment would determine in broad parameters what grand strategic outline could be pursued. Beaverbrook's plea amounted to an official confession that Britain's independent war was no longer viable. This made the American response an urgent issue.

First responses were not unpromising. On 1 January, Lt. Gen. H. Arnold, Chief of Staff U.S. Army Air Force (USAAF), offered a revision of the current allocation of U.S. aircraft output which left some doors open. Light bombers and fighters were reduced, transports ignored, but medium and dive bombers were increased. The vital heavy bomber offer was cut but still amounted to 25 to 33% of U.S. output. Above all, it was proposed to deploy a large number of USAAF combat groups in the U.K. Beaverbrook argued the cuts would hurt RAF plans but felt the USAAF move would make the offer "reasonably satisfactory,"[33] and indicated American thought was moving towards a more active role. The COS saw it as a threat to the principle of allocating resources according to strategic needs. If the RAF's projected expansion was reduced by USAAF growth, they wanted to be sure that the latter accepted the grand strategy for which the resources had been slated. While both sides mulled over these new considerations, the COS' response to Beaverbrook's case linked strategic and structural questions and returned the conference focus to machinery.

On 31 December, the COS agreed that the time was now ripe to define combined machinery which would formulate and co-ordinate policy on strategic plans, allocations

and shipping. To do this the American government had to organize its own coherent machinery, especially a Staff body, and a British Minister should be placed in Washington. He would co-ordinate efforts, but departments would remain the agents of policy and conduct business on a bilateral basis. This could ensure the services retained control of allocations. British supplies and theatres would still be controlled from London but U.S. representatives would be necessary, in order to secure access to U.S. policy and resources but belie any impression the new system was simply British intrusion into the American administration.[34] That would have been a justified impression. The COS wanted to galvanize American policy but harness it to British grand strategy. This view of the coalition's charter was far less realistic about British leverage and American assumptions than Beaverbrook's more focused effort. The COS' continued ambivalence about their freedom to pursue independent policy was doubtless affected by the ease with which "wear down" was accepted as "WW1." Yet this also indicated a realization that strong commitments to machinery which could exert effective control over combined decisions and efforts would be needed to reconcile their potentially stronger partner to its new role. Combined control would become a very one sided advantage as the flow of supplies became more and more a one way process. Combined organs could retain for the British a voice they could otherwise lose. The COS, well aware that personalities would exert a decisive influence on the whole formative process and eager to implement their own policy, decided to adopt a recent decision by Churchill to leave Dill in Washington to head up the "Joint Staff" team and even suggested he take over as Minister Resident.[35]

It had been clear since the ABC-1 talks that broad common principles were needed to direct a coalition global war and only a full conference of principals could define them. To that same conference it was now clear that combined central machinery was necessary to define a coalition policy charter, knit U.S. policy into it, and maintain a forum to pursue coalition war in unison. Churchill's return from Florida and continued setbacks in the Pacific, coupled with Beaverbrook's efforts, now brought Roosevelt and Hopkins to accept the need to settle the whole issue. New inter-departmental committees to formulate and oversee policy within American channels and in combination with the

British emerged in rough parallel, revolving around the control of munitions allocation, shipping, production and especially grand strategy. Both national leaders and Staffs were determined to retain control of national war policy and grand strategy. Given the mix of organization, personality and circumstances, the final result seemed logical.

The U.S. Staff now formally became the JCS, organized along British lines and with the same mandate. This enabled the "Joint Staff" to be erected, to co-ordinate advice to the national leaders on the use of the armed forces as instruments of national and coalition policy. The COS hoped to organize it along lines which would do two things - preserve their concept of dual control of global policy, in practice giving them necessary aid and effective control in main theatres, and retain Staff control of structural policy. When told by Churchill on 12 January that he and Hopkins had discussed committees to allocate munitions and shipping, the COS insisted:

> "the fundamental principle for the allocation of war material must be that it should go wherever the military need was the greatest, and this could hardly be decided except by the military staffs sitting together."

They called for a "Combined Chiefs of Staff" which would formulate strategy, control allocations through sub-committees, and oversee production programs. Churchill's bodies could be the "court of appeal" but the "CCS" would have to define principles and adjust problems as they arose in order to get a "better balanced" U.S. effort, i.e. more American supplies for the British.[36]

Pound formally tabled the proposal to the two Staffs that afternoon. He envisaged the global co-ordination of strategy and structure by the "CCS" and function oriented sub-committees. Dill would head the British side, but parallel bodies from the CCS down would be set up in London and Washington, to undertake the task in their respective "spheres." The Americans were alert to the lop sidedness of this proposal and reacted strongly. Marshall insisted that it was premature to commit the still evolving American machinery to joint organs. The British wisely insisted on defining basic principles, starting with the primacy of strategic needs and the mechanisms of parallel bodies under the Staffs. Marshall agreed but insisted there be only one "CCS," located in Washington and given a broad global mandate. Stark suggested the COS could

delegate representatives as a standing committee and objected to Ministerial status for Dill. The COS agreed to reconsider the latter but left Marshall unanswered. It was agreed in principle to establish a "CCS" with powers over allocations and submit the plan to Churchill and Roosevelt.[37] This was one of the two basic decisions of the conference. Although British principles had been accepted, there was a vital caveat. With no "CCS" in London, the sure growth in the American share of total alliance power threatened to reduce London's ability to retain a full voice in the basic grand strategic decisions. The Americans clearly did not intend to let the British exploit their administrative skills and advanced mobilization to prevent them from building up their power and influencing coalition policy along American desired lines.[38]

Once central principles - a sole CCS and the primacy of strategic needs - were agreed, the rest was settled fairly easily. It was agreed to form sub-committees, labelled "Combined" to denote British-American (Joint was reserved for internal use), to co-ordinate coalition policy. The most important, the Munitions Assignment Board (MAB), was to allocate finished equipment under CCS direction. Marshall, the COS and Hopkins all insisted on this departure from the Beaverbrook idea of supply department control; Hopkins took the chair.[39] Churchill and Beaverbrook agreed to a one month trial well aware that if the CCS succeeded its satellites would be fixed firmly in its orbit. Raw materials were placed under a Combined Raw Materials Board (CRMB), with a vaguer mandate to advise on allocations according to program and strategic needs. This vagueness reflected American administrative confusion and appeared again in the directive for the new Combined Shipping Adjustment Board (CSAB). This decision reflected the inability of American civil agencies to reconcile conflicting claims and reduce the grip of the service departments.[40] Two pools were to be formed, in London and in Washington, to allocate respective resources; but the central board, a two man committee of the Ministry of War Transport representative (Sir Arthur Salter) and whoever would head the new War Shipping Administration, would attempt to co-ordinate on an interchange basis. Yet the American service departments would retain control of ship **production** policy, under Presidential oversight. These were real "gaps" in the new machinery, but they did make it easier to lay down this basis of an agreed framework.

The new CCS only settled that framework on 14 January. The combined bodies' directives were settled, with a broad but vital mandate to: a) recommend broad programs, based on strategic needs; b) submit directives on allocations to national bodies; c) settle broad issues of conflicting theatre claims for reinforcements.[41] This package was submitted to Churchill and Roosevelt as WW16. They accepted it as the administrative basis to implement the agreed grand strategy defined in WW1. The new coalition now had a basic plan and machinery. Meanwhile, consensus had emerged on the scale of American effort required. Beaverbrook's lobby bore fruit, aided by Pacific setbacks and the American services' own pressures. Beaverbrook's ploy - comparing American targets to much higher British scales - did the trick. By 10 January, Roosevelt agreed to increase overall war production and British supplies.[42] Dorling advised Beaverbrook of a large increase in USN appropriations for British orders, which he credited to Beaverbrook's plea to "raise their sights very considerably."[43] On 13 January, Beaverbrook submitted a report on his mission, termed "Raising the Sights." He noted correctly that nothing was final or guaranteed and many details remained unsolved, but the decisive aim had been achieved. Roosevelt accepted the need to organize a vastly greater war effort. Beaverbrook's figures speak for themselves (selected examples):

1942 Targets

	Combat Aircraft	Tanks	Anti-Tank Guns
U.S. Targets pre 12/41	28,600	20,000	7,000
1st War Dept. Proposal	31,250	29,550	11,700
2nd War Dept. Proposal	37,000	25,450	14,900
Roosevelt Decision	45,000	45,000	14,900
(1943 Targets)	(100,000)	(75,000)	

In addition, there was to be an increase in shipping from six to eight million tons and a major increase in naval building, both to rise further in 1943.[44] None of these

figures survived in practice, and the scale of British supplies remained contentious. But at this point the need was to commit the Americans to an increased effort, period. A dramatic declaration of Presidential policy, followed by the organization of the War Production Board (WPB), under Donald Nelson, vaguely charged with the "direction" of national industrial mobilization, signalled success. At last the signal was given which would enable serious effort to proceed. Given relative consequences and benefits this, not his 1940 efforts, should surely stand as Beaverbrook's greatest contribution to the war effort.

These great decisions have for the sake of clarity been traced as emerging in an isolation and with a consistent focus that did not in fact occur. But they formed the bedrock on which the attempt to define a coalition policy was spun out, in an overlapping "third stage" of discussions, by events and issues outside the conference discussions themselves. The end result was the emergence in now acute form of latent dilemmas for the British regarding the orientation of their grand strategy. One powerful pressure stemmed from the new situation on the Eastern Front. The Soviet counter-offensive raised confidence in both London and Moscow. Stalin more aggressively demanded a gesture of good faith by public recognition of Soviet 1941 frontiers. Eden was advised to take a harder line in his discussions in Moscow, and the COS eyed the supply protocol covetously.[45] Eden advised that Stalin seemed to want better co-operation, but on concrete terms: frontiers, a hard line towards Germany's post-war future, supplies, and especially a "Second Front." Churchill realized that the Allies badly needed an active Eastern Front, but shared Roosevelt's desire to delay all discussion of post-war related issues. More to the point, there was still no real point of contact beyond a common enemy and Britain was still much too weak to offer more than diplomatic gestures. These gestures, however, could only involve the issue of spheres of influence, anathema to Washington. Offering them at the risk of offending the indispensable ally to appease the uncongenial one was more than Churchill could swallow. No gestures were forthcoming, under the excuse of the need to consult with Roosevelt.[46]

Nevertheless a working basis with Moscow was a strategic necessity. This raised a long term problem which Halifax outlined to Churchill on 2 January. In the long term international stability would become dependent on the co-operation of the "Big Three," the U.S., the U.K. and the U.S.S.R. Therefore, some formula regarding frontiers, especially the Baltic States, had to be found to reconcile Stalin. Churchill resisted this approach, which was later resurrected,* and Halifax warned Eden that political issues overall were suffering from Churchill's preoccupation with grand strategy. This was a pointed reminder of the conference focus, but Halifax felt the Foreign Office should insist on greater attention to longer term issues.[47] This raised the second wider issue, the six month old "Article VII" Lend-Lease "consideration" talks. Halifax and Cherwell insisted a timely concession would help more immediate concerns. However, the Foreign Office felt that now the Americans were at war the whole issue was less urgent and they could be made to understand the obstacles to post-war pledges, mainly the uncertain British economic position. Churchill told Halifax that he was too busy to discuss the issue. Cherwell stepped in to warn Churchill that Cabinet was divided because the essence of the issue was the extent to which Imperial Preferences would be threatened. British economic independence could be eroded by any freer trade regime which would favour a stronger U.S. economy. But his plea for an approach to Roosevelt was ignored.[48] This again illustrated that while the consequences of all out mobilization were raising long term questions, Churchill was still too uncertain of the war itself to pursue them. The organization of a war coalition came first.

The conference itself was high political drama. Churchill's famous speeches in Washington and Ottawa, even the gesture of a Christmas ceremony, struck a tone of righteous belligerence and solidarity which aroused American public opinion. This created the right atmosphere for Churchill and Roosevelt to draft a general but ringing declaration to breathe symbolic life into a global coalition. Roosevelt seized on the fortunate term United Nations and a Declaration was made on New Year's Day to "set forth who we were and what we were fighting for."[49] It did just that in stirring rhetoric, but its phraseology not only gave political focus to the coalition but also

* *See below, p.210*

reflected its heterogeneous nature. The new UN pledged total war with all its resources and full co-operation from all its members, the "Big 3" and the smaller European and Imperial allies. It was explicitly stated no separate peace would be considered. These main themes and qualified Soviet agreement underlined the nature of the coalition: a disparate group driven together by events and, especially between East and West, deeply suspicious of the most basic aims of their new partners. Only a common enemy and basic principles could unite such a group, especially when its own weakness rendered far distant the day it could co-operate in the field. Churchill and Roosevelt took charge of the definition of the coalition by this move, but these fundamental compulsions cemented the new alliance and defined its possibilities.

These undercurrents were overshadowed by the immediate impact of the greatest influence on the conference, developments at the sharp end. To those at the centre it was one war, and a deteriorating one. Churchill and Roosevelt wanted to seize the initiative in the Mediterranean, but the Japanese advance upset all plans. It shaped the conference's operational decisions and dictated the basis of coalition grand strategy for the next six months, even before the conference ended. In a national gamble as reckless as BARBAROSSA, the Japanese launched a widespread three pronged assault from Southeast Asia to the Central Pacific, hoping to carve out a vast defensive perimeter which could be held strongly enough to induce the Allies to accept Japanese hegemony in the region. This meant going to war with the Allies and the U.S.in a vast expanse while the bulk of the Japanese Army was still committed in China. At first all went well. The USN Pacific Fleet was crippled in a surprise attack and put on the defensive. Central Pacific outposts were lost and American forces in the Philippines isolated, by the end of December. As the crisis developed momentum it sucked reinforcements in piecemeal and forced the Americans to improvise a defence.

These startling setbacks destroyed the assumptions underpinning British grand strategy, predicated on co-operation with a strong Pacific Fleet. At the same time, British disasters raised the spectre of an utter collapse. On 10 December, Force Z was caught trying to fend off Japanese invasions of Malaya without air cover, and was destroyed by the specially trained 22nd Air Flotilla. This virtually destroyed local British

naval power and illustrated the glaring weakness of the RAF. With hopes of deterrence or U.S. aid gone, the final illusion to fall was that inferior Japanese combat power justified risks. By the end of the month, Hong Kong had fallen. The Japanese controlled the air and their Twenty Fifth Army was pressing rapidly down the peninsula towards Singapore. Suddenly the whole Imperial position east of New Delhi appeared very shaky. The ramifications were immediate and widespread. The issue crystallized into the extent to which tactical offensives in the Mediterranean would suffer from moves to stabilize the Far East. The Admiralty wanted to restore its old plan of a slow buildup, ultimately nine battleships and four aircraft carriers, in the Indian Ocean. This now depended on pinning the heavy German ships at Brest, holding Singapore, and the USN containing most of the Japanese fleet. It was now understood that the RAF could not cover "main fleet to Singapore." Cunningham insisted that if his fleet were stripped for the buildup, the Mediterranean could only be held if Eighth Army's advance continued and RAF forces were reinforced. The DC(O) agreed to the balanced naval buildup policy but nevertheless insisted that reinforcements be diverted immediately.[50] CRUSADER's prosecution was still considered essential, but these claims now called it seriously in question.

At first, Churchill and Brooke - left in London to "hold the fort" - both felt improvised assistance could help Far East Command hold the Japanese without drawing on the Mediterranean.[51] At first Auchinleck was also optimistic, but he soon warned Brooke that Eighth Army's logistics were badly strained and the enemy was digging in around Gazala. On 16 December, Brooke warned in return that an overall reallocation of forces might be necessary and asked for an estimate of minimum force needed to capture Tripoli.[52] This rang alarm bells in Cairo. Auchinleck seized on Rommel's sudden retreat to resume the advance but on 18 December the Middle East Defence Committee warned Churchill they could still envisage no aid for any other area. On 19 December Auchinleck warned he would need four more divisions just to complete CRUSADER.[53] It was too late. The Admiralty had already warned that the balanced fleet could not concentrate before April and agreed the new Eastern Fleet could retreat to Ceylon, if compelled. The COS had already directed Brooke-Popham to give Malaya

priority and diverted 17th British/Indian Division directly there, but could in addition offer only 18th Division, four fighter squadrons (two from GYMNAST forces) and odds and ends.[54] Brooke realized the situation was slipping out of control and felt this piecemeal drain threatened both areas. By the 24th he felt the Far East would have to take precedence and feared Churchill would push the Americans into a now premature GYMNAST by a rash pledge.[55]

This was the first trace of a theme that came to dominate the Churchill-Brooke relationship. It was rooted in Churchill's addiction to offensive action for its own sake. On this occasion, Brooke had cause for concern. Churchill tried to use a broad British consensus that basic defensive needs could be secured by U.S. reinforcements to the U.K., as a first step, to connect aiding the Far East and still pressing on in Africa. The idea was that this would commit the U.S. in practice to ABC-1 and enable British forces to go overseas. This "chain" idea was raised at the first session at ARCADIA on 23 December. Marshall agreed in principle to send bomber squadrons and up to four division to the U.K., a move codenamed MAGNET. PILGRIM and other minor operations were placed on a contingency basis.[56] Churchill then mounted a sustained lobby to convince all and sundry that the reinforcement "chain" would both restore the Far Eastern situation and allow the initiative to be retained in the Mediterranean by a larger GYMNAST. GYMNAST was the only specific major operation considered because only in the Mediterranean did the Allies have any initiative. It was an existing concept, ready to go if ACROBAT developed. Churchill worked on Roosevelt's determination to sway public opinion by engaging U.S. forces against the European Axis. The planners were forced to draft a new variant, a concerted six division assault known as SUPER-GYMNAST. It ran head on into problems of politics and shipping. A concerted assault would rule out the American policy of inducing Petain to join the Allies. Then de Gaulle's forces seized the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon without Allied approval. This enraged many in Roosevelt's government and made them more reluctant to burn bridges with Vichy.[57] Also, it was soon found that the larger operation would so overstrain shipping as to ruin MAGNET and reduce British reinforcement traffic. The COS sent for shipping experts from London but American

planners insisted anything larger than the original "invitation" variant would upset all plans.[58]

Brooke and the COS both welcomed these doubts about an early GYMNAST. They agreed that shipping now seemed a current limit factor and regarded MAGNET, the "chain," and CRUSADER as far more urgent. The JIC warned that Burma and its vital oil and tungsten would soon be threatened.[59] Brooke ordered further measures to review the balance and reinforce Malaya. He then compelled the JPS and VCOS to acknowledge the precedence of the Far East. A telegram to ARCADIA urged as current priorities: Burma, Singapore and the East Indies, i.e. the "Malaya Barrier," to be held; ACROBAT to go if the situation allowed; GYMNAST to go only if unopposed and with full U.S. participation. While general priorities remained unchanged, in the short term a shift in the operational balance and a greater deployment in the Far East was essential.[60] Actually, this decision was forced on the British by the Japanese advance.

The two divisions at sea were now to go directly to Singapore. A fighting retreat down the peninsula, even to the extent of scorched earth measures, was demanded. Brooke-Popham responded to this by going on record: London's refusal to deploy the forces agreed in 1940 was responsible for the disaster.[61] Before he assumed command Pownall agreed with this but at first he was confident.[62] But even as Pownall assumed command the ABDA concept emerged and subsumed his area. This change in perspective plus relentless Japanese pressure sparked Pownall and Wavell to think in grand strategic terms. Pownall warned that inadequate airpower was proving fatal. Although he had agreed with the decision, in which he had shared, to neglect the theatre, he also felt the focus on the bomber offensive at least "indirectly" aggravated his own situation.[63] He agreed with the ABDA decision and his appointment as Wavell's COS and felt the Allies needed to reorganize, but time was of the essence. By 9 January, the three Imperial divisions under Lt. Gen. Percival were teetering, and Wavell decided to pull back to Johore. Pownall doubted Percival would be tough enough to win a decisive battle.[64]

In this disintegrating situation, Wavell offered a plea for fundamental grand strategic readjustment which intensified debate at the centre. In apocalyptic terms, he

sketched a vision of globally co-ordinated Axis drives to a junction in the Middle East. This required a defensive buildup there and a minimum effort everywhere else, including his own command.[65] This vision of a co-ordinated grand strategy far overrated German-Japanese synchronization and power, reflected the strength of the tendency to see the Empire as the main target of Axis grand strategy and illustrated the shock of the Japanese advance. Shortly this perception would come to dominate Whitehall assumptions, but as yet it was still hoped that the initiative in the Mediterranean could be maintained. However, the writing was clearly on the wall. Wavell was told in reply that the COS wished to clear North Africa and vigorously defend Burma, to consolidate the general position and therefore preclude such a strategic threat.[66] Their plans had already been ruined by two familiar factors.

There simply were not enough forces to meet all the urgent needs, and the Army proved unable to succeed with those available. By now, Allied ability to retain any current strategic flexibility hinged on Eighth Army's ability to clear Libya. By mid January most of Cyrenaica was retaken and Auchinleck prepared to attack Agheila, where Rommel seemed ready to stand. Churchill feared recent reinforcements and shorter supply lines would restore Rommel's strength but Auchinleck cited reports that Axis forces were hard pressed. Despite warning repeatedly that logistics and stretched supply lines limited the forces that could be kept at the sharp end to one division and one brigade, he intended to press on. Churchill seemed at last to realize the risk and the stakes by approving this "bid for a decision" and pledging to "support you whatever the result."[67] By early January, however, the German Air Force regained control of the central Mediterranean and reinforcements flowed to Rommel. Cunningham warned that this put Malta and the whole area at risk and prophesied that due to recent British naval and airpower diversions to the Far East, Rommel would build up enough strength to prevent ACROBAT.[68] The COS reaffirmed that Wavell was to receive only enough forces to hold the "Malay Barrier"[69] but by now this pledge was hollow. Current grand strategy had been forced back on the defensive and the ARCADIA deliberants were forced to respond.

This response was made more difficult by the Australian response to events. The polite fiction that sustained Imperial unity on war policy was that if any Dominion was mortally threatened, the U.K. would be willing **and** able to run great risks to go to its defence. In return, the Dominions accepted British leadership of an Imperial grand strategy and deployment focused on an agenda determined in London. The Australians had long been the most vocal in pressing to codify this "Imperial defence" vision. The fall of France and subsequent events left that defence seriously unbalanced. Bluntly, Whitehall needed to focus the Empire's power against the Germans. The "Imperial" grand strategy was thus already unbalanced when the context was seriously altered by the entry of the U.S. into the war and the emergence of a direct Japanese threat to major Imperial positions. Long simmering Australian dissatisfaction with the central direction of the war boiled over. Churchill described Singapore as a "fortress," and insisted that the new ABDA command, the American decision to develop Australia as a major base, and stop gap reinforcements could all screen Australia by holding the line Burma-Singapore- Hawaii. Curtin flatly disagreed. With three Australian divisions still in the African theatre, and one now heavily engaged in Singapore, he took drastic action. On 27 December Curtin publicly claimed Australia's right to a full say in grand strategy against Japan and its intent to look to the U.S. as the senior partner.[70]

This was an open challenge to British grand strategy and Whitehall's conduct of the war. It was followed up by Australian demands that the Allies seek an early fleet action in the Pacific. Here was a challenge which infuriated Churchill, all the more so because he could not ignore it.[71] British weakness had undermined the whole delicate fiction of an "Imperial defence." Whitehall now saw the overriding imperative to be the reconciliation of the Dominions to a concentration of Imperial power in British hands, to be deployed according to an Allied grand strategy; right now, Britain needed the power of the Empire without being called on to assume its responsibilities. Churchill was convinced that only the main powers who alone faced global responsibilities and deployed similar forces could see the whole picture in perspective. Unfortunately, that picture was out of balance: Britain need Imperial forces to rate as a "main power" but could not now afford to offer its own, in any strength, to succour its satellites. The

Empire was to be held, but on British terms.[72] The "rolling seminar" reluctantly agreed to transfer two Australian divisions from the African theatre, but hoped to fob off further pressure with a showcase forum for smaller allied input which left the control of policy firmly in "Combined" hands.[73] However, all this Australian pressure exposed not only a basic dilemma but also the irreconcilable nature of the ARCADIA plans and the immediate crisis facing Wavell.

This was reinforced by American resistance to any GYMNAST variant and the emergence of a general shipping shortage. Roosevelt's political priorities kept GYMNAST under review but the War Department were determined to scuttle it. They feared its effect on their expansion plans and the leverage it seemed to give Churchill on Roosevelt, and considered it part of that "peripheral" strategy, supposedly aimed at preserving Imperial interests, which prevented strategic concentration. Also, Marshall wisely insisted that, as for understandable political reasons the first U.S. operation had to be a success, only a large deliberate assault could be risked. This was used to entrench SUPER GYMNAST as the planning focus. MAGNET was then confirmed in what seems to have been an attempt to scuttle all the "GYMNASTS." MAGNET suited the concentration concept and put the British in an awkward position by raising competing shipping claims between the Pacific, the "chain" concept and the "GYMNASTS." Something had to give. As the American Official Historians rightly observed, the spark was the massive shipping deficit brought on by the collapse in the Pacific.[74]

Time was so pressing that the decision was actually in the hands of those who controlled the current available shipping pool, the U.S. service departments. The London experts were forced to confirm that new needs for shipping placed the "GYMNASTS" in an impossible position. It was actually agreed on 10 January to plan to allocate 180,000 troops for a SUPER GYMNAST in March, but that same day, London reassured Cairo that only an unopposed GYMNAST was possible.[75] For some time, Brooke and the VCOS, unencumbered by the definition of new machinery, had been quicker to accept the impact of events on plans. ARCADIA now caught up. On 11 January it was agreed that immediate changes were necessary. Marshall insisted

ABDA receive more reinforcements, at the expense of the "GYMNASTS." The COS willingly agreed to accept a general review of current shipping allocations intended to bolster MAGNET, the "chain" concept, and Wavell's command.[76] The last plenary session of the conference bowed to the unavoidable and recast current strategy. Increased U.S. Army reinforcements to the Pacific were accepted. The price was a reduced MAGNET and a delay in SUPER GYMNAST, with a "snap" three division GYMNAST to be ready if Vichy policy changed. By the end of the conference, as if to reaffirm the change, Singapore's fate was felt to rely on a race between reinforcements and the Japanese, the East Indies were menaced and Burma was attacked.[77]

Only rapid and decisive success by Eighth Army could have mitigated all this but to his dismay Auchinleck faced an old problem - apparently inferior combat power. On 1 January he confessed to Brooke his greatest problem:

> "...the tactical lack of success of our armoured units. We have inflicted heavy losses on Germans but have suffered equal losses ourselves."[78]

The inferior combat power of British armoured forces forced all attacks to be deliberately concentrated and lavishly supported. This above all else hampered Eighth Army's progress. Auchinleck told Brooke that his tanks were inferior in both hitting power and reliability and begged Brooke to step in personally to improve matters. An improved two pounder gun and more six pounder Crusaders were especially urgent.[79] Brooke replied that he was already involved but general quality was such a deep rooted problem that no real improvement was expected before **1943.** Even six pounder Crusaders would not arrive for several months.[80] Intelligence clearly warned of a German buildup and imminent riposte and Auchinleck was forced to confess his uncertainty as to whether Eighth Army could press on. He argued that German armour was better, more reliable and better handled than the undergunned and poorly led British tanks.[81] Brooke pointedly suggested that it would be possible to strive immediately to improve the tactical handling of armour and its conjunction with other arms.[82] Whether this could be done in time or not, to those at the centre a familiar theme was clear. The forces already deployed could not make decisive progress; Rommel was reinforced and seemed ready to attack again. The increased demands on all three services as a result of the extension

of the war made it impossible to reinforce Auchinleck. The scope of tactical offensives within "wear down" had again contracted. As a result, a divergence emerged between the ultimate direction of grand strategy agreed as WW1 and the current orientation forced on the Allies by their relative and absolute weakness.

Churchill tried again to restore the balance with a persuasive paper putting the case for American absorption into a further revision of "wear down." Fundamental security could be addressed by MAGNET and the reinforcement "chain." Shipping limitations were cited to urge the prime 1942 effort be escalated attrition of German airpower rather than a massive U.S. ground force buildup. The Mediterranean was the best place as forces were already in contact, but time was of the essence as the Germans would surely again attack the Soviets in the spring. Operations everywhere were to be as intense as possible. "Fortress" Singapore was to hold long enough to allow the concentration of naval power. Thus the marshalling of Allied resources and 1942 success would allow a strategic offensive in the European theatre in 1943.[83] These familiar themes were addressed to both Roosevelt and the COS, but already undercut by problems with shipping and at the sharp end. Churchill himself soon realized the constraint of "that harsh and despotic factor, shipping."[84] Even before the conference ended, MAGNET was cut in half to increase initial reinforcements to Australia. The conflicting claims of new and existing commitments on shipping now formed a vicious circle which threatened to erode the whole starting point of the recent strategy.

Whitehall itself had now taken note of the need to respond to events and the new dimensions of the shipping problem. It was realized that events had sparked a new phase.[85] The result was a major revision of policy. The JPS summed up the problem by warning that overseas' needs would now need to increase to such an extent that a truly minimum level of necessary imports would have to be found. The LPC were considering projected claims in a range between 25 and 33 million tons for 1942. Attlee raised the issue in the DC(O) on 16 January. Brooke called for a true minimum to be defined, with operational needs given priority.[86] This clearly suggested the balance between long term structure - eventual power - and short term operations - current power - be altered again, this time drastically. The deciding voice turned out to be Anderson's. The

various reports convinced him that imports could still be cut and destocking increased but overseas needs were now at crisis proportions. Gambling that the CSAB would be able to "grip" American shipping, and thus salvage the import position, he insisted that a minimum import level be established and operational needs put first.[87] This underlined the widespread atmosphere of crisis that had so heavily affected ARCADIA; indeed, it emphasized the apparent thread by which all the ambitious plans hatched in Washington now rested.

Churchill flew home, in view of the Far East crisis, to report to a Cabinet thus already grappling with drastic adjustments. His report, on 17 January, was euphoric. Given the strain in the field, this indicated the early optimism and emphasis placed on the fundamental organizational and strategic framework erected for the coalition. Guiding principles and mechanisms were front and centre. Churchill saw the "common pool," the "Combined" bodies, and his personal links at the top as the keystones. He felt the Roosevelt administration's decision to imitate the British pattern of central co-ordination would close the gap between decision and execution and enable unified American and coalition policy. He also exulted in Beaverbrook's success, but hopes for the Combined Boards brought out his true aspirations:

> "...these Agreements were, in his view, wholly favourable to us. In practice, as we were already fully engaged in the war, our resources would not be drawn upon. In assessing the value of these instruments, regard had to be given to the personalities behind them."[88]

By personalities, Churchill meant Roosevelt and Hopkins. They were now to be relied on to deliver the crux - sincere U.S. adherence to the "common pool." In practice, this would harness uncommitted American power to British policy while leaving committed British power undisturbed.[89] Clearly, Whitehall was confident that while a genuine community of interests would cement an integrated war effort, British experience, position and skill would make the new framework an effective vehicle for preserving its influence in that effort.

However, the Boards were only the spokes. The hub was the CCS, under the supervision of Minister of Defence and Commander in Chief. Their control was to be

unimpaired. A Pacific War Council was duly set up in duplicate in London and Washington, to accommodate Australian grievances, but Whitehall unanimously agreed that it must remain a powerless sop to Allied opinion.[90] The Americans' agreement to a London body indicated they shared this view. Roosevelt had only been won over to a CCS and its control over allocations by Hopkins' and Marshall's assurance that the new bodies would be strong and streamlined organs with real authority, but including only the leading powers and centred in Washington.[91] This would locate the coalition machinery in the midst of American bureaucracy. The latter would have time to reorganize, and expanded American power would increase their leverage over the "pool" and "Combined" concepts. Washington also intended to develop a framework to impose its own policy on the coalition.

The whole structure evolved pragmatically out of the existing situation, the balance of resources and different administrative practices. It was clearly grounded in the British concept of using existing structure. All bodies joined national departments in joint forums in their particular sphere, under the summit umbrella of Churchill and Roosevelt. The Boards were indeed "innumerable adjustments, rather than spectacular turns." It is fair to say that despite its British origins the machinery, as established, was an American success.[92] The form in which it emerged was a significant departure from British hopes, especially regarding the CCS. Its de facto operation during the conference augured well for flexibility but it had emanated from the American concept of unified theatre command. Above all, it had not been duplicated with parallel authority in London. The British had hoped to secure delegated control of operational spheres with an assured flow of forces and supplies and had given in only when the JCS refused to delegate any power. Churchill's decision to leave Dill in Washington as not only head of the JSM and leading delegate to the CCS but also as his personal representative actually enhanced the authority of that new sole CCS.[93] The British accepted this crucial erosion of their call for parallel authority with great reluctance. They feared that future American material preponderance might elbow them out of the leading role they felt their vast experience and greater mobilization had earned. This ambivalence was a

serious flaw in British perceptions of the new coalition's relative balance of power potential.

This flaw must be considered in assessing the impact of the conference on Allied fortunes, especially the relationship of the leading powers. Because WW1 so closely duplicated the "wear down" pattern, the ARCADIA grand strategy decisions were widely seen as a British success. The usual basic argument is that a wily Churchill implanted a far seeing ulterior "Imperial" strategy on an unwary Roosevelt and led the Americans into the Mediterranean swamp. Regarding the ARCADIA decision, this is premature. The "wear down" outline's success at ARCADIA was by default. American strategic thought had as yet no consensus alternative.[94] Yet even recent and more sophisticated studies still argued that an enduring British outline was successfully entrenched at ARCADIA. One scholar even suggested that Churchill was correct: these decisions "blueprinted" the broad outline of Allied grand strategy into mid-1944. This must be qualified. "Wear down" was the approach being pursued by the more heavily engaged ally, the British. But the WWI draft was a loose tentative outline, accepted only because it did not close off any future scenario. It reflected current strategic reality. Japan only indirectly threatened the very survival of the Allies as World Powers; Germany very directly threatened the existence of the Soviet Union and, in London's eyes, the U.K. Yet the unexpected collapse in the Pacific left "wear down" as only a vague set of general parameters. The contentious point, the ultimate offensive approach, was very clearly left open. The basic reason has been ably summed up by another recent argument: instead of subscribing to an ultimate approach based on absolute American power, Churchill and his retinue opted to base future coalition plans on relative British weakness and assume Washington agreed and would continue to agree.[95] In truth, Churchill's satisfaction was dangerously complacent.

In retrospect, Brooke felt that grand strategy at this point had been made "hand to mouth."[96] Grand strategy had been and had to remain opportunistic, pursuing a loose general pattern but exploiting and adjusting to whatever opportunities arose. This was a dangerous but unavoidable posture against a stronger enemy with the strategic initiative. The adoption of "wear down" was rendered only a potential success by the

collapse of Far East Command and stagnation in the Mediterranean. As ARCADIA ended, the "rolling seminar" was dimly aware of this. The shortfall was largely relative. High hopes had been vested in this first council of war between principals. A comprehensive framework for national war policy and a grand strategy with realistic power prospects had, at last, seemed possible.[97] Some vision of order might at last be wrought from the chaos rampant since May 1940. But this concept of fixed detailed policy ran against the grain of British strategic thought and practice. It also ran aground on the barrier of Axis power. The details seemed only to foster ambivalence. The British could only offer ABDA two divisions and 51 Hurricanes. It was a command born to die so that a relationship might flourish. Yet the "GYMNASTS" had already been subsumed by defensive needs. The Americans insisted China be considered an important factor, but Burma, the only direct link, was already threatened.[98] On the other hand the "pool" and Board principles seemed to offer promise of an eventually more powerful "wear down" consensus. These multiple contradictions made the real issue the degree of conviction which each partner would vest in the whole new concept.

The suggestion that the British impact on the conference decisions was less than final raises a basic issue: how firmly parameters set in conference could bound subsequent policy. On the surface, "wear down" triumphed.[99] ABC-1 was reaffirmed. U.S. war production on a serious scale was finally official policy. The "bombing-blockade-subversion-peripheral operations-Soviet aid" pattern was accepted as current and overall grand strategy. Defensive needs, such as security of sea lanes, were to be paramount. Only minimum forces were to contain the Japanese. However, Churchill and the Americans insisted on aggressive expectations even in the current phase. North Africa would be cleared and direct "wearing down" escalated. The line Rangoon-Singapore-Hawaii was to be held. Then in 1943 the Allies would respond. The fact that BARBAROSSA had saved the British position and the prevailing belief that winter weather alone had saved the Soviets were dangerously glossed over. But ambivalence was the crucial British mistake. The Allies would meet again in time of crisis but never again would the British have such a chance to exploit greater readiness and define favourable terms. The Americans would be in the war in all respects. The crucial error

was the "rolling seminar's" inability to grasp the inexorable impact of the future growth of American power, or perhaps their tendency to overrate their ability to offset this.

This was avoidable folly, rooted in the unrealistic desire to place American power under British control. The insistence on one CCS should have dispelled any illusions. The danger was clear, and the British continued to appeal for a parallel CCS. However, they accepted the initial decision, which should have indicated that the constraints of circumstances went in both directions. In theory, the British would have done better to accept that, as their power would soon peak, concessions to entrench the "pool" concept would eventually reap handsome return. But this would have called for a revolution of thought in all layers of British governance and their vision of British interests. It was also ruled out by the chaos found in Washington and the over confidence this generated. The British still felt the ARCADIA decisions left them time - time for "wear down" to prove itself as coalition grand strategy. American unpreparedness, and the inherent logic of the concept led the Roosevelt administration to accept the "pool" and "wear down," but only as starting points. There were three factors which made time a more urgent factor then ever. The question of Imperial policy and priorities had become acute, which threatened the cohesion of British power. The Americans were already conscious of their vast potential power. They looked to the vision of imposing their will on the enemy in a decisive campaign as best suited to their interests. This ran counter to the fundamental underpinning of the "wear down" strategy and could risk British power itself. Ironically, this was accelerated by Beaverbrook's actions; unavoidably, the British had started their own clock running. Finally, the only place "wear down" could gain tangible momentum was at the sharp end. As always, the combat power of forces in the field would influence the direction of strategy. The signs were ominous. Churchill's scope for personal influence had already begun to contract with Wavell's directive, calling for the CCS to supervise the command.[100] The central Mediterranean was again too hot for the RN. Auchinleck now expected to be attacked. Finally, the German Navy launched a new U-Boat offensive right off the North American coast which renewed the threat to the supply lines which procured the vital margin of power. Unless the available forces could hold the line and allow the tactical offensives of "wear down" to take hold, the gap

in assumption and expectation left open at ARCADIA would worsen. This would almost certainly make coalition grand strategy a major issue. The record to this point was not a cause for optimism.

Endnotes to Chapter 3

1. Leighton & Coakley, Global Logistics 1940-1943, Washington, 1955, 144.

2. Churchill, The Grand Alliance, 645. The papers can found in full, PRO, PREM3/499/2. Large extracts were reprinted in Churchill, The Grand Alliance, chapter 14.

3. Churchill, The Grand Alliance, 659; Gwyer, 336-339; Gilbert, Road to Victory, 9.

4. PRO, CAB80/61, CR(JP)6, 16/12/41.

5. PRO, CAB80/61, ARCADIA Papers, COS minutes, 18/12/41.

6. PRO, CAB80/61, ARCADIA Papers, COS minutes, 19/12/41.

7. PRO, CAB80/61, CR(9), 19/12/41.

8. Hall, 336.

9. PRO, CAB80/61, ARCADIA Papers, COS minutes, 13/12/41; Kimball, vol.1, Churchill-Roosevelt, C-142X, 18/12/41.

10. PRO, CAB66/20, WP(41)302, 19/12/41; CAB79/16, COS minutes, 20/12/41.

11. PRO, CAB66/20, WP(41)303, 20/12/41. The telegram itself was sent on 21/12/41, with minor revisions.

12. Churchill, The Grand Alliance, 642.

13. Leighton & Coakley, 140.

14. Steele, R.W. The First Offensive 1942, Bloomington, IN, 1973, 59; Leighton & Coakley, 248.

15. Eisenhower, J.S.D. Allies: Pearl Harbour to D-Day, Garden City, 1982, 17.

16. PRO, CAB80/61, ARCADIA Papers, COS-JCS minutes, 23/12/41.

17. PRO, CAB80/61, ARCADIA Papers, COS-JCS minutes, 25/12/41.

18. PRO, CAB80/61, ARCADIA Papers, COS-JCS minutes, 27/12/41.

19. PRO, CAB80/61, ARCADIA Papers, COS minutes, 26/12/41.

20. PRO, CAB80/61, ARCADIA Papers, COS minutes, 27/12/41.

21. PRO, CAB80/32, WP(41)307, 29/12/41; CAB65/20, Grey #148, Churchill-Attlee, 29/12/41, attached minutes War Cabinet meeting, 29/12/41.

22. PRO, CAB66/25, Eden to War Cabinet, 1/1/42; CAB80/61, ARCADIA Papers, COS-JCS minutes, 29/12/41; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/V, Diary entry, 29/12/41; 14/38, Dill to Brooke, 28/12/41.

23. PRO, CAB99/17, ARCADIA Papers, COS-JCS minutes, 30/12/41.

24. PRO, CAB99/17, CR(32), 31/12/41, ARCADIA Papers, COS minutes, 1/1/42.

25. PRO, CAB80/61, ARCADIA Papers, COS-JCS minutes, 27/12/41; CAB99/17, ARCADIA Papers, COS-JCS minutes, 31/12/41.

26. Gwyer, J.M.A. Grand Strategy, vol.III, 360.

27. Matloff & Snell, 97-102; Eisenhower, D.D. Crusade in Europe, New York, 1948, 18-22; Gwyer, vol.III, 360.

28. PRO, PREM 3/490/1, Dorling to Beaverbrook, 20/12/41.

29. HLRO, Beaverbrook papers, D/13, Dorling to Beaverbrook, 27/12/41.

30. HLRO, Beaverbrook papers, D/117, Self to Beaverbrook, 27/12/41.

31. HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D/117, Beaverbrook to Roosevelt, 27/12/41.

32. HLRO, Beaverbrook papers, D117, Beaverbrook to Roosevelt, 29/12/41.

33. HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D/13, DSD(41)14, Arnold memorandum, 1/1/42.

34. PRO, CAB99/17, CR(31), ARCADIA Papers, COS memorandum, 31/12/41.

35. PRO, CAB99/17, ARCADIA Papers, COS minutes, 1/1/42.

36. PRO, CAB99/17, ARCADIA Papers, COS minutes, 12/1, 13/1/42.

37. PRO, CAB99/17, ARCADIA Papers, COS-JCS minutes, 13/1/42.

38. Leighton & Coakley, 249.

39. Ibid, 251; Eisenhower, J.S.D. Allies: Pearl Harbour to D-Day, 38.

40. Rosen, S.M. The Combined Boards of the Second World War, New York, 1951, 87-91.

41. PRO, CAB99/17, ARCADIA Papers, COS-JCS minutes, 14/1/42.

42. Hall, 342.

43. HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D/96, Dorling to Beaverbrook, 10/1/42; Leighton & Coakley, 198.

44. HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D/96, Dorling to Beaverbrook, report on Mission, 13/1/42.

45. Kitchen, 111. Kitchen's view that this illustrated a tendency to underrate the importance of the Soviets in grand strategy unless their situation was very grave might overestimate the ability Whitehall perceived it had materially to assist the Soviets.

46. Beaumont, J. Comrades in Arms, London, 1980, 91; PRO, CAB65/25, Eden to War Cabinet, 1/1/42; Gorodetsky, 283-288.

47. CCA, Hickleton Papers, A4/410/4/11, Halifax to Churchill, 2/1/42, A4/410/4.15, Halifax to Eden, 5/1/42. "Reconcile" seems to have meant find a semblance of justification for Soviet control. Halifax, as he often did, copied this note to Eden.

48. NCA, Cherwell Papers, H164, Foreign Office to Halifax, #6914, 13/12, Halifax to Foreign Office, #5953, Halifax to Cabinet, 29/12/41, Cherwell to Martin, 2/1/42.

49. Churchill, The Grand Alliance, 683.

50. PRO, CAB80/61, Pound to COS, 13/12/41; CAB80/60, COS(41)277(0), VCNS to COS, 11/12, 14/12/41; BL, Cunningham Papers, 52561, Cunningham-Pound, #2022B, 11/12/41; CAB80/60, COS(41)280(0) revise, COS to DC(O), 20/12/41.

51. PT, vol.4, Churchill-Auchinleck, 12/12/41.

52. PT, vol.4, Auchinleck-Churchill, #1652 Susan, 13/12, Auchinleck-Brooke, 15/12,Brooke-Auchinleck, 16/12/41.

53. PT, vol.4, Auchinleck-Churchill, 17/12/41; Auchinleck-Brooke, 19/12/41.

54. PT, vol.1, C in C Eastern Fleet-Admiralty, 13/12/41; Admiralty-C in C, 1433A/14, 14/12; Admiralty to C in C 005A/17, 17/12/41.

55. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/V, diary entries, 20/12, 24/12/41, and retrospective.

56. PRO, CAB69/2, COS(41)280(0), COS to DC(O), 19/12/41; CAB80/61, ARCADIA Papers, COS-JCS minutes, 23/12/41.

57. Churchill, The Grand Alliance, 631,667; Kersaudy, 179. Churchill ignored American anger with de Gaulle at this point.

58. PRO, CAB80/61, ARCADIA Papers, COS-JCS minutes, 26/12/41; CAB99/17, ARCADIA Papers, COS-JCS minutes, 31/12/41.

59. PRO, CAB79/16, COS minutes, 22/12, 23/12/41, JIC(41)488, 23/12/41.

60. PRO, CAB79/16, COS minutes, 25/12/41; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, Notes on My Life, 25/12/41 entry.

61. PT, vol.1, WO-Wavell, 22/12/41; COS-Brooke-Popham, 22/12/41; WO-Wavell, #59902, 23/12/41; WO-Wavell, #59918, 23/12/41.

62. PT, vol.1, Brooke-Popham-COS, 25/12/41; LHCMA, Pownall Papers, diary entry, 20/12/41, Pownall-Brooke, 27/12/41.

63. PT, vol.1, Pownall-WO, 29/12/41; LHCMA, Pownall Papers, diary entry, 30/12/41.

64. LHCMA, Pownall Papers, diary entries 2/1, 5/1, 8/1/42; PT, vol.1, Wavell-COS, 8/1, 9/1/42.

65. PT, vol.1, Wavell-COS, 1/1/42.

66. PT, vol.1, COS-Wavell, 8/1/42.

67. PT, vol.5, Churchill-Auchinleck, 11/1, Auchinleck-Churchill, 12/1, Churchill-Auchinleck, 13/12/41.

68. PT, vol.4, MEDC-Churchill, 27/12/41, Cunningham-Admiralty, 10, 10/1/42; BL, Cunningham Papers, 52567, Admiralty-Cunningham, #1655A, 24/12/41, Cunningham-Admiralty, #1338B, 27/12/41, 52561, Cunningham-Moore, 9/1/42.

69. PT, vol.4, COS-MEDC, #COS224, 10/1/42; PRO, CAB79/17, COS minutes, 10/1/42.

70. PRO, CAB80/61, Curtis-War Cabinet, 13/12/41; ARCADIA Papers, summary of telegrams, 1/1/42; Churchill, The Grand Alliance, 668-669.

71. Churchill, W.S. The Hinge of Fate, Boston, 1950, Chapter 1. This account understated his reaction at the time.

72. A good brief discussion of this "Imperial"dilemma as it now emerged is Cohen, in Kennedy, P. Grand Strategies in War and Peace, 57-60.

73. PRO, CAB65/20, War Cabinet minutes, 29/12/41; CAB69/2, Page to Churchill, 31/12/41; CAB99/17 ARCADIA Papers, COS minutes, 2/1/42; CAB80/61, ARCADIA Papers, directive to Wavell, 3/1/42; CAB79/17, COS minutes, 7/1/42; CAB80/61, ARCADIA Papers, Hollis to COS, 8/1/42.

74. Matloff & Snell, 104-119; Steele, 54-76; Leighton & Coakley, 153.

75. PRO, CAB99/17, ARCADIA Papers, COS-JCS minutes, 10/1/42; CAB79/17, COS minutes, 10/1/42.

76. PRO, CAB99/17, ARCADIA Papers, COS-JCS minutes, 22/1/42; CR(44), forecast of Shipping Situation 1-3/42, 3/1/42.

77. PRO, CAB99/17, ARCADIA Papers, Plenary Session, 12/1/42; PT, vol.1, Wavell-COS, 12/1, 14/1, 15/1, Churchill to Wavell, 15/1/42.

78. PT, vol.5, Auchinleck-Brooke, 29/12/41, 1/1/42.

79. PT, vol.5, Auchinleck-Brooke, 29/12/42.

80. PT, vol.4, Brooke-Auchinleck, 8/1/42.

81. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 6/D/4d/D, Auchinleck to Brooke, 6/1/42. This was a private letter which belied much of the C in C's official confidence at this point.

82. PT. vol.4, Brooke-Auchinleck, 8/1/42.

83. Kimball, vol.1, Churchill-Roosevelt, C-153X, 7/1/42; long extracts and an argument that this paper expressed the eventual "Combined" consensus can be found in Churchill, The Grand Alliance, 699-704.

84. Churchill, The Grand Alliance, 705.

85. CCA, Robinson Papers, 1/2/1, Production Executive minutes, 13/1/42.

86. PRO, CAB79/17, COS minutes, 14/1, 16/1/42; CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes 16/1/42.

87. PRO, CAB71/6, LPC minutes, 16/1/42.

88. PRO, CAB65/25, War Cabinet minutes, 17/1/42.

89. PRO, CAB65/25, War Cabinet minutes, 19/1/42; Cohen, in Kennedy, P. Grand Strategies in War and Peace, 53, also noted Churchill's consistent moves to stir up American public opinion, but he somewhat overstated Churchill's personal role in forging "Combined" machinery.

90. PRO, CAB80/33, COS(42)24, 16/1/42; CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 16/1/42.

91. Matloff & Snell, 125; Eisenhower, J.S.D. Allies: Pearl Harbour to D-Day, 36-38.

92. Hall, 337, 351; Eisenhower, J.S.D. Allies: Pearl Harbour to D-Day, 38.

93. PRO, CAB65/25, War Cabinet minutes, 19/1/42; Gwyer, vol.III, 382; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/V, 12/41, retrospective.

94. Gwyer, vol.III, 352; Matloff & Snell, 102; Steele, 74-76. Steele exaggerated the thesis that at this point the War Department's fear of losing influence with Roosevelt to Churchill was driving them towards a **coherent** overall outline. This was premature, as will be seen in Chapter 4. Parkinson, 337; Higgins, T. Winston Churchill and the 2nd Front, New York, 1957, 84-86, 91-95; Callahan, 233.

95. Cohen, in Kennedy, P. Grand Strategies in War and Peace, 51, for the continuity argument; Ben-Moshe, 508.

96. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/V, diary entries and retrospective. The 1954 comment that Churchill worked by impulse and intuition alone is poorly placed in a review of a period in which Churchill wrote four outstanding strategic papers.

97. Scott & Hughes, 433.

98. PRO, CAB99/17, ARCADIA Papers, summary of conclusions, 20/1/42.

99. WW1 can be found in full, PRO, CAB80/61, COS(42)7(0), 5/5/42.

100. PT, vol.1, Churchill-Wavell, 13/1/42.

Chapter 4

Strategy Extended: By Default

> **"We were all completely agreed as regards 1943 but if we were forced this year to undertake an operation on the continent it could only be on a small scale. It was necessary to relate its military value, which would not be great, to the danger of Germany and Japan joining hands in the Indian Ocean."**
>
> **- Brooke, 14/4/42**

The course of events in 1942 made the ultimate defeat of the Axis powers almost certain. But full British mobilization was approached faster than British campaigns progressed. The Empire continued to maintain more forces in contact, but American power rapidly increased. The Soviets continued to absorb the bulk of German military power, in a bitter struggle for survival. British policy makers were forced to confront the fact that while for the coalition as a whole the key question became not "if" but "how" the war would be won, for the U.K. "at what cost" was becoming a vital question. Indeed, the making of grand strategy in a coalition context now became so complex that for clarity's sake the chronological survey must now blend in with a thematic approach. Throughout the changing course of events, Whitehall clung to two fundamental assumptions: the Empire alone could not generate enough power to carry the Allied war effort forward on British terms; and even overall Allied potential power could not guarantee that the most rapid approach would not be an unacceptable risk. This underpinned Whitehall's reaction to the emergence of an Allied debate on two interlocked issues: the immediate grand strategic approach, and the overall grand strategic outline.

These debates revolved around two great broad questions: the plan to establish a "Second Front" in Europe, and Whitehall's struggle to integrate the Allied war effort on favourable terms and harmonize British and American structural policy, with each other and with an agreed Allied grand strategy. But in order to understand how all these questions converged, in Whitehall's perception, into one great national agenda, their evolution must at first be treated separately. This chapter will deal with the seminal dialogue regarding the role of a "Second Front" that developed from early spring to late summer. This experience can best be traced in measured steps. First, the context must

be set, by examining the impact of further setbacks in the field, and the emergence of severe internal and external pressures. Internally, Whitehall had to face a serious crisis of confidence, at home and in the Empire, in the central direction of the war and the competence of the armed forces, especially the Army. Externally, Whitehall found itself confronted with new agendas from Moscow and Washington. The nature of the debate that erupted will be traced to its first impasse in late June. Then the pivotal debates of mid-summer will be examined. It will be argued that the dominant fact regarding the formulation of British grand strategy was the depth of the consensus on fundamental imperatives expressed in the "wear down" outline. The "rolling seminar's" vision was affected by events, but "wear down" provided a flexible framework within which to adapt, not alter, its ideas in the face of a changing context.

The first half of 1942 was perhaps the nadir of British fortunes. Mere survival no longer seemed at stake, but that bred greater bewilderment and frustration at almost continuous defeat. While American belligerency eased the overall strain, in the short run it brought added pressure on the Allies which the makeshift ARCADIA arrangements could not relieve. The collapse was worst in the Far East. In 150 days every Imperial position between Calcutta and Australia was lost. Singapore fell on 15 February, with the humiliating surrender of 130,000 troops. In successive assaults the oil rich East Indies were lost and the ABDA command collapsed; its last commander, a Dutch Admiral, surrendered on 9 March. The Japanese also took the Philippines, advanced through Burma, knocked the weak new Eastern Fleet out of the east and centre of the Indian Ocean, and took the Bismarck Islands. By late May, the Japanese were in a good position to cut Allied communications to Australia and had knocked Imperial forces out of Burma and back into India. The Japanese advance there was halted only by its own exhaustion and the rainy season; India, lodestone of Empire, seemed at grave risk. In fact, the Japanese advance had overreached itself.

The USN's fleet carriers had escaped the attack on Pearl Harbour, which left the Allies a fleet in being to contest Japanese efforts while American mobilization expanded. American actions settled the strategic debate in Japan over how best to entrench their vast

new perimeter. Further offensives to extend the interdiction of Australia and consolidate a defensive bastion in the central Pacific were approved. It was hoped that Japanese forces could erect an impenetrable barrier from which to ward off Allied counteroffensives while newly captured resources were exploited. Both plans were disrupted by American naval airpower, with a decisive assist from a well applied signals intelligence effort similar to "Ultra."[1] The Americans scored a strategic victory in early May at the Battle of the Coral Sea, the first naval battle where the opposing fleets never saw each other; a Japanese attempt to overrun all of New Guinea and isolate Australia was stymied. The far more decisive battle of Midway, on 4-5 June, restored a rough balance of seapower overnight. The Americans destroyed the bulk of Japan's veteran naval air units and sunk four fleet carriers. This stemmed the Japanese tide and took the pressure off the Allies before irreversible damage was done. Yet this was only of general consolation to the British. Their failure to emulate the American success with existing forces left them hanging on in the Indian Ocean, separated from the main fronts.

The same depressing story repeated itself in north Africa as well. With speed and skill that reflected very poorly on British efforts, German reinforcements of less than 100 tanks were marshalled in under a month to spearhead a probe into Cyrenaica. Auchinleck expected an attack but felt the same logistical problems which forced him to reorganize his forces would allow him the time to do so before a serious threat developed. Inexperienced formations in unbalanced deployment were again overpowered by superior enemy efficiency, and the probe became a major thrust. Supply problems prevented Rommel from repeating his dash of 1941, but by early February Eighth Army was back in the Gazala area barely 30 miles west of Tobruk, well clear of the central Mediterranean. ACROBAT, let alone GYMNAST, was forgotten. Another long struggle to build up superior forces ensued, in which Auchinleck was hampered by the diversion of reinforcements to India and escalated pressure on Malta.

Developments on the Eastern Front were little better. The severe winter caught the Germans unprepared and cost them dearly, but a rout was averted and reorganization made a new offensive possible. A premature Soviet offensive pushed about 100 miles west of Moscow but petered out in March. Through a series of directives, Hitler defined

a new grand strategy: escalated U-Boat efforts, naval concentrations in Norway, defensive preparations to face Allied threats, and a renewed strategic offensive in the east to knock out the Soviets. The northern and extreme southern flanks were to be secured. A defensive stand was to be made in the centre. In the south, a massive offensive would be launched to "wipe out the entire defence potential remaining to the Soviets."[2] Stalin realized that the Soviets would be forced to revert to the strategic defensive, but misread German intentions. By June very large forces, including 53 German divisions, were poised to attack. This was the global fulcrum of the war.[3]

The situation in the Atlantic sea lanes deteriorated again, partly from losses in the Far East and Mediterranean which drew forces away. This deterioration helped the Germans concentrate more naval power in Norway to contest the supply convoys to Russia - the most spectacular move being a daylight dash through the Channel on 12 February by the battlecruisers from Brest. Russian convoys became major fleet operations from March and the Allies were obliged to retain a powerful Home Fleet. The U-Boats opened a new campaign off the north American coast. Losses soared and overall strain worsened as, for various reasons, it took five months for the Americans to begin to master the problem.

A rejuvenated Bomber Command and the CIRCUS sweeps were again unleashed in an effort to escalate "offensive" pressure. Bomber Command finally seemed able to score impressive results. In March and April, German coastal cities were heavily attacked. In May and June, three widely trumpeted "1,0000 plane raids" were carried out on the Ruhr. It seemed on the surface that in this one area British forces were breaking through. This in barest outline was the texture of events in the field. It must be noted that while overall strain had greatly increased, Allied and British fortunes and priorities had not developed in step. This imbalance underpinned the evolution of strategic thought in British and Allied circles.

The strain of repeated setbacks coming on top of the promise of a new coalition proved almost too much for British political consensus. Frustration mounted and brought in its train debates over nearly every aspect of national policy, especially over the central direction of the war. In fact, a deep set "national malaise" emerged. This set off, from

January through August, the worst political crisis of the war. This crisis was directly linked to defeat in the field and the visceral feeling that it was avoidable. 1940 seemed understandable. 1941 seemed excusable. But now, something seemed drastically wrong. Searching criticism focused on the sinews and direction of power and brought out the endemic jealousies of the political class. It was ridden out because no clear coherent alternatives were ever presented, the coalition held intact, and Churchill proved far more the able and ruthless politician than the apolitical father figure.

Churchill returned from ARCADIA to find, as an acute observer noted, that his central policies of total war and victory retained strong support but their conduct had become a contentious issue. The friction attendant on the great social upheaval of total war exploded into a political crisis after the defeats at Japanese hands. A rising tide of criticism on broad grounds came to be focused on complaints that the machinery of war direction was itself a cause of defeat. This criticism naturally revolved around Churchill's personal role. However, Churchill's personal esteem remained high. He again used this to force his critics into a Vote of Confidence on 29 January, won by the colossal margin of 464 to 1. The margin was misleading. It concealed a much deeper unease over the central direction of the war. In fact, February 1942 proved to be the low point of the war in public confidence in the government.[4] Two main sentiments emerged: the armed forces could not fight and the direction of war production was chaotic.

The loss of confidence in the armed forces, especially the Army, was serious. Eighth Army's setback was made more disturbing by Ultra intercepts which indicated the small scale and improvised nature of Rommel's advance. Auchinleck could only repeat his complaints about logistics and armoured forces.[5] Churchill was keenly aware of the stubborn Soviet defence before Moscow and American stand in the Philippines and expected a similar effort in Malaya. On 10 February he warned Wavell the large forces concentrated at Singapore held British honour at stake. On the 11th he pledged it to Roosevelt, insisting the force would fight to the bitter end.[6] The result was the biggest surrender in the Army's history after only a week. Among the many shock waves, first came doubt about the Army which also echoed throughout the Army itself. Cabinet felt

its efforts in Malaya "left much to be desired." Criticism of the Army became all pervasive, much to Brooke's anger. Percival's last report criticized British attitudes, training, equipment and complacent underestimation of the Japanese, and received wide circulation.[7] The Army's response was to see its own weakness as a reflection of the nation's weakness.

Brooke confessed to feeling that for 10 years the Empire had been on a "slippery decline," and considered the Army, in generalship especially, desperately weak. Pownall saw the Army as a reflection of the nation "grown soft these 20 years." This visceral pessimism ran deep in Whitehall and wider circles, in a gloomy feeling that defeat had exposed the nation as effete. Harold Nicolson attributed this in large part to the pre-war drift to liberal sentiments, described as the progressive rejection of efforts to see and maintain the Empire as a Great Power and the tendency to see it instead as either a burden or a vocation. The nation shared this pessimism; however, revealingly, the "Channel Dash" sparked greater popular outburst than more distant defeats. A contributing factor to this profound reaction was instinctive racism. Brooke, Pownall and Churchill all noted distinctions between trouble with the Germans and defeat by Orientals.[8] The fall of Singapore seemed to suggest that Britain was no longer a first class power capable of retaining a global position.

In this atmosphere of malaise more than Churchillian rhetoric was required. Greater power could not be secured overnight, so attention fastened on to the perennial human instinct that a cleverer policy could make up for sheer weakness. This meant reorganization of the government, especially the direction of structural policy. A virtual vacuum in the reconciliation of "Home" policy had developed due to Churchill's strategic preoccupations, Anderson's apolitical status and the Bevin-Beaverbrook feud.[9] After the formation of the WPB in the U.S., Churchill accepted the need for a counterpart to co-ordinate British production. Beaverbrook was his first choice. Churchill relied on him to spark action and also wanted to keep him busy, to prevent any further disruption of the political atmosphere. The problem was how to define Beaverbrook's powers in a way acceptable to his critics yet marking a real advance. This was worsened by Cripps' return from Moscow, high in undeserved public esteem as the symbol of the popular

desire to assist the Soviets. Churchill's attempt to bury Cripps in Moscow backfired to the extent that he had to head off a political opponent by co-opting him into the Cabinet. The balance now rested precariously on the ambitions and potential for mischief of Beaverbrook and Cripps. That balance was tipped by Attlee, Bevin and Beaverbrook himself. Churchill first tried to bury Cripps as Minister of Supply, under Beaverbrook as a new Minister of Production with wide powers to control allocations, co-ordinate programs, settle conflicts and animate ties with Washington. Cripps rebuffed the offer and Attlee and Bevin flatly refused to allow Beaverbrook wide powers over other departments. Bevin had a good case - Beaverbrook made a great deal of trouble over his new mandate. At first he described it in wildly expansive terms, before settling for supervisory powers over all supply departments except Bevin's.[10] This was not on. Beaverbrook, the apostle of disruptive departmental autonomy, could not convince many that his change of heart was other than base ambition.[11] Beaverbrook realized that rifts over structural and Soviet policy, plus personal antagonisms, had isolated him and warned Churchill obliquely he would not sit still.[12] Churchill had no choice but this time to accept reluctantly Beaverbrook's resignation on 19 February. That same day, Churchill moved decisively to restore a political balance.

Cripps entered the War Cabinet as Lord Privy Seal and Leader of the House of Commons, which allowed Churchill to exploit his current prestige. Attlee moved into the Dominions Office and was styled Deputy Prime Minister. The shuffle developed into a month long house clearing. Lyttelton was brought back from Cairo to become Minister of Production. He was given only an office, not a department, and control over raw material allocations plus responsibility for supervising co-ordination with Washington. But he was also brought into the War Cabinet, which gave him the chance to define his own role. Greenwood was dismissed entirely. Wood was dropped from the War Cabinet. Hankey, Margesson and Moore-Brabazon were all sacked. Dalton lost MEW and SOE to Lord Selbourne but moved to the Board of Trade and onto the LPC. These changes reduced the War Cabinet to seven - three of each party plus Anderson. This swept away the last anti-Churchill Conservative strength and entrenched Bevin's fiefdom. The Churchill-Labour axis was complete and the coalition held. Beaverbrook's ouster

was a source of widespread satisfaction.[13] It seemed to indicate that Churchill might become more receptive to broader influences. This was timely, as continued frustration in the field sparked another challenge to Churchill's direction of the war.

The loose general feeling that Churchill's personal domination of strategy led to mistakes coalesced in March into calls for a strong individual to be interposed between Churchill and the COS as an independent chair of the latter. The belief was that this and the creation of a separate Staff charged only with long term plans would enable a detached perspective to emerge, free from executive burdens and horse trading. Hankey led the public and private pressure, arguing that Churchill's erratic style had circumvented constitutional channels. This theme did touch irritation within policy circles with Churchill's eccentric behaviour,[14] but there were three major problems with this criticism. Personal rancour bit deep, especially in Hankey's case. The arguments that Churchill the dictator or Churchill the over-burdened PM unable to stop trade-offs were to blame were contradictory. There were inherent flaws in the concept of a head of the COS in theory and practice. Many critics wanted to harness, not oust, the Prime Minister.[15] All these inconsistencies and weaknesses were exploited by the "rolling seminar," which closed ranks behind the Prime Minister. Careful preparations were made to refute Hankey's case. A "party line" was defined which called on critics to explain how a new Staff or "super COS" or both could avoid clashes with executive organs over the use of forces, or how Cabinet could cope with divided advice.[16] It was indeed likely that any new organs without departmental responsibility would actually have worsened conflicts over plans and priorities. In any case, Churchill would not countenance a separation of advice and responsibility. Hankey scored some minor triumphs over particular habits of conducting business,[17] but in general the shallowness of the criticism held it in check.

The loss of Tobruk in late June,* symbol of resistance in 1941, brought the discontent with war direction to a peak. Churchill returned from a trip to Washington amidst a blaze of publicity to face another vote of censure. It was still no contest. Churchill's personal popularity remained immense, at 78% at this its low ebb. The

* *See below p.240-241*

"rolling seminar" remained solidly united on fundamentals. The critics remained fatally divided and were again trapped into going through with the vote by Churchill and Attlee's insistence that public confidence be seen to be retained or revoked. The mover made the ridiculous suggestion that the Duke of Gloucester be appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Army; the seconder reversed the call to reduce Churchill's influence by claiming that the problem was Staff negation of executive energy. Churchill routed his critics but was well aware that only his own prestige and the lack of considered alternatives kept the coalition in control. There was evidence of intrigue in many quarters and a sense that the government's fate rested on reversing the tide of defeat.[18] The national malaise had reached the point where Churchill was surviving on credit. This tension coloured grand strategic debate.

This tension exploded in Imperial relations, especially in the cases of Australia and India. The fall of Singapore led to bitter Australian accusations of betrayal and a serious loss of mutual confidence. The British resented Australian demands to return all Australian forces to the home theatre and for an increased share of grand strategic decisions. Washington agreed with London that only they were really able - with their global responsibilities and perspective and control of information - to formulate grand strategy. This enabled the British to undercut all Australian efforts to secure a greater voice.[19] The Australians, who were not really prepared to bear such a burden, slid into a peremptory and sulky turn to the Americans without considering the implications of exchanging distant senior partners.[20] There were some good strategic reasons for this turn. After ABDA fell apart and MacArthur arrived in Australia he was named Supreme Commander of a new Southwest Pacific Command. This placed Australia where the Japanese advance left it - in the American strategic orbit. But this did not improve Australian access to central decisions. The Australians belatedly realized the folly of assuming the Americans would be more generous than the British regarding war direction.[21] The British were forced to accept that only the Americans could succour the Pacific Dominions. Neither London nor Canberra wanted to lose all influence with the other but the new obstacles were serious . The Australians forced the issue in May by again challenging the basic "Europe first" decision. London agreed Britain retained

a responsibility for the Dominions but noted pointedly that Canberra had opted for American support. Token reinforcements were agreed, as were continuing political and strategic contacts, but neither stressed the point. The return of two of three Australian divisions from the Middle East and Canberra's refusal to allow them to intervene in Burma had been a nasty reminder to London that its control of Imperial assets was not limitless. The British continued to urge the Australians to support distant efforts and resisted any move to increase their voice. The Australians slid into a strategic partnership with MacArthur, under his influence and focused on their own campaign.[22]

An even nastier reminder flared up with sustained crisis in India. A long building rupture was set off by the Japanese advance. For seven months the British grappled with active Indian opposition to their presence, centred in the Congress Party. From February an attempt was made to head off a partisan split in Whitehall, resolved by a decision to draft a declaration promising India post-war Dominion status and what amounted to token participation on an Executive Council to advise the Viceroy on current policy. Cripps' offer to sell the proposal personally was seized on by Churchill. Cripps left for India on 22 March and a complex five point intrigue emerged.[23] Congress insisted on a real share of current policy. Cabinet was determined to retain full control of India's war effort. The Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, considered the offer a certain source of political strife. The American and Chinese governments pressed London to compromise. Churchill and a hard line faction led by Grigg and Amery hoped the offer would either succeed and contain strife or fail and saddle Congress with the blame.[24] The ultimate barrier could not be breached. Cabinet would not accept any serious Indian control of war policy. Gandhi would not accept less, or what he notoriously termed "a post-dated cheque on an empty bank." The publication of the declaration enhanced the British moral position and undercut Cripps' leverage. This, plus the Japanese advance, kept Cabinet in line.

Talks collapsed on 11 April. Cripps blamed his failure on Indian internal divisions over constitutional change and Gandhi's rigidity.[25] Gandhi's actions set off serious civil disobedience and sporadic disorder in July. Cabinet ordered firm but cautious response, on the compromise basis of ensuring immediate security coupled with

continuing dialogue.[26] Gandhi was put under house arrest in late August. Overall, the complexity of the situation had greatly strengthened Churchill's position. Constitutional and factional problems were serious. The Indian Army, also suffering from rapid expansion, had to be awarded priority in bearing a heavy dual burden of internal security and active defence. Whitehall was broadly determined to increase Indian national power, but under British control.[27] India was not an issue about which Churchill could think rationally. To him it was the symbol of Britain's status as a world power and a major component of its strength. He considered American attitudes simplistic and irritating and even risked pointed rebukes to Roosevelt on the political aspects. Circumstances - a clear and present danger - worked for Churchill here and strengthened his case for focus on the war.[28] His attitude set the tone for a wider Whitehall attitude - that only it knew what was best for India, an integral unit of British power. The short term political gain, including some damage to Cripps' reputation, had its price: open internal strife in India and a new burden for the Army which affected its planning.[29] More and more London was being forced to confront the fact that now when it most needed to exert Imperial power in unison it was less able to command full support.

Discontent with the direction of the war and organization of national power reached its most dangerous form with two serious confrontations within the Cabinet in July. A two pronged challenge from Cripps constituted a contention that Churchill's philosophy of government had failed. Cripps warned repeatedly that there was broad and deep discontent over how power had been used. Bracken's sources confirmed this, especially after the fall of Tobruk. Dissatisfaction with the conduct of the war reached 41% of polled opinion, a wartime high. The visible target - personality - was again singled out and the real target - national weakness - glossed over.[30] Cripps made his first move on 18 July, calling for the establishment of a committee to survey the reorganization of government for post-war direction. Then on 30 July he sent a personal paper to Churchill resurrecting the issue of machinery for the central direction of the war. Cripps argument that too few expert personnel were in positions of authority had become commonplace, but its author made it a challenge Churchill could not ignore. Cripps based his criticisms of the DC-COS system on the advice of Liddell Hart. Their

call for an independent "War Plans Directorate" to supervise the JPS was familiar, as was the argument that this would bypass service rivalries and ease overall long term planning.[31] This vision of rational planners free from executive burdens distilling logical plans leant too heavily on Liddell-Hart's personal ambitions and the belief that the war was being lost in Whitehall. Cripps and his fellow critics were sincere in their belief that Churchill had too much authority and used it too eccentrically and the COS had too many burdens. This served Churchill notice that his personal position was not invulnerable. Yet Cripps, the challenger, had in fact served up a hostage to fortune. The case for more technocrats had broad support but the call for a new Staff system rested on shakier grounds that Churchill had already rebuffed. Cripps had challenged Churchill on his high ground, the direction of the war. It is ironic that he was the last and most dangerous spokesman of that inchoate criticism so weakened by its focus on Churchill's style and a lack of realistic appreciation of the limits of Whitehall flexibility. Cripps demarche, the "Second Front Now" lobby, and Conservative discontent had become loosely united around the thesis that the misuse of national power was responsible for Britain's plight. This criticism was irresponsible, "unreal, even absurd,"[32] in its vision of the relative weight of the problems of channels of authority and the state of national power.

The second confrontation was a more responsible and more substantial critique of war policy from Attlee. Attlee's paper did not challenge Churchill's position. Attlee remained a pillar of coalition war policy and grand strategy; in fact, at some political cost Attlee retained Labour Party support for the tacit bargain that there would be no "Second Front" at the risk of British power.[33] Attlee kept his brief within Cabinet circles. His "informal" paper sent to Churchill on 10 July collated the fears and criticisms of the conduct of the war of those who supported its leader. The result was an often overlooked exchange which put on record the two coalition leaders' positions on the whole spectrum of war policy. Attlee's paper was a trenchant attack on British military practice with three broad themes: the high command thought in obsolete dogmatic terms; this led to unbalanced and poorly co-ordinated forces of inadequate combat power; as a result the services could not singly or together match the Germans

and "wear down" was thwarted. Attlee's paper read like an audit of military performance. The Army thought in last war terms of infantry linear advance supported by vast ancillary and logistic arms. The result was an inferior unadaptable force designed to fight a static war. Technical advance had outpaced thought and command doctrine. The Air Staff saw everything other than strategic bombing as "an illegitimate filching away of their resources." The heavy bomber focus had hurt other production. Worse, it had created an Army dependent on their success, which could only come if resources needed by other arms were concentrated. Other points were conventional wisdom: subjugate air units to Army and RN control; retain Imperial positions for political and strategic imperatives. The key point was that military power had fallen between two stools - ground and air power dependent on each other but unable to work together, each too large to enable the other to expand, and badly in need of reinvigoration of thought and doctrine.[34]

Attlee's paper was responsible criticism of the end results of the execution of the 1940-41 decisions on the balance and organization of power. It placed primary responsibility for the failure to execute "wear down" on the services themselves. Given the frustration he had experienced in endless calls for more flexibility and adaptability in thought and practice, Churchill's response on 29 July represented one of the most important records of his estimate of the limits of national power. Churchill agreed that service organization was cumbersome and bloated but defended previous policy decisions. He found the root cause of frustration at the other end - structural weakness and the great disparity in relative power. Churchill agreed the Army was in bad shape, but felt air and naval power had been correctly organized. He defended the decision to focus on fighters and bombers given 1940 circumstances and deplored cries for "diversions" of RAF effort. Churchill's explanation revealed some evolution in his thought but also the strength of the "wear down" assumptions:

> "Continuous reflection leaves me with the conclusion that, on the whole, our best chance of winning the war is with the Big Bombers. It certainly will be several years before British and U.S. land forces will be capable of beating the Germans on even terms in the open field... The growth of Coastal Command at the expense of Bomber Command is a very marked feature. The only thing that has

> been doing any good at the present time has been cut to 1/11th of our total first line strength. It would be a disaster to cut them further. Personally, I increasingly feel that this is the most hopeful of our various means of attack, though by no means the only."

Churchill readily agreed service establishments were "terrifying in lavishness." He did not agree that blinkered attitudes in the military were the primary obstacle to "wear down." Strategic bombing was still the best way to "wear down" Germany. The Army could not move until the relative power disparity had been reduced. The RAF could not do this as a "hand maiden to the army." But the Army was not excessively large either, because the task for which it had been organized - **home defence** - had been a legitimate concern. The trump card was the argument that the broad parameters of the balance and direction of effort had been the imposed result of inter-war lethargy. The result was improvisation in 1940 and shortfall in 1941.[35] This exchange should have synthesized what was then apparent to those in a position to see: structural power had fallen short in all aspects **and** military power had proven weak and cumbersome. The result was little progress in "wear down" and sluggish reaction to changed conditions. Instead, Attlee argued that the application of effort since 1940 should have overcome pre-war weakness but had not because of mental decay in the services. Churchill countered that such decay was apparent but not decisive because of the deep roots of self imposed national weakness. In fact, Attlee and Churchill cited the past to pose contending cases for the present.

Both men realized the escalation of the war would force Britain to attempt still greater efforts. Attlee recorded the view that these would be possible if service professionalism improved, an expression of faith in Allied power. Churchill countered that while improvements in thought and practice were needed, relative weakness would still compel the Allies to hew to existing grand strategy. Attlee's critique should logically have led to Churchill's conclusion. By July 1942, immense national exertion had produced no major lasting victories beyond survival. To blame this largely on military obsolescence argued national effort since 1940 had or should have overcome the effects of pre-war neglect. In a narrower sense, Attlee was suggesting that Labour's record since 1940 had made up for its positions before 1938. Churchill's rebuttal argued

that pre-war neglect had gone too far to allow for a fundamental revision of grand strategy. Churchill saw Attlee's critique for what it was: partly precaution but also an invitation to consider how to improve national performance before new pressures led to irreversible decisions. But Attlee's move reminded Churchill that national patience was nearing its limit. This deep set national malaise had by now become a serious factor in grand strategy. It is therefore essential to note that in this exchange with his most important ally, Churchill hewed firmly to the "wear down" outline and defended his service advisers. The existence of a basic consensus helped prevent the serious debates on balance and emphasis from approaching the "brass-frock" rift of the previous war. This was vital in many ways, not least because by August, the government's survival, and future strategy, clearly hinged on an early victory.

These internal pressures, severe as they were, were matched by the increasing complexity of the new "Grand Alliance." The less direct but more openly sensitive problems arose regarding policy towards the Soviets. That policy became increasingly restricted in its options after June 1941, when public opinion turned out of instinctive relief ever more in favour of the closest possible ties and greatest possible assistance. Martin Kitchen was right to say public opinion did not dictate policy,[36] but it reached a level of intensity on this issue that could not be ignored. It was generally agreed that the Allies must do whatever possible to keep the Eastern Front active and intense. The Eden-Stalin talks made it clear that some long term understanding was essential if hopes of post-war progress were to be realized. Yet the complications were staggering. The often fractious British-American and Churchill-Roosevelt relationships were almost serene compared to ties to the Soviets. Both sides retained an arms length posture and mutual suspicion. Personal diplomacy did not help. Churchill established only a stiff formal correspondence with Stalin which revolved around Soviet demands. Both sides were very grudging in releasing information. Allied leaders simply could not discount the possibility of a Soviet move for a separate peace. Stalin's pressure for a diplomatic gesture, renewed in February as the claim for frontier recognition, was adopted by the Foreign Office as a possible emollient.

Eden persuaded Cabinet to consider a more formal alliance and a gesture on frontiers on grounds of sheer expediency. If no serious military aid could be offered, this at least might encourage Soviet benevolence. Eden and his officials were forced to steer a tortuous course between Roosevelt's rejection of territorial arrangements and Churchill's insistence that the Allies stay in step on such a vital issue. Cabinet was persuaded to approve a call for tripartite talks at the official level. This was a method Eden hoped to use to foster British influence through diplomatic means, by settling "all big political questions" à trois under British auspices. Roosevelt pressed on with a personal appeal to Stalin. A personal approach from Beaverbrook to Roosevelt was rebuffed. Cabinet decided on 25 March to press on with a bilateral pact. Roosevelt was told that strategic concerns were overriding, and reluctantly accepted the decision. Cabinet approved a draft treaty of full military-political alliance on 7 April; Molotov was already scheduled to journey to Washington for wide ranging talks, so an invitation was issued to him to stop in London to conclude a treaty.[37] The questions of the limits of diplomatic expediency remained open, however. Cabinet only reluctantly accepted the need to make a gesture regarding frontier recognition and obliged the Foreign Office to dilute this clause and stress overall co-operation. Molotov rejected the draft before his arrival on 21 May. Another draft was written up offering a 20 year alliance and a "Mutual Assistance Pact." Eden hoped this would address the long term security fears he saw as Stalin's priority and allow him to bend over frontiers. To Cabinet's delight Molotov accepted a draft with no reference to frontiers on 26 May. However, it had been American pressure that induced the Soviets to change their minds.[38] The reason was obvious - the Soviets expected significant strategic assistance in return, which would become a guarantee of good faith.

Unfortunately, the very military weakness which had fostered the turn to diplomatic gestures made such assistance a fundamental issue in British war policy. Clearly, the Soviets were going to face a renewed German offensive. The COS did not feel the Allies could afford to lose the Soviets and nobody could guarantee they would not opt out. Allied grand strategy was now clearly dominated by the need to fit in the Soviet-German struggle. Yet only to Beaverbrook was the issue clear cut. Soon after

resigning, he compiled records of his lobby to convince Cabinet that Britain could and must take bolder action. Beaverbrook blamed Attlee for blocking diplomatic concessions. He told Eden that he had resigned because Labour had rejected his Soviet policy and a powerful Ministry of Production. On 25 March, Beaverbrook circulated a paper on "policy towards Russia," with barely muted personal criticisms from an earlier draft. Beaverbrook claimed Cabinet had wasted the goodwill generated by his September mission by "failure to fix a policy," which had fostered Soviet resentment and suspicion. Beaverbrook called for "An Anglo-American-Russian Combination for Victory and Peace" and set four prerequisites: 1) agree to Soviet security demands; 2) allow an equal Soviet voice in war direction; 3) allow the Soviets to participate in the "common pool"; 4) accept an unconditional Soviet share in determining the peace settlement of Europe.[39]

This package illustrated the problems of working with the Soviets. The first - 1941 frontiers - and the last - post-war co-operation - were issues Whitehall could not really settle without American benevolence. The second and third were primarily Moscow's decision. This was the weakness of Beaverbrook's case - the British could not co-operate more closely than the Soviets would allow and Moscow was not interested in discussing anything other than what it needed. Whitehall was indeed wary of closer ties to Moscow but really felt bound by relative weakness. Beaverbrook's case, that partisan attitudes hindered the best use of national power, was overstated. Beaverbrook had already warned Churchill that he intended to use his great leverage in the popular press to press his policy.[40] He considered loyalty to Churchill and criticism of his policy perfectly compatible. In fact, Beaverbrook's actions were consistent with long habits. His resignation undoubtedly stemmed in the end from a certain lack of fortitude in sustained direct confrontation.[41] Beaverbrook preferred the role of lone wolf, as he had all through his career. This and his challenge to national policy now made him, as Churchill realized, an even looser cannon in strategic debate, because his arguments raised issues difficult to expose in the middle of a war.

The one factor which Churchill saw as a solution to the pressures for increased aid to the Soviets, increased supplies, actually aggravated the whole situation. The whole problem brought home to the "rolling seminar"how constricted British options were

becoming. The Soviets demanded more supplies but did little to help deliver them. The Americans increased their allocations but had little naval aid to spare. Public opinion favoured aid. The COS resisted vigorously, especially Brooke. Brooke blamed Beaverbrook for what had become a drain of sorely needed equipment without even full accounting from Moscow of the Soviet situation, let alone return concessions. Cabinet blocked all attempts to "borrow" these supplies,[42] but the problem worsened when the Germans concentrated U-Boats, surface forces and aircraft in northern Norway. Improved signals intelligence helped the British to trace these moves. It even revealed that the "Channel Dash" had been a strategic gain to them because the two battlecruisers were laid up from mine damage. However, the Admiralty was forced from March to face the threat of combined arms interdiction led by the fast modern 15" gun battleship **Tirpitz**. The convoy cycle was reduced and each trip became a major fleet sortie. This contributed to a large backlog of supplies and increased the debate. The issue was poised on a knife edge when on 10 April the COS advised Cabinet that the route was now too dangerous and suggested that without Soviet accounting of their needs, the effort was wasted.[43] When Cabinet discussed the issue on 15 April they were understandably nervous. The Americans had increased their allocations and did not intend to press the Soviets to justify claims for the imminent Second Protocol. The COS indicated the reason by confessing that such a request might elicit awkward pressure in return. Cabinet rejected the idea of connecting the issue to the draft treaty and opted to consult the Americans.[44]

Churchill and Roosevelt flatly rejected any reduction in the flow of supplies and insisted on the negotiation of a Second Protocol for 1942-1943 of similar one-sided terms. This put increasing strain on the British, who were forced to provide practically all the escort forces (albeit ⅔ of the supplies now came from the U.S.). Nor was there relief elsewhere. The Pacific route was dependent on Japanese restraint and could not be used for valuable munitions. The overland route through Iran was hampered by an almost total lack of infrastructure. What facilities existed were needed by Imperial forces to defend the area. The Murmansk run was slated to carry 3 of the 4 million tons tentatively envisaged in the Second Protocol. But in April and May only 58 of 83

merchant ships in three convoys got through, despite cover from a reinforced Home Fleet. Churchill and Roosevelt reluctantly agreed to reduce the cycle to three convoys of 39 ships every two months but refused to suspend them; it was politically impossible to do so. A commitment of 4.4 million tons was accepted for the Second Protocol. This turned attention to improving other routes.[45] In fact by late spring, Whitehall was at its wits end trying to define ways to assist the Soviets without taking unacceptable risks in return.

The far more direct, and in Whitehall's eyes, more important new element was the emergence of a new American agenda for grand strategy. The more fractious administrative machinery in Washington was retooled for total war in early 1942. On the military side, the War and Navy Department's administrative structures were streamlined. However, reorganization did not foster co-ordination.[46] There were few long established habits and channels of consensus. Roosevelt reversed Churchill's practice and retained overall control by remaining the aloof arbiter. The flow of ideas and influence was less easily defined, but every bit as politicized and bureaucratized, as in London. The difference was in context. American planners worked in an atmosphere of expansive expectations of future resources but with fewer forces yet engaged; plans were still developing. Both services were determined to imprint their policy on Allied grand strategy and concerned about three serious obstacles: the piecemeal drain into the Pacific, the weakness of the British position, and the Churchill-Roosevelt connection and ultimate veto.

The USN's critical focus of thought and effort was, from the start, on the maritime oriented Pacific campaign. Roosevelt, on the other hand, continued to support the "Europe first" policy. His focus was reinforced by concern over Soviet intentions and grumblings attendant on domestic mobilization. Roosevelt determined to entrench the strategy with domestic opinion through a visible American role in early operations. This was the essential backdrop within which the War Department crystallized its policy. The collapse of the ABDA command raised the question of the overall level of force needed to stop the Japanese. Marshall and Arnold agreed that China was of pivotal strategic importance and organized 10th USAAF to assist Chinese efforts from India, but

contested the Navy's desire to escalate offensive action. On 28 February Brig. General Dwight D. Eisenhower of the Operations and Plans Division (OPD) circulated a paper with proposals to stop the piecemeal unravelling of the ARCADIA decisions. Citing the importance of sustaining Soviet resistance and concentrating American power, Eisenhower called for a concentrated strategic offensive in Europe. On 16 March, the JCS reached a compromise. Force levels in the Pacific were to be increased, but the main effort was to be a concentration of power in the U.K. This was a concept framed to suit all desires. Roosevelt accepted the prospects of enticing domestic opinion, enhancing American leverage and helping the Soviets. King settled for faster progress in Europe. The War Department deplored the piecemeal dispersal of American forces and the apparent drift in grand strategy, both exactly the reverse of their intentions. They also considered British intentions to be to encourage the former trend, to benefit their own forces. A specific counter plan was ready by late March. The idea was to appease Roosevelt and the Soviets by a plan ostensibly aimed at "aggressive action against the Continent in 1942," which would involve the more tangible objective: a firm commitment to an ultimate strategic offensive dominated by concentrated American forces.[47]

However, from ARCADIA well into 1944 the basic fact of Allied grand strategy was interdependence. Neither London nor Washington could afford to ignore the other's views. This set a firm parameter which bound Allied war policy and its frictions. This made the channels refined at ARCADIA truly vital. First and foremost were the Churchill-Roosevelt axis and the CCS. This civil-military framework reproduced the functions of the London machinery. A Combined Planning Staff (CPS) and Combined Intelligence Committee (CIC) were formed. The permanent secretariat system was adopted. This encouraged British hopes for greater efficiency but as always the men who made the channels work were the deciding factor. Here the British benefitted from simple luck. Dill won the confidence of Marshall and a direct appeal from Roosevelt led to Churchill's reluctant confirmation of Dill's appointment as head of the JSM, senior delegate to the CCS and Churchill's personal representative. This placed Dill in a position of great potential influence but no executive power, which gave him a vested

interest in making the CCS effective. He also rapidly developed an acute sense of power channels in Washington and a unique breadth of perspective on "Combined" issues. Dill lacked Churchill's confidence, but with exceptional ties to Brooke and then Marshall he was able to make the CCS and JSM an active player in British strategic thought.[48]

Dill learned rapidly that the two sides had different perceptions of their new combined machinery's mandate. King wanted to clarify the CCS mandate to control areas besides ABDA. London unanimously insisted that the "main strategic planning of the war" not fall exclusively to Washington. Dill warned the COS that the Americans would not delegate any authority and advised them to focus on securing agreements in Washington. The COS felt this would result in a loss of control over war policy and pressed for the idea of "Combined" overall co-ordination with delegated control of operations.[49] The collapse of ABDA raised the issue of spheres in both cities. The American proposal came in a wire from Roosevelt to Churchill on 9 March: Washington to control Pacific operations, London to control Mediterranean and Indian Ocean operations, the CCS to exercise general supervision and co-ordinate the balance of supplies. The vital Atlantic-European theatre would be jointly controlled. This proposal was a logical outcome of the Japanese advance but raised concerns on both sides - for the Americans the place of China, for the British the details of supervision and joint control and the scale of Pacific activity.[50] London's most serious dilemma was that if control became too exclusive their theatres could be starved of the American resources necessary for operations. Churchill and the COS accepted the proposal on 17 March without pressing this point, gambling that physical constraints would lead in practice to greater control in London of the primary struggle in Europe.[51] This indicated their continued reluctance to accept the need to make sacrifices to breathe life into the "Combined" concept. There was still excessive faith in British experience and position at the expense of attention to changing circumstances.

London should have been more attentive to Dill's advice. The CCS was fast becoming the best channel by which the British could discern and influence American thought. But as the CCS subjected one issue after another to overall review, beginning with overall requirements needed to defeat the Japanese, London continued to focus on

retaining some influence over Dominion policy and Pacific strategy. Dill tried to compensate by recognizing the American lead in the Pacific, but London dismissed his efforts as having "gone native."[52] The COS did, however, take note of Dill's warning that American plans for offensive action in Europe were gestating. The heading "Combined Strategy in Europe" appeared in COS minutes for the first time on 7 March. The CPS were directed to study the question on 24 March. Finally on 1 April, Roosevelt informed Churchill that the Americans had agreed on a plan which he strongly supported and Marshall and Hopkins would bring it to London.[53] This established a pattern in coalition grand strategy which endured into 1944. The consensus defined at a conference of principals had been eroded by events. London's failure to use the CCS more effectively contributed to a drift in strategic thought which could only be repaired by another conference of principals. The Americans would bring to London a new vision of grand strategy based on a new perspective of power. There they would find how far from complete the concept of "Combined" strategic thought had become.

The essence of London's position at the imminent conference, however, lay in current grand strategy. While the Americans hoped to forge a new grand strategy, the British wanted to save the existing one. After Singapore fell, it was necessary to rethink current plans. The "operational spheres" proposal focused British attention on the Indian Ocean, where a vicious circle reappeared: inadequate overstretched forces and shipping capacity and piecemeal reinforcements in the face of enemy pressure. Wavell's forces were pushed into India in May by four Japanese divisions. Wavell warned London that his forces would need to be completely reorganized. He acknowledged they had been outfought but blamed inadequate air and naval power.[54] This raised the question of priorities as the loss of the "Malay Barrier" left the Indian Ocean wide open. The COS focused on the attempt to reorganize RAF forces and a new Eastern Fleet. Their efforts only epitomized British relative and absolute weakness. Without Singapore, the RN had to take up a large unexpected burden with no organized secure base, reliable air cover, intelligence or logistic support. Somerville was sent out from Force H to take command and by late March had concentrated five battleships, three carriers, seven cruisers and 16 destroyers. Numbers were all he had. Four of his battleships were the slow obsolete

R class. His 88 aircraft included no first class modern types of any kind. Almost immediately the new fleet faced a sortie by the main Japanese fleet, including five fleet carriers, towards Ceylon. Somerville wisely decided to keep his fleet in being. London agreed but wanted to hold Ceylon. Wavell wanted to focus on Burma.[55] The Japanese sortie settled the issue. Somerville lost the carrier **HMS Hermes** and two cruisers, was forced to pull back to East Africa, and warned the Admiralty that his forces were inadequately trained and equipped to risk fleet action. Ceylon escaped serious damage and the Japanese fleet soon returned east, but British land and naval airpower was perilously weak in quality and quantity. The COS were forced to reconsider the overall problem.[56] To assist Wavell meant taking risks elsewhere and possibly falling between two stools on two levels - between Ceylon and Burma or between the whole area and the Middle East.

The situation in the Middle East and Mediterranean also deteriorated. Another acrimonious debate developed around different perspectives and estimates, focused on intelligence, logistics, combat power and interlocked positions. Auchinleck refused to return to the offensive until his armoured forces were better trained and equipped and had at least a 50% margin of superiority and 50% reserves. London felt this risked the loss of Malta, now again out of range of air support; and without Malta, Rommel might be able to win the logistic race and amass enough power to drive on Suez. Churchill and the COS both warned Auchinleck in these terms.[57] When on 27 February Auchinleck suggested no move before early June, Churchill set off two months of the most difficult debate the "rolling seminar" ever endured. Churchill felt that the Army had lost the will to fight and threatened to strip Auchinleck of forces if he would not attack. Axis reinforcements and air assaults on Malta intensified, developments London could now follow closely after more successes by GCCS. On 2 March the DC(O) set up a searching enquiry into the fighting power of the Army. A committee chaired by Attlee was struck to consider past failures by armoured forces. Nye went to Cairo to question theatre staff and commanders.[58] London was especially upset by the fact that the Germans were able to bring equipment into action more rapidly. The COS considered Auchinleck's margin claims and logistic efficiency questionable given his available

forces. Brooke mistrusted his selection of subordinates and doubted he understood the interdependence of Malta and Egypt. Divided counsels in Cairo also worried London. Cunningham applauded London's efforts to send first line fighters to Malta. Auchinleck, however, refused to "risk the whole Middle East to save Malta."[59] The question was one of relative risk. Churchill and the COS felt the loss of Malta would be a disaster. Auchinleck felt the qualitative superiority of enemy armour would make an early attack a disaster. The COS understood Auchinleck's sharp end qualms but, in April, Malta came under air attacks so intense that decision could no longer be delayed.

After three weeks of debate, on 8 May Churchill insisted that Auchinleck attack "in late May," to cover supply convoys slated to run the gauntlet of Axis air power in June to keep Malta alive. Brooke took Churchill's criticism of Auchinleck's narrow focus to heart but both he and Auchinleck now expected a German attack which they hoped would solve the problem. Auchinleck felt he had a better chance to ward off rather then mount an offensive. The COS agreed and the attack was put back to June, coupled with an order that Malta was not to be lost.[60] This consensus decision to accept an attack came about by default. Severe Axis pressure from Malta to Burma underlined the interdependence of this vast theatre and the fact that the British had been forced into a reactive posture. Before April, reinforcements flowed east - two divisions from the U.K., three divisions (two Australian) and several squadrons from the Middle East. From April the tide was reversed. Weakness was especially appalling at sea. The Mediterranean Fleet could not control the central area. The Eastern Fleet's buildup was delayed and it was forced to leave half the Indian Ocean naked.[61] To make matters worse, defeat in Libya once again upset all plans.

On the night of 26 May, Rommel's six Italian and three German divisions attacked the fortified line near Gazala. After 19 days of confused, often severe fighting, the British position was shattered; many units, especially armoured, were broken up piecemeal. Auchinleck retreated, hoping to regroup and hold west of Tobruk. Malta suffered another defeat as the eastern convoy was beaten off completely while only two supply ships arrived from the west. The margin was again razor thin. Auchinleck's team had been badly outgeneralled. Abundant intelligence of many forms was not well

applied as tactics and all arms co-ordination, with the exception of air support, left much to be desired.[62] The logistic balance was most telling. From 1 April only five of 26 Axis convoys had been attacked. Auchinleck's tank strength rose from 1,389 all types in March to 1,813 in May, including 250 of the new American M3 Grant medium types. Yet only 659, 152 Grants, had been deployed in Eighth Army. Its six full divisions (two armoured) and four brigades had been broken by a force it should have fought to a standstill.[63] Events moved too rapidly for deep reflection, but Churchill instinctively felt Auchinleck had failed to focus on the main front. Auchinleck angered Churchill by a suggestion on 3 May that he stand on the defensive and reinforce India - six of his 14 divisions were Indian - and by an unfortunate reference to "tactical problems in Libya." Churchill pointedly suggested victory in Libya would be Auchinleck's best contribution.[64] This role reversal indicated the bewilderment in British strategic thought sparked by unexpected defeat. Churchill was at his worst in such periods, pressing relentlessly for offensive action with inadequate attention to the circumstances.[65] The COS were more cold blooded, but agreed that in this vast interlocked theatre the centre of gravity had now emerged in the middle.

From early January, London looked to Washington to help restore the position, in line with the prevailing concept of absorbing the Americans into current grand strategy. Shipping and airpower became decisive factors, but without a shared project the current situation pulled Allied thought in different directions. Auchinleck's defeats scuttled GYMNAST; it was relegated to contingency planning by March.[66] Attempts to concert efforts against the Japanese foundered on the wedge driven between the two Allied positions. The USN proved unwilling to concert action to help distract the attack on Ceylon. IRONCLAD (an attack in May on the important Vichy French controlled island of Madagascar, to preclude any Japanese attempt to establish a base there to threaten convoys) was only indirectly aided by King.[67] Somerville was equally unwilling and unable to help the USN. Until his forces were better prepared and had stronger bases and air cover, he refused to do more than "trail his coat" around the Indian Ocean to deceive the Japanese.[68] The Allies were simply too weak to concert

action and looked to their own positions, much to Australian anger.[69] Airpower was the crux of the matter.

On 16 March, Portal stated the only way to reinforce India was to "rob" the Mediterranean or "risk" the U.K. The COS settled for both and urged the Americans to expand the "chain" of reinforcements. The Americans agreed to strengthen 10th USAAF but insisted support for the Chinese remain its primary task. This exposed a serious dilemma in Allied grand strategy. London regretted the American perception of China as a vital strategic asset. The Americans argued that because the Chinese were containing most of the Japanese Army they could not be lost. The British saw the Chinese as a broken reed and, similar to their views on the Soviets, desired to support them only if the effort did not force unwarranted risks to Allied power. The loss of Burma made the issue urgent. The British saw the defence of India and reconquest of the area from Burma to Singapore as the main task. The Americans saw this as the supply line to China. This stored up serious friction in an area the British saw as their operational sphere, worsened by their dependence on American material.[70]

Immediate friction arose in another area, overall allocations of air forces. Events eroded the initial plan to concentrate 20 American combat groups in the U.K. Encouraged by Arnold's agreement to help the flow of planes to Malta and north Africa, the British tabled a paper in the CCS on 23 February envisaging a major redistribution of effort. American combat groups should be sent not only to the "main U.K. offensive" but also everywhere from Libya to India. Arnold rejected the plan as an attempt to scatter the USAAF in penny packets to serve British strategy. The JSM could not repair the damage and a review of global air policy was undertaken in the poorest atmosphere.[71] British pressure for American shipping assistance fostered further suspicion. The increased demands for forces overseas now made shipping the limiting factor in the balance of immediate deployment. The British pressed the "chain" concept and called for a closer audit of the American shipping situation. Dill was directed to warn the CCS that without greater American assistance shipping straits would force the British to risk either India or the Middle East to save the other and duly did so on 17

February. The result was another overall review.[72] In fact, an overall review of grand strategy was fast emerging piece by piece.

Dill finally made the direct connection between overall grand strategy and current problems on 10 March, albeit Marshall had already been made aware of the shift in British concerns. Dill warned the CCS that the vital oil reserves in the Middle East were now considered at risk.[73] In fact, the "rolling seminar" now accepted Wavell's fear of a great combined Axis drive to sever Allied communications between India and Suez, which would ruin British grand strategy. Circumstances had - for the moment at least - fused the controversy over "Imperial defence" and "Europe first" into one problem. There was never any evidence that the Axis Powers were planning such a move, but Whitehall feared that they now had the capability to attempt it. The JIC warned that British weakness might tempt the Japanese; even raids to disrupt the sea lanes would pose a major problem. The German threat was far greater. The immediate danger was a drive on Suez. A far more serious prospect was an advance through the Caucasus, alone or as part of a vast pincer thrust aimed at the oil fields. The JIC now realized that the Eastern Front was Berlin's priority, but this was cold comfort. British forces had so far failed to cope with secondary efforts. The mere prospect of a strategic offensive aimed at an "Axis junction" seemed frightening, especially on top of the various other pressures now extant. Whitehall thinking was strongly united: in order to preserve the British relative and absolute power position, and "Europe first," the Suez to India bulwark could not be lost.[74] This was the stance that faced Marshall and Hopkins as they arrived in London.

The April discussions in London set grand strategic debate on a new plane and set off a sweeping and sustained dialogue. That made the main focus of British concern a really seminal factor. There could not have been a worse time for the Americans to offer a specific proposal for a grand strategic offensive. Beleaguered by military and political problems around the globe, the "rolling seminar" simply could not give serious attention to plans seen as desirable eventual goals before more urgent problems were solved. A grand strategic offensive was still "the Distant Future." However, intense

political and strategic pressures compelled them to establish some sort of consensus for future co-ordination. This basis revealed the fundamental difference in British and American grand strategic approach. It was from this point that coalition grand strategy began to diverge seriously.

Before the Americans arrived, Churchill made two important changes in the central machinery. Although he saw Pound as a personal friend, Churchill was tired of his stubbornly defensive strategy and lax chairmanship. He delicately proposed to move Brooke in as chairman out of order, to inject fresh vigour. Pound and Portal supported the move even though it foretold greater influence for the Army, and Brooke assumed the chair of the COS on 7 March. Churchill also proposed to promote Mountbatten to executive Chief of Combined Operations and full member of the COS. The COS resisted this appointment but Churchill was resolute. He wanted to impress the Americans, who liked Mountbatten, and emphasize offensive action by inserting into the matrix someone with a vested interest in it. Churchill insisted Mountbatten become a member "above the line" for all issues of overall grand strategy or amphibious concern.[75] Mountbatten duly became a tri-service representative whose power base **depended** on the expansion of offensive operations. This was to have a major impact on the course of the definition of grand strategy.

The issue which emerged to the fore of strategic debate, and remained there, was the "Second Front." Soviet straits, American desires and political agitation made it the main issue of coalition policy. Through a pot pourri of proposals, the only constants in Whitehall's eyes were the growing menace to the Soviets and the perceived risk of any cross-Channel assault. From January it was agreed that the strategic reserve would remain in the U.K. During ARCADIA, the COS approved an outline plan called ROUNDUP, which envisaged "igniter" operations in mid-1943, limited by landing craft to 12 divisions, and to be launched only if "wear down" succeeded, by British forces alone. Home Forces were also to prepare to seize any opportunity to move if the Germans "cracked." This did not settle the question of 1942 activity. Combined Operations submitted a plan for a series of raids of escalating size. Home Forces noted these would use up resources needed for ROUNDUP training. The COS tried to settle

this clash between the immediate and the overall by a planning directive on 13 February. ROUNDUP preparations were not to be disturbed; it was to go in spring 1943 if "wear down" succeeded. Other plans for smaller raids or a contingency move could proceed, either a large raid if the Soviets were desperate or TINDER, an "opportunity" assault.[76] This directive raised three vital issues. Home Forces long term mandate became offensive. A specific relationship between cross-Channel attack and the Soviet front was suggested. But the lines of control were badly blurred. Pressures now swelled from every side to complicate the issue. The JSM warned of stepped up War Department planning. Stalin renewed pressure for a major campaign to divide German forces. Mountbatten tried to ride the issue to increase his profile. Beaverbrook set off a vocal public lobby for a "Second Front" to assist the Soviets and cement the alliance. In response, Churchill and the COS called for intense study of offensive options, brought to a head by a JPS report in early March.

On 10 March the JPS submitted a proposal which underlined the specific problems of cross-Channel assault. Somewhat surprisingly, they argued that because the Soviet struggle was the decisive factor of the war, Britain should offer the best assistance possible - a "Second Front." Given "ruthless determination and the will to accept risks," they recommended an operation to establish a bridgehead and force a German response. The discussion delved into detailed problems but the JPS stayed firm, Brig. Stewart suggesting that the need to assist the Soviets warranted a possible sacrifice of 8 to 10 divisions. The limits of shipping and air cover restricted options to two mutually exclusive areas - Calais or Cherbourg. Calais would be easier to support but harder to hold; Cherbourg easier to take but harder to support. What was wanted was an operation that would spark at least very large air attrition, to provoke German transfers from Russia. But Brooke set the limit from the start. He flatly rejected any thought of risking large forces against an unbroken German Army in an attempt to stave off Soviet disaster.[77] Brooke's objection became an immovable obstacle and it was true to the deep rooted assumptions of "wear down." The aberration was the JPS' call for a sacrifice on the grounds of relative strategic priority. This posed a direct linkage between Soviet and British operations the COS had never recognized. The JPS demarche

reflected the growing power of the "Second Front Now" lobby, then rising in official circles due to Beaverbrook's move to independent criticism. On 17 March, Beaverbrook sent Churchill a veiled warning to synchronize grand strategy with the Soviets by three means: frontier recognition, more supplies, and "an expedition into Europe." Calling it "the struggle that settles our future," Beaverbrook soon went public with his "Second Front Now" appeal, through newsprint and the speakers' rostrum. His campaign caught public attention, especially an April speech in the U.S. where he typically urged the Allies to "strike even recklessly." The simplistic appeal of the slogan made it a major force which the "rolling seminar" felt very acutely.[78] Brooke's determined stand acted as countervailing pressure. The pressures pushed SLEDGEHAMMER, the bridgehead plan, into active consideration.[79] Brooke's resistance emasculated it.

Three weeks of debate produced three conclusions: something had to be done to help the Soviet; bringing on air attrition was the safest course; a series of escalating raids was the only acceptable method. Brooke moved the focus onto a large raid of some length near Calais in mid-summer. On this basis - a large scale "bait" for air attrition which did not risk limitless commitment - Brooke and Portal came together. The JPS tried to salvage the bridgehead concept by having it referred to the Combined Commanders - Mountbatten, Douglas, Paget and Ramsay, (Commanders-in-Chief of Fighter Command, Home Forces and Portsmouth respectively).[80] Mountbatten had already convinced the COS to concentrate the scarce landing craft necessary for both 1942 operations and training for 1943 in the U.K. under his auspices. This was necessary if any operation were to be launched. Landing craft were essential to land an assaulting force and sustain and reinforce it if it was to remain. However, Mountbatten tied his support to the bridgehead plan, which the Combined Commanders noted on 28 March would likely provoke a German response strong enough to crush all forces committed. A temporary bridgehead would be pointless, risking heavy losses for no guarantee of real assistance to the Soviets.[81] Their final report went as far as to suggest that if logistic problems could be solved, say by the early capture of a port, a bridgehead could be held against the enemy forces currently in France. They advised it be launched if the Germans were at least stalemated in Russia but warned it might set off an uprising

in France. Brooke and Portal rejected the advice on 8 April, on the grounds that it envisaged a new campaign while the threat to the U.K. still existed. They were unmoved by pleas that only a major assault would pull forces out of Russia and definitively ordered 1942 plans to focus on a temporary assault to spark air attrition.[82] Brooke knew Home Forces, having rebuilt it from scratch, and he was free from the vested interest that drove Mountbatten. He was determined not to risk more than temporary ground contact anywhere the Germans could, in theory, concentrate unlimited force until German power had visibly declined. Portal saw Fighter Command in the same light. This was the pure creed of "wear down," reinforced by defeat overseas and mistrust of Soviet stamina.

The soundness of this view is a complex question. The COS consistently underrated Soviet stamina but to them the real issue was whether British power could sustain a "worst case" scenario in any new initiative to help the Soviets. They so clearly saw all the obstacles facing a Channel crossing, although ironically crediting the Germans with the ability to overcome them the other way, on a tactical level. Ports were still organized for defence, as were Home Forces; fighter range was limited; landing craft were scarce. But on a strategic level broader pressures had already fostered an internal split in Staff consensus. It was an open question whether such caution would be acceptable as grand strategy. Mountbatten was now a loose cannon, his organization intimately involved in preparations but the plan he favoured rejected. Into this cauldron walked Marshall and Hopkins. On the eve of their arrival the JSM were informed of the new consensus with which London would receive its guests: some 1942 move to aid the Soviets was essential, but it must be considered in the context of the new Axis threat to Allied communications in the Middle East.[83]

Marshall arrived in London having made a grave error - he had not secured complete internal consensus. Roosevelt bought the War Department plan as a way to engage American forces in Europe in 1942 and secure American control of grand strategy which could also mollify the Soviets. Hopkins was his master's voice. Marshall and OPD saw the plan as a way to stop the drift and waste in American mobilization by ensuring a guiding concept of concentrated force emerged which would allow them to

control grand strategy.[84] This subtle but vital difference became important when the discussions revealed a fundamental difference of approach and perceptions of strategic prospects. London was amply warned of the new focus and complexity in American thought by Dill and by Roosevelt himself. Dill warned the COS that the American plan was not well placed in global context.[85] In fact the plan was based on the premise that as a concentration of force in the U.K. would serve either 1942 or 1943 plans and greatly improve logistic efficiency, it was the best way to prevent further dispersal of American forces. 1942 preparations could be used to mollify Roosevelt, commit the British, and generate logistic momentum for the real goal - a 1943 strategic offensive.[86] This scheme ignored two crucial points. Roosevelt's real priority was action in 1942; he did not care where. More importantly, American unpreparedness meant that the British would have to accept a leading role in any move in 1942. Marshall would ask the British to accept no less than an entirely new grand strategic approach, but he had not really understood Roosevelt's ultimate position.

Marshall tabled his plan for "Operations in Western Europe" on 9 April. The plan called for a strategic offensive in the decisive area, northwest Europe, in 1943. It envisaged an initial force of 48 divisions, nine armoured, including 18 British, three armoured, supported by 5,800 combat aircraft, 2,550 British. The assault would be a six division landing somewhere between Le Havre and Calais. It would be developed into a deliberate linear advance aimed to defeat the German Army in the field. It would have to become the hub of Allied policy from now on. This was both opportunity and danger to the British. At last a specific pledge of really large American forces for Europe was on the table. However, Marshall's focus seemed to ignore the potential relative balance of forces available. This was emphasized in the latter part of the plan, operations in 1942, which insisted the Allies be prepared to act either to exploit a German collapse or try to rescue the Soviets. Brooke responded with the British vision of an assault to "bait" air attrition, but emphasized the current difficulties overseas. As Marshall could only offer three and a half of the estimated nine divisions necessary for a 1942 move, Brooke's view that any bridgehead would be crushed - and the U.K.'s defence imperilled - loomed large. A rift was at hand. While Marshall was ready to

"take losses" to ensure irreversible focus on 1943, the COS hoped to connect the plans to their refusal to gamble in 1942.[87]

> The clues were already apparent. Churchill warned Roosevelt on 12 April:
>
> "We must of course meet day to day emergencies in the East and Far East while preparing for the main strike."[88]

The COS expanded on this point in a written comment on the Marshall proposal. It was agreed that an active Eastern Front and strong American forces in the U.K. were imperative, but more emphasis was placed on immediate measures to block an Axis junction. Such an event would, it was argued, make Germany impossible to defeat. Somewhat disingenuously, the COS called for "careful study" of the bridgehead concept they had already rejected.[89] Marshall challenged the reply on 14 April by a dexterous mixture of carrot and stick. Given the expected completion of Pacific reinforcements by July, if his plan were approved, ships and aircraft could be found for India and the U.K. Minimum levels of Allied forces needed to hold from Libya to India should be defined, "in order to preserve the main operation." Brooke responded to this frank confession of motive in like fashion:

> "we were all completely agreed as regards 1943 but if we were forced this year to undertake an operation on the Continent it could only be on a small scale. It was necessary to relate its military value, which would not be great, to the danger of Germany and Japan joining hands in the Indian Ocean."

The definitive point was reached in conference that evening. Marshall noted the points of agreement: escalated bombing, raids, the need for more landing craft, 1943 offensive. He then made two points: the forces currently available or en route to the Suez-India theatre would hold the position; the projected superiority of Allied air forces would make any cross-Channel move in 1942 safe because it would give the Allies the ability to interdict German attempts to concentrate ground forces. Brooke and Portal refused to accept any serious cross-Channel move before the Middle East was clearly secure and the Germans had visibly stumbled in Russia. Hopkins pointed out that the political imperative was some sort of Allied attack in "Europe" in 1942. This caveat was subsumed by the desire of the Staffs to reach an accord. In the end, it was agreed to concentrate forces in the U.K. for a new redefined Allied ROUNDUP. Churchill

welcomed the deal, but pointedly warned that an Axis junction had to be prevented.[90] This caveat struck the crux of the matter - the British clearly felt they had only accepted a guiding framework, one subject to current needs and subsequent events.

Churchill assured Cabinet nothing more than a "resolute effort" to establish a bridgehead in 1942 had been agreed. Marshall told the CCS views were "in complete accord" but in the minutes "regarding operations in 1943" was pencilled in. Marshall's assurance that existing positions would hold was the key.[91] This brought everybody together because it ruled nothing out. The British wanted an American buildup in the U.K. and relied on events to rule out a 1942 assault. Roosevelt was delighted with the prospect of early action. The War Department's action was most important. Marshall had his eye on 1943. He pushed 1942 to appease Roosevelt and develop logistic momentum. It almost certainly did not matter whether a 1942 assault came off; the goal was a concentration in the U.K. This was a premature attempt to control grand strategy. Marshall misread Roosevelt's position and underestimated the depth of the "wear down" consensus. This left him with a problem, because he could not openly reveal his dilution of Presidential priorities and thus had to press in earnest a 1942 operation over which London had a physical veto. Only if the Germans had collapsed would a 1942 bridgehead have been attempted, yet the idea was to offer a diversion to prop up a Soviet collapse. It was easy to accept ROUNDUP. It brought American forces and was in the "distant future" so long envisaged in "wear down." The British even felt bold in contemplating departure from the "igniter" concept. This revealed a profound divergence of approach. Conscious of growing power and eager to harness it, the Americans sought consensus by proposing to seize control of events. Conscious of collapsed plans and new threats to committed power, the British retained consensus by sticking to the "wear down" basis. Both sides struck a vague accord hoping that events would drift toward their own interpretation and preclude further argument.[92] This was irresponsible to say the least, especially on Marshall's part.

The agreement to entrench the "Second Front" as the specific objective of grand strategy placed it in the forefront of debate until 1944. In fact it became the contact point of the coalition as from this point interested parties tried to steer policy in their

preferred direction. The idea of a grand strategic offensive to cement the coalition was on the table and could not be ignored. To the drumbeat of Beaverbrook's public orchestra, Whitehall searched for the right formula for three long months. The familiar combination of political and Soviet pressures, overseas problems and perceived prospects produced what Churchill so aptly termed "strategic natural selection."[93] The COS attempt to define how to give substance to American concentration in the U.K. and ward off reckless action in 1942 sparked a veritable alphabet soup of code names and concepts. First on the list was BOLERO, the new scale of buildup of American air and ground forces in the U.K. The new targets - 14 air groups and 105,000 troops by September, 17 divisions (800,000 troops) by April, the start date for ROUNDUP (the rest to move directly to France) - superseded MAGNET. This posed major administrative problems for the British and sparked revealing responses. Air formations were desired first; this made strategic sense, as they would join existing efforts. A Cabinet committee was struck to oversee co-ordination, but placed under the administrative LPC umbrella rather than the DC(O).[94] Worse confusion arose in the U.S. with renewed pressure for reinforcements for the Pacific.

It seems certain that Marshall saw BOLERO as a way to pin both the USN and the British to War Department strategy. Marshall secured Roosevelt's backing but again failed to realize that the President did not share his view of SLEDGEHAMMER as the only 1942 option. Trouble over landing craft made things worse. A much greater program was now required but the USN resisted this because it would cut into the output of naval vessels. It also wanted smaller craft which could be produced faster but were unsuitable for a major Channel crossing. Roosevelt intervened directly, ordering increased priority for large craft. The naval bureaucracy fought the change until July, which had evil consequences. 1942 plans were fatally undercut; naval output was upset; yet in the end a large program was begun, which increased War Department desires to appease King by prompt execution of the agreed policy.[95] Dill kept the COS well aware of developments, but while the COS were convinced that American 1942 plans were ill conceived, an impression reinforced by poor U.S.intelligence estimates,[96] they

did not want to jeopardize BOLERO by blunt opposition. This shaped a fatal decision to let plans collapse under closer scrutiny without an overt veto.

The initial result was renewed confusion in British thinking. Portal - under pressure on a more fundamental issue to be discussed below - and Mountbatten reopened scrutiny of a relatively ambitious 1942 scheme, hoping to address personal and American concerns. This ran into an unavoidable dilemma. While all manner of plans could proceed, sooner or later commanders had to be appointed and resources marshalled for an operation to proceed; these resources were so finite that whatever was done in 1942 would affect prospects for 1943. Brooke worked to scuttle the resurrected SLEDGEHAMMER in a more dangerous atmosphere - because ROUNDUP gave the first real if still murky form to the "distant future" apex of grand strategy, he needed an intermediate course which avoided a premature gamble. The only visible option was a series of raids. The initial "Second Front" directive made ROUNDUP the basis of overall grand strategy but saw raids and air action as active 1942 efforts; SLEDGEHAMMER was to be kept alive on paper as an "opportunity" move, to nurse BOLERO. However, Portal now began to speak of "this commitment to concentrate maximum land based effort in Western Europe this year" and refer to it in relation to overseas plans.[97]

In May the COS considered in detail exactly what sort of operation should even be prepared for in 1942. Portal wanted SLEDGEHAMMER, in the form of a six division bridgehead near Calais to spark sustained air attrition. Brooke would not budge from his insistence that superior German combat power and logistic advantage ruled out a major ground campaign before the visible success of "wea. down." He cited the shortage of landing craft to argue that the Germans could reinforce at a greater rate and wipe out any force which penetrated inland. As a stalking horse, Brooke suggested a two to four division raid developing into a temporary bridgehead, to be held for two to four weeks, to spark air attrition large enough to affect the Eastern Front.[98] Portal wanted to leave the choice between an "emergency" or "opportunity" move open as long as possible. The issue was the relationship of a 1942 assault to the Soviet situation. Brooke was convinced the Germans would not collapse in 1942, refused to consider major risks

on the Soviets behalf, and let loose the new idea, IMPERATOR, to head off SLEDGEHAMMER.

The COS brought the issue to Churchill on 27 May. Brooke, supported by Paget, stuck to his reasons for refusal - the uncertainty in Russia, the unfavourable relative logistic balance, the inability to limit the liability of a fixed bridgehead. Churchill accepted this case and made a definitive decision:

> "In view of the military arguments put forward, he was not prepared to give way to the popular clamour for the opening of a Second Front in these circumstances."[99]

This ruled out any prospect of an attempt to stake out a fixed position in France in 1942, barring German collapse, but settled nothing else. The whole issue of 1942 cross-Channel action was like the mythical Hydra. While the basic "wear down" premise held fast, the pressure for action kept alternatives alive. IMPERATOR became the new focus of debate, but there was a joker in the deck. Mountbatten exploited his role in the centre of amphibious concerns to recoup his fortune, by switching his support to Brooke's preference for a new series of raids in 1942 and Churchill's desire for ROUNDUP in 1943. Mountbatten convinced the COS to send him to Washington to advise on the prospects of ROUNDUP preparations, which gained him attention on both sides.[100] He used that attention to press urgently for the series of raids Combined Operations needed to establish itself and Brooke desired to appease the tumult.

Since 1940 Combined Operations had planned and prepared raids but had only been able to mount useful but nuisance scale efforts. Then in March things changed. CHARIOT, a desperate raid to knock out the major dry dock at St. Nazaire - the only facility in France which could accommodate the **Tirpitz** - was seen as a spectacular success after it achieved its objective, albeit at terrific cost. The "Second Front" crisis brought raiding to the fore, building on this momentum. The COS blocked all Mountbatten's attempts to secure control over raiding operations at the expense of regular channels. They knew any raids across Channel would be magnified in importance because of the overall situation and they did not trust Mountbatten or his hybrid outfit. Combined Operations suffered cancellation after cancellation at the hands of executive

authority. Mountbatten despaired of being able to launch any action himself.[101] Brooke's change of attitude gave him a chance. On 13 May Mountbatten submitted an outline plan for a division sized raid of day long duration on Dieppe in early July, codenamed RUTTER. Skilfully arguing that any larger operation would use up forces large enough to threaten ROUNDUP, Mountbatten secured COS approval and a directive for further preparations.[102] Here was a plan which potentially could address many varied concerns without risking a strategic reverse. Mountbatten had a foot in the door.

The situation was further complicated by an increase in Soviet pressure. Supplies were useful, but their fixed priority was a large Allied assault on Europe, both to force the Germans to divide their forces and to demonstrate that the Allies were not secretly intending to let the Soviets carry the brunt of the war and exhaust themselves. This pressure helped the "rolling seminar" distil essentials; but, because everyone agreed that some action to relieve the Soviets was a military necessity, this was not achieved without confusion and serious strain. The first instinctive move was, as it had been in June 1941, to escalate air operations. Herein lay the first clue to Portal's wavering from the "wear down" consensus. In March the COS decided to renew the CIRCUS sweeps, and to escalate them by 50% when the German offensive in Russia resumed. However, this posed a problem. Fighter Command's expansion had been diluted by the drain of reinforcements overseas, its latest models had fallen behind their German counterparts, reserves were inadequate, and Portal insisted on sending top line types to Malta. In order to press hard enough to force diversions from the Eastern Front but still meet all needs, the Americans were asked to accelerate deployment of fighters to the U.K. to extend the "chain."[103] Portal had to display some receptiveness to Marshall's plan or risk losing essential margins, but this risked sparking a battle which might commit his entire force. This was a tortuous course, made more so by the fact that the Soviets would not regard anything less than a full scale "Second Front" as acceptable.

Whitehall prepared a very full case, based on extensive intelligence appreciations culled mainly from signals intelligence, to face Molotov on his visit in late May. Churchill was advised that German strength was inadequate for another general offensive all along the Eastern Front; indeed, it was felt that if major new oil resources were not

secured, German overall power would decline in 1943. It was expected that up to 30 divisions could be transferred from Norway and France to support the impending drive on the Caucasus. Hitler had already ordered the construction of a fortified coastal line, or "Atlantic Wall," to replace this drain and ward off the Allies. Military Intelligence reported that of 25 field divisions then in France and the Low Countries, only four were fully mobile first rate units. Air Intelligence assessed the strength of its opponents as 4,410 combat types, 2,185 deployed in Russia.[104] This meant 70% of German military power was in Russia, poised for a blow which could knock out the only ally able to absorb such a burden and perhaps threaten the vital Middle East oilfields as well. On the surface, this made a strong case for a "Second Front Now."

Molotov raised that very issue with Churchill on 22 May. He received a British answer which never changed: until the Allies reached a position where they felt able to reinforce their bridgehead faster than the Germans could mass against it, no invasion could be more than a counterproductive sacrifice. The Allies would spark a diversion of airpower and prepare a 1943 campaign but that was all. Both men talked past each other. Molotov did not understand that what the British feared was not current German dispositions but their apparent potential to concentrate superior force. Churchill claimed 44 Axis divisions already faced the Allies; but what concerned the Soviets was getting 40 more out of Russia. Molotov bluntly asked what the British would do if the Soviets collapsed. The answer was pure "wear down": the task would be much harder, but the Allies would continue to escalate blockade, bombing, raids and peripheral campaigns. Molotov left Churchill in no doubt that the Mutual Assistance Pact had been accepted only to please Roosevelt and pointedly noted his consultations on the "Second Front" would continue in Washington.[105] Clearly, the Soviets rejected the British case and hoped to extract a pledge from Roosevelt to surmount it.

A fortnight of further confusion produced only one firm decision: there would be no 1942 cross-Channel operation larger than a day long raid. Portal and Mountbatten tried to resurrect IMPERATOR as an option for any attempt to "rescue" the Soviets. However, Brooke secured approval of a report on 6 June which left it tottering. The report advised that deep penetration inland to spark air attrition would be a needless risk,

especially as landing craft resources limited any assault to one division. This had the desired effect. Churchill, acutely sensitive to the risks of another fiasco, scuttled the whole idea of any "rescue" assault. On 8 June he directed that no landing be made on the Continent unless it was intended to remain there. SLEDGEHAMMER preparations would continue, but it would go only if the Germans were visibly weakened. As IMPERATOR relied on the same resources and prerequisite, it was off.[106] Unfortunately, confusion still reigned on the broad question of 1942 action, thanks to Roosevelt.

Tipped off by a careful telegram from Churchill on 28 May that the British were averse to SLEDGEHAMMER, Roosevelt made a deliberately ambiguous public pledge to Molotov. Asked whether "plans were proceeding," Marshall had no choice but to agree; his caveats were lost in the public announcement that "full understanding was reached with regard to the urgent tasks of creating a Second Front in Europe in 1942." This elastic phrase was a recipe for trouble. It suited Roosevelt's desire to prolong active study in hopes that events would swing in the desired direction, but it left Stalin a hostage to fortune. The Soviets insisted on interpreting it as a firm pledge for full scale action, hoping to force the Allies' hand.[107] Molotov pressed this point relentlessly back in London in early June, and offered two bribes. In return for a Second Front, the Soviets would consider a reduction in Lend-Lease supplies - an idea floated by Roosevelt - and favourably consider post-war co-operation. This was the crucial point. To the Soviets, the "Second Front" was a token of Allied sincerity and benevolence as well as a strategic imperative, a litmus test of the coalition. Churchill only restated the obstacles to 1942 action and resorted to strong language on ROUNDUP. Cabinet qualified the Roosevelt pledge on 11 June with an Aide-Memoire which clearly stated that no promise could be given to launch an operation before the situation was ripe. Cabinet also confirmed the "no invasion unless to stay, not until the Germans 'crack'" stance, and accepted SLEDGEHAMMER as an "opportunity" move only.[108]

Once again a form of words had emerged which meant different things to each side. Trying to reconcile the diplomatically imperative and strategically desirable with the tactically suicidal, Churchill and the COS had injected ambiguity into the core "wear

down" consensus. Only the Soviets knew exactly what they wanted and pressed their claim. As yet, Whitehall had made no firm decision on 1942 grand strategy. The PQ convoy problems lured Churchill's focus back to Norway. He favoured a division sized assault to capture two airfields in the north, in order to cover the convoys and please Stalin with less risk of a German riposte. This was Churchill at his worst. Moved as ever by the desire for maximum offensive action, he expanded this concept, JUPITER, into a major campaign to "advance gradually southward, unrolling the map of Nazi Europe from the top." As often happened, Churchill's act, meant to spur the Staff into a real effort to solve obstacles, exposed these as so formidable that their tendency to play for safety was exacerbated. The operation would call for more air cover than was feasible, strain shipping and divert effort from the central objective - to secure essential positions and build up strength while wearing Germany down. Churchill peevishly suggested his idea would place Allied forces in an area difficult for the Germans to mass forces and that planners should focus on a plan and ignore broader considerations.[109] This completely distorted Allied logistic and air capability; the latter point was tantamount to asking the COS to ignore their duty. This was a measure of the strain the "rolling seminar" was under and the general irritation it could foster, but it also indicated that ideas were still in motion.

Mountbatten made the next move. On 1 June he pressed for RUTTER as the climactic raid, arguing it alone would employ all available landing craft without hurting ROUNDUP. This acute tilt to Brooke won COS and Cabinet support; on 11 June Cabinet accepted a one day "butcher and bolt" raid as the only **unconditional** 1942 cross-Channel assault.[110] Mountbatten ran into trouble however when he tried to advance an independent thesis for 1943. Phrased to sway Brooke, the argument ran that as a Soviet defeat would rule out ROUNDUP some plan was necessary to clinch BOLERO; Mountbatten offered a series of different scenarios, depending on the Soviet situation, codenamed JUMPER. Against COS wishes, he raised the issue in Washington. Dill tried to explain that the concept was very tentative, but the damage was done.[111] The Americans were becoming intensely suspicious that the British were against the whole idea of cross-Channel assault.

Mountbatten's action came on the heels of the Churchill telegram of 28 May which accurately reflected the fluid state of Whitehall thought, ranging from JUPITER to Gazala. The JCS saw this as a signal the British intended to renege on their "commitment" for concentration in the U.K. Marshall and Eisenhower now began to realize that Roosevelt's aim also went no farther than large scale action in "Europe" in 1942. This left them in the awkward position of pressing SLEDGEHAMMER, in order to guarantee ROUNDUP, without command support. Eisenhower was sent to the U.K. as Commanding General European Theatre of Operations (ETO) to fight for his own plan. Efforts to accelerate BOLERO into an irreversible commitment were stepped up. MAB pledged to confer 1A priority for forces destined for the "Second Front" from target date of initiating continuous operations.[112] But the War Department could not change the fact that the preponderance of forces gave London a veto over 1942 operations. On 15 June, Dill wired the COS a penetrating analysis of the Washington mood, culled from an interview with Hopkins. Roosevelt - concerned about the Soviet and Mediterranean situations, eager to initiate visible U.S. action - had begun to lean to an operation in north Africa as a way to address these concerns without precluding ROUNDUP. Marshall was "desperate" over SLEDGEHAMMER and worried about ROUNDUP. The JCS were considering a tactical offensive in the Pacific. The COS took the warning seriously.[113] Worried about public expectations after the Roosevelt pledge, they suggested a further conference in Washington to exploit this divergence in American thought and secure Roosevelt's support. But first a basic British consensus had still to be defined. As all agreed the German situation on the Eastern Front was the governing factor, it formed the starting point.

The JIC now felt the Soviets would survive another massive assault. The COS went no further than to agree that the Soviets would avoid utter defeat; even this, it was felt, justified a more business like stance in bilateral debate. The COS agreed that Soviet resistance had made the U.K. safe from invasion in 1942, but refused to consider the U.K. safe in all contingencies until 1944, on the grounds that excessive weakening of U.K. forces could tempt enemy reaction. Churchill and the COS met on 15 June, as he and Brooke prepared to leave for Washington. Churchill pressed for JUPITER.

Mountbatten advocated JUMPER on the grounds that the need to retain Roosevelt's support was paramount. The COS were preoccupied with defensive concerns - they had even suggested talks with the Soviets regarding defence of the Caucasus - but agreed that BOLERO must not be reversed. Brooke, reflecting the strength of the swirl of ideas, suggested the revival of GYMNAST. This was the heart of the matter. There could be no cross-Channel invasion of any sort before "wear down' had succeeded, regardless of the Soviet situation. Beaverbrook's extreme position:

> "anything that furthers Russia's effort in the war is worth any price, no matter how high,"[114]

would have to be appeased by a minimal gesture; defensive concerns were priority. But the American power pledged in BOLERO was the foundation of all plans; GYMNAST might well be the best way to guarantee its execution. This, however, was Brooke's view; for once, he and Churchill went to Washington with no consensus beyond the fundamental "wear down" veto of cross-Channel assault. This had grave consequences.

The consequences were rooted in the different perspectives held at the political and military levels, which emerged on the question of GYMNAST. GYMNAST had, in fact, never been excised from Churchill's or Roosevelt's thought. Churchill resurrected it in his 28 May telegram, which provoked the War Department to insist that any diversion of forces from concentration in the U.K. in 1942 would preclude ROUNDUP in 1943.[115] This made Brooke's stance in the resulting CCS conferences a pleasant surprise. On 19 June Brooke surveyed the sweep of 1942 plans. The crux of the problem was the Eastern Front; if it held, as Brooke felt it would, ROUNDUP had a "good chance." If it did not, ROUNDUP was off. Regardless, in the meantime shipping strain and pressure in north Africa forced the Allies to settle on one major 1942 operation. Brooke offered two new twists - an attempt late in 1942 to secure a bridgehead at Brest or Cherbourg if the Soviets were hard pressed, or a form of GYMNAST in 1943. The JCS did not notice that Brooke now considered ROUNDUP only an option for 1943; they did note the resemblance of his new bridgehead scheme to a similar American proposal and that he had not pushed for GYMNAST in 1942. Marshall and Brooke met privately later and found their views "pretty well of the same

accord...as to the general outlook." Consensus emerged the next day. The JCS resisted GYMNAST, insisting concentrated power was essential to defeat the Germans. Brooke wanted BOLERO executed in order to allow a choice of options, to be governed by the Soviet situation. Eisenhower hoped to use the new bridgehead idea to retain the original policy. Marshall opted for a more subtle compromise. It was agreed to advise Churchill and Roosevelt as follows: the focus should remain BOLERO/ROUNDUP, 1942 cross-Channel plans should continue, and GYMNAST should be ruled out for 1942 on the grounds its absorption of resources would preclude ROUNDUP. The bargain was no 1942 GYMNAST and continued cross-Channel study in return for full scale BOLERO; this left the JCS with hopes of ROUNDUP, Brooke with hopes of safety in 1942 and choice in 1943. It seemed 1942 U.K. operations would become what Marshall wanted all along - inoperative momentum for ROUNDUP.[116]

The CCS underlying fear was that their careful trade-off would be upset by "political imperatives." They were right. That same day, Churchill gave Roosevelt a paper citing unanimous British opposition to any 1942 Channel assault other than an "opportunity" move. If a sound plan could not be found, the Allies would have to look elsewhere; a major new stroke was strategically, politically and diplomatically imperative. On 21 June, Churchill, Roosevelt, Marshall, Hopkins, Brooke and Ismay discussed the whole issue. Churchill skilfully promoted GYMNAST as a way to reconcile Roosevelt's determination for action in 1942 and his long standing desire to secure northwest Africa with COS fears for the Mediterranean. The CCS advice was rejected and they were directed to find a plan for action in 1942. The wording was a delicate compromise: cross-Channel operations offered the biggest potential gain and should be studied intensely, but if found impossible other schemes should be considered instead.[117] This was not a final decision but it set the stage for one. The deciding factor was, again, events in the field.

The Eighth Army's collapse dramatically underpinned the shift in British strategic thought in Washington. London and Cairo both expected Tobruk to be held. It fell on 21 June. That same day, Cairo warned that Eighth Army was too weak, especially in armour, even to hold the Egyptian frontier and would stage a fighting retreat to Matruh.

This again isolated Malta. If Rommel could retain the initiative and secure his logistics, he might threaten the Suez Canal itself.[118] The news hit Washington and London with crushing force. Attention was already focused on the area from Egypt to the Caucasus. Reinforcements were accelerated. Auchinleck even suggested open restoration of the death penalty, a plea rejected as premature.[119] In this atmosphere, with existing primary commitments at risk, it was again difficult for Brooke and Churchill to see SLEDGEHAMMER-ROUNDUP as an urgent issue.

However, this episode also helped underline the intimate nature of the British-American alliance. Roosevelt generously addressed Churchill's sense of humiliation by an instant straight forward offer of assistance. It was an emotional gesture which indicated the far greater sense of affinity and shared interest between these two powers than that enjoyed by any other combination. But a gesture and specific execution were two different matters. Given a choice, Brooke opted for 300 Sherman tanks instead of 2nd U.S. Armoured Division. Brooke still doubted American combat power; Marshall still doubted British priorities. This was close co-operation, but on self interested terms.[120] Churchill and Roosevelt had other ideas, which shaped the turn to GYMNAST.

Churchill saw GYMNAST as a way to inject Allied power into an area to help secure pivotal British positions once and for all **and** as a basis for further offensive action. He was determined that Eighth Army recoup itself and restore British prestige, but Allied reinforcements would clinch this and carry Roosevelt. Failing that, there was JUPITER. The COS were concerned with current defensive efforts, which had to be secured once and for all before any Allied offensive. The JCS saw their concentration thesis slipping away. The CCS were now obliged to ward off collapse in the Mediterranean and draft an offensive plan for action in 1942. Nothing was decided, but the fall of Tobruk and the political command decision had definitely channelled policy.

The loss of Tobruk has been justifiably described as the low ebb of the British Army in the entire war.[121] Eighth Army's retreat and Tedder's weakness - in mid-June he complained that with only 46 squadrons as opposed to estimated requirements of 95

he could not operate in the central Mediterranean - left Malta and Egypt hanging on by their fingernails. Malta faced especially grave risk as no convoy could be organized before August. Reinforcements of all types were accelerated, but became subsumed in a serious debate over the fighting power of the Army.[122]

The attempt by the CCS to sort out their dialogue and submit a firm outline to Churchill and Roosevelt occupied the rest of the summer. The dominant factor as far as the British were concerned once again proved to be events in the field. Auchinleck insisted "we are still largely an amateur fighting professionals," and warned that Eighth Army must consolidate at an easily defensible position.[123] Eighth Army duly dug in near El Alamein, where Auchinleck planned to use his excellent artillery, and improved air-ground co-operation, to beat off assaults while the Army reorganized. Churchill was appalled to hear that after two years his senior commander still considered the Army unprepared. He was also infuriated to hear of plans to split Eighth Army in two, to defend Alexander and Cairo, if it was pushed out of its new line. Churchill, supported by Cabinet, deplored Auchinleck's "looking over his shoulder" and ordered Eighth Army to stand fast and fight as if it were defending Kent or Sussex. This was meant to be taken literally. Here was the fusion between Imperial defence, "Europe first," and "wear down." Without the absolute and relative power generated by the former, the others were impossible. Churchill pointedly reminded commanders of the obligation to fight and suggested they "fight ruthlessly, and use Russian methods" - by which he meant to the death.[124] This loss of confidence in the Army continued to mark the "rolling seminar's" approach to all problems even more strongly than before.

Nevertheless, there were grounds for optimism. Some quarters felt that Rommel had now overstretched himself.[125] Indeed, his success had disoriented Axis plans, which sensibly called for the conquest of Malta before a deep thrust into Egypt. But Berlin had lost confidence in airborne assault after Crete, and never had any in Italian seapower. Rommel's success made it too easy to decide to press Malta from the air and try to "bounce" Egypt. This was a poor decision. If Eighth Army held on, there would be another race to build up forces in which the Allies had greater grand strategic interest and a base from which to interdict Axis supplies. Rommel received a fourth German

division, but his advance only lengthened his supply lines. Auchinleck established a position that could not be outflanked and received large reinforcements, including the American tanks. Signals intelligence significantly improved, to the point where Cairo could rely on a steady and accurate warning of Rommel's situation and intentions. Auchinleck used it to help break up a series of assaults on his new positions, followed by a confused succession of attempts on both sides to gain the initiative. But on 28 July Auchinleck broke off contact. He blamed lack of reserves, especially infantry, new Axis defences, and the need for time to prepare new arrivals for combat.[126]

London was not impressed. The improved flow of intelligence only increased its frustration and fear. On 13 July the JIC warned that Berlin intended to build up Rommel's forces to 10 full divisions, for a drive on Suez. Auchinleck found himself caught in what had now become a common dilemma for British field commanders. Despite Whitehall's scepticism about the Army's potency, it did not understand why relatively inferior combat power could not be offset by greater numbers, improved equipment and better intelligence. Churchill wondered why it took so long to prepare new arrivals for combat, and why Auchinleck would only concentrate 380 of his nearly 1,800 tanks in Eighth Army. The Prime Minister finally decided to go to Cairo to review the situation himself.[127]

The situation in India was not much better. Wavell, Peirce and Somerville felt unable to risk more than limited offensives unless they received larger reinforcements. After the Japanese threat faded, the COS were reluctant to offer them. But Churchill was convinced that more ambitious plans were possible and necessary. To rely on the USN to beat the Japanese itself was politically unacceptable. From mid-May he called for an early offensive to reconquer Burma. Churchill expected the Eastern Fleet to include eight battleships (four modern) and three fleet carriers by July and wanted Somerville to return to Ceylon. Somerville felt he could only do this as part of a strategy co-ordinated with the USN. King, on the other hand, requested the RN to stage a diversion to support proposed operations in the southwest Pacific. Somerville agreed only to make a demonstration; with the loss of heavy units to the Mediterranean, by September he still had only two fast battleships, one carrier, no secure forward base, and

very poor air capability in quality and quantity. The COS gave short shrift to action in such circumstances. The Eastern Fleet could not be reinforced because of other needs and could risk no action with existing forces.[128] This familiar refrain affected hopes of early offensives and co-ordinated strategy.

A surprisingly durable outline plan for an eventual offensive into Burma did emerge in May from the swirl of ideas in London and India. Sea lanes would have to be secured, to isolate the area. An advance along the coast to secure air bases was a necessary first step. The next year, co-ordinated overland advances in the north and an amphibious assault on Rangoon would be possible, given air superiority.[129] Wavell fought over this outline with Churchill all summer. The issues were relative airpower, logistics, seapower and troop morale. An all out offensive could only proceed under several conditions: a two to one superiority in air forces for sustained pressure; major improvement in the virtually non-existent logistic infrastructures in Assam province to sustain advance over rough Burmese terrain; and landing craft for a two division assault, to prevent the defeat in detail of any of the major advances and make more certain a first victory to restore Army confidence. None of these conditions could be achieved in 1942. Wavell suggested restricting operations to small probes in the north when the monsoon lifted in late October. Churchill termed this "nice and useful nibbling." He wanted a visible British success in restoring lost prestige and territory, including at least the capture of Rangoon. However, he did concede that this was dependent on successful stands by Eighth Army and the Soviets.[130]

Alexander returned to the U.K. to present Wavell's outline plan for the reconquest of Burma to the COS, who dealt with it on 10 July. The plan called for a four pronged overland and amphibious offensive by five divisions, supported by 68 squadrons; the decisive factors would be control of the sea lanes and the air and the ability to maintain forces over rough terrain. The COS approved the plan and an overland coastal advance into Akyab to secure air bases as a first step in 1942. Churchill resented this postponement of the full scheme, codenamed ANAKIM; suspecting the usual compilation of fears in a worst case basis, he again demanded planners leave broad issues aside.[131] The COS forced Wavell's hand by reclaiming all his landing craft for imminent

operations closer to home. In August, Wavell and the COS agreed to stick to the only feasible operation in 1942, a one division coastal advance.[132] Once again, longer term ambitions had been diluted by overall quantitative weakness and local qualitative inferiority.

With India in turmoil, a beaten army, bitter experience of weakness in the air and no certain American support, Wavell would never have accepted ANAKIM.[133] However, this raised coalition friction. The Americans were eager to restore supply lines to China but suspicious of British aims. The result was a confused chain of command which fuelled existing resentment in London over American actions in a British sphere and British reliance on American support.[134] The COS tried to offset this by promoting operational spheres in the context of overall grand strategy. This set off an internal debate on that latter issue. A consensus was forged on this very long term issue and sent to Washington as a broad hint of possible compromise. The draft posed five possible courses to defeat Japan - conquest of Manchuria, interdiction of sea lanes to China, strategic bombing, reconquest of the East Indies, severance of Japanese sea lanes to the south. The latter was the preferred course. The hint was that if Britain took the lead in the Indian Ocean, it would in some form assist efforts in the Pacific and China. Now that the Japanese advance had spent itself, the COS were determined not to allow a serious flow of forces to India until Germany had been beaten. Circumstances again shifted the emphasis between Imperial defences and priorities closer to home. The COS were uncomfortably aware of their dependence on American supply and the American capability for independent action in the Pacific. Churchill realized the danger of seeming reluctant to help the Chinese. But London considered offensive action to help the Chinese as unwarranted a risk as it was for the Soviets.[135] Given the weight of political factors involved, this was a recipe for serious friction.

It was against this backdrop that the time all parties in the "Second Front" debate had relied on to swing events towards their policy ran out. Churchill and Roosevelt stuck by their decision to insist on some new campaign in Europe in 1942. The result was the most important decision in Allied grand strategy since ABC-1. The COS used a favourable atmosphere in Whitehall to convince Cabinet the Allies could not even

afford to assemble the necessary forces for SLEDGEHAMMER, because it now seemed so remote and shipping was at a premium. Portal had qualms, because a pledge had been given to prepare a 1942 operation. Everything hinged on the uncertain fate of the Soviets. ROUNDUP was only a possibility. Churchill was still pressing JUPITER, having asked MacNaughton, commanding general of First Canadian Army, to review the scheme in hopes of a more optimistic response. The Mediterranean absolutely had to be secured once and for all, to ease the shipping burden and deny the vital oil deposits to the Germans. Most of all, the Americans had to be dissuaded from recklessness in 1942. Brooke now saw GYMNAST as the answer to all these problems. On 7 July, Cabinet confirmed the SLEDGEHAMMER veto and decided to delay informing Stalin until a firm consensus had been reached with the Americans. The COS supported Churchill's call for renewed study of GYMNAST, which could "transform the Mediterranean situation," but objected again to JUPITER.[136] The consensus was expressed in an important telegram to Roosevelt on 8 July. The telegram argued that as ROUNDUP was the basic objective, the need for action in 1942 had to be met by an operation which would not preclude it by excessive demands or likely defeat. Roosevelt's inclination to GYMNAST was addressed but the central theme was clear - the Allies could not land anywhere where their ground forces could be exceeded by German forces.[137] This official notice of the six week old British veto of SLEDGEHAMMER set off intense activity which led to final conclusions.

The COS squarely confronted the prospect that ROUNDUP might entail a premature departure from "wear down." The original policy - BOLERO and existing efforts for 1942 - was politically unacceptable. The preferred alternative was to reinforce existing campaigns by the safest choice - GYMNAST. The JPS were directed to consider whether a 1942 GYMNAST would preclude ROUNDUP and, given likely developments, which was more desirable. In other words, the JPS were to find a palatable way to submit GYMNAST. The COS tackled JUPITER themselves. On 9 July, they reached a tacit consensus with MacNaughton - the Canadians would confirm the objections to the plan in return for a full share of whatever action emerged from the U.K. in 1942. The JPS reported, as expected, on 16 July. SUPERGYMNAST, the

deliberate assault, seemed necessary, but its demands on resources meant "it must be regarded as an **alternative** and not as a supplement" to ROUNDUP. Therefore, a decision had to be made as to the date when it would be necessary to choose one or the other. On 17 July, the COS put aside SLEDGEHAMMER and noted that Mountbatten and Eisenhower were studying the idea of a late autumn bridgehead. Finally on 18 July, Churchill and the COS reached a consensus: SLEDGEHAMMER was off, ROUNDUP preparations were to proceed, but SUPERGYMNAST was to be promoted as "the only feasible 1942 operation" and "the right wing of the Second Front."[138] The idea was to convince the Americans that proceeding on British assumptions in 1942 need not rule out continuing preparations for the American concept for 1943.

This was close to disingenuous. Given Whitehall's doubts about ROUNDUP after GYMNAST, it very much depended on the definition of "continuing preparations" and the Americans' willingness to concentrate forces on the hope that events would take a favourable turn. To make matters worse, the 8 July telegram intruded on a serious debate in the JCS over a proposed southwest Pacific offensive. King was eager to seize the initiative both to prevent MacArthur from gaining the lead role in theatre strategy and to prevent the Japanese from entrenching their perimeter. SLEDGEHAMMER was ROUNDUP's guarantee; its rejection raised the spectre of U.S. forces being dispersed and Allied campaigns remaining under British control. Marshall and King were absolutely convinced that only a linear concentration of force could unleash the full potential of the American war machine; this would also lead to American control of Allied policy. Marshall angrily proposed a turn to concentration in the Pacific if the U.K. concentration was diluted and tied to opportunism. Roosevelt flatly rejected this proposal and forced Marshall to confess that an abandonment of "Europe first" would leave the Soviets and the British in dire straits. Roosevelt then ordered the JCS to go to London and seek consensus on a new campaign in 1942 on this basis: SLEDGEHAMMER could be pressed, but if the British resisted, GYMNAST was to be accepted instead.[139]

Dill's warning that Marshall was serious about a turn to the Pacific convinced the COS to promote the attractiveness of GYMNAST and their commitment to ROUNDUP.

A transparent bribe was offered - London would accept Marshall's nomination as Supreme Commander for ROUNDUP.[140] Churchill described GYMNAST as an alternative "Second Front." Tensions were high when Marshall, King and Hopkins arrived in London on 18 July. The critical player, however, was the absent Roosevelt. His direct order tied the JCS hands and predetermined the final conclusion. However, that conclusion was given an important twist because of JCS reluctance to abide by the Presidential fiat and their resentment of the British, on whom they laid the responsibility. Marshall could no longer treat SLEDGEHAMMER as a stalking horse for 1943. He was forced to promote a specific plan and opted for the idea of a late autumn bridgehead. He and Eisenhower felt such a bridgehead might be held over the winter and evolve into ROUNDUP, and would either be a useful diversion or face the weakest forces ever likely to be found in France. In fact, the real motive was constant - to protect the policy of a concentrated strategic offensive. A specific plan gave Brooke a chance for a specific rebuttal, which summed up the basic British opposition to the American concept. The problem was not how strong the Germans were in France, the problem was how strong they **might become**. Ten divisions would be needed to hold a bridgehead; only six could be maintained. The RAF could not guarantee air superiority. With nearly 300 divisions in Russia and excellent lines of communication, the Germans could easily concentrate enough power to destroy any bridgehead. To the U.K. this would represent a national disaster. The CCS agreed to disagree on 22 July. Cabinet was reluctant to reject Marshall but it upheld the veto on any cross-Channel assault besides an "opportunity" move. Roosevelt ordered the JCS to accept this decision, which moved a northwest African invasion from possible to probable.[141]

The price was revealed in two more days of tense debate. On 24 July, Marshall submitted a paper which made three key points. GYMNAST would be adopted but SLEDGEHAMMER and ROUNDUP preparations would continue. A final choice would be made on 15 September, based on the situation on the Eastern Front. If the Soviets were hard pressed, GYMNAST would proceed. In that case there would be a price:

> " a commitment to GYMNAST implies the definite acceptance of a defensive encircling line of action for the Continental European theatre, except as to air and

blockade operations against Germany."

The warning was clear - GYMNAST meant the end of the "agreed" April grand strategy, so the Americans would consider the entire ARCADIA consensus overturned. Portal and Brooke tried to convince the Americans that "wear down" was aimed expressly to create the necessary conditions for strategic offensive, led by cross-Channel assault. They failed. Marshall and King insisted a large GYMNAST would suck in so many resources as to preclude ROUNDUP. Planning and training could continue, but for an "entirely new" operation to return to the Continent. The American paper was adopted as the basis of an agreed report to Churchill and Roosevelt. Titled CCS94, it read like a consensus. A "rescue" SLEDGEHAMMER was off. If the decision went to GYMNAST:

> "...renders ROUNDUP in all probability impracticable of successful execution in 1943 and therefore that we have definitely accepted a defensive encircling line of action for the Continental European theatre, except as to air operations and blockade; but continued organization, plans and training for invasion are necessary so it can be staged should a marked deterioration in German military strength become apparent and the resources of the UN, available after meeting other commitments, so permit..."

This could have been a JPS draft, it so well reflected what the British really felt. What the COS disliked was the price:

> "...over and above the U.S. forces required from BOLERO for operations in north and northwest Africa,...readjustment of U.S. commitments to BOLERO would be made for the purpose of furthering offensive operations in the Pacific."[142]

This document and the frustrations it reflected marked a turning point in CCS relations and Allied grand strategy. The Americans knew they did not have enough combat ready forces to overrule the British belief that relative weakness ruled out any early change in the fundamental grand strategic approach. But the irreconcilable clash between the political need for early action and their multi-faceted desire for concentration had forced them to risk the latter on behalf of the former. Their price was the escalation of the Pacific campaign from containment to a secondary but significant offensive. This was illustrated not only by a planned transfer of forces but also by a shift in thought. "Wear down" had to be accepted for the moment, but the Pacific could be used as leverage to ward off dispersion before an effort could be made to revive strategic

concentration. Roosevelt finally had to order Marshall on 31 July to abandon the provision for a choice in September and proceed unconditionally with an Allied invasion of northwest Africa, renamed TORCH. This was a command decision which forced the CCS to accept a new outline of operations for 1942. Marshall signalled in return that BOLERO would pay the price. ROUNDUP plans could continue, but the BOLERO forces would become a pool for the needs of the new campaign.[143]

This was not what Churchill or Roosevelt had in mind. Roosevelt probably did not really ponder the long term strategic consequences of opting for TORCH. To him, the operation was a political balm which could rally support for "Europe first" and be cited as aid to the Soviets. Churchill saw TORCH as part of a grand design involving deception from the U.K. forces to pin the Germans while TORCH and Eighth Army took them in the flank.[144] This forced the British to try to solve two conflicting problems: how to secure the largest possible commitment to TORCH without killing BOLERO. A basic consensus British on the objectives of TORCH strengthened Whitehall's position. The debate on how to proceed gave the Allies their first experience of organizing a combined offensive campaign and integrating different military practices. This was complicated by the emergence of different strategic appreciations and priorities and policies towards Vichy.

The British agreed the Americans should visibly take the lead in the operation. This would preserve the fiction TORCH was Roosevelt's personal project, entice more U.S. forces, and perhaps spark a friendly Vichy response. Eisenhower was appointed Supreme Commander Allied Expeditionary Force, responsible directly to the CCS. He set about building a fully integrated staff with subordinate positions rationed out in due proportion. The real trouble developed over the basic outline plan. There were several constants: the earliest possible date; a deliberate assault by large forces; the need for visible success. Apart from these, basic differences emerged which made Eisenhower the man in the middle. The British saw the object of the campaign as the rapid conquest of the whole northwest African Mediterranean shore, especially Tunisia. This would at last enable the Allies to clear Africa, close blockade leaks, secure air bases to cover Malta, and develop a base for operations to clear the whole Mediterranean, which would ease

the shipping strain. They decided to put enough force into TORCH, including six divisions, to make it their first really concentrated move since 1940. Washington saw safety, rather than speed, as the key point. With a concrete plan at hand, Marshall wanted to ensure the U.S. Army succeeded in its first "European" action. The JCS feared assaults in the Mediterranean would risk leaving the force isolated if the Spanish or the Germans took Gibraltar, the one available base to sustain supply lines. Whereas the British wanted landings in eastern Algeria and a rapid advance on Tunis, the Americans wanted a landing on the Atlantic coast at Casablanca. This would mean a slower advance but a safer buildup.

This clash had Eisenhower's plans bouncing back and forth and set off the familiar inflation of claims to levels that seriously interfered with existing efforts.[145] The need to sustain a large force in an area of poor infrastructure threatened to be a huge naval and shipping burden on already stretched resources. In fact this argument, which derisively became known as the "Trans Atlantic essay contest," brought out the basic differences in national policy towards the whole Mediterranean area. The Americans feared that TORCH would ruin their long standing attempt to sway Vichy by careful benevolence and intimidate Spain by economic warfare. There were internal arguments over whether prior political intrigue or a massive show of force was most likely to gain Vichy officials sympathy and stifle resistance. The British had fewer illusions. They were confident only brute force would change Vichy minds and doubted Spain would risk its precarious economic position by turning on the Allies. The result was a deadlock. The issue reached the CCS on 28 August. Cunningham saw the objectives as offensive: assist the Soviets by stretching the Germans and seizing Tunisia. Marshall and King argued TORCH had defensive objectives: to clear and secure the Mediterranean and help secure the Atlantic. They caustically reminded the British cross-Channel operations had been designed to help the Soviets and wondered why the British saw so many tactical risks there but so few in TORCH. Indeed, London had made an ironic role reversal from advocating caution in grand strategy to boldness in theatre strategy. It was justified. Cunningham rightly dismissed the relative hazards of the assaults; there would be no Germans on African beaches. The issue was subsequent development. In order to

preclude an Axis response and avoid a subsequent stall and logistic drain, more power and speed than the Americans desired would be necessary. King flatly refused to transfer any forces from the Pacific except under direct Presidential order.[146] Clearly, a compromise would have to be found to reconcile American concerns for security and hopes for a political coup with British insistence on the need for power and speed.

Marshall and King were right to suspect the COS saw TORCH as a way to consolidate existing efforts. The whole concept was an original article of "wear down." But the British were right about the need for speed. The JIC doubted the Germans would move into Vichy territory, but the COS wisely decided to assume the Germans would try to hold Tunisia regardless of the situation elsewhere.[147] While this would mean an element of grand strategic success, it could also lead to strategic failure. The COS decided to increase the forces committed to TORCH. On 6 August Dill suggested that short run shipping priorities for air force units be accepted as TORCH - WS reinforcement convoys - BOLERO. King saw the wider implications and insisted on including the Pacific. TORCH had become to the British a safe current grand strategic option but a threat to overall grand strategy. If TORCH succeeded rapidly, matters would progress. If not, at least Allied forces would be safer and have better odds of relative reinforcement in north Africa, while contributing more directly to current British efforts, than they would have anywhere else. However, TORCH's claim on shipping and forces was eclipsing BOLERO, which might leave the U.K. itself exposed.[148] In fact, the interconnection of factors could not be escaped. Only one pool of forces was available to assist the Soviets, secure the U.K., prevent collapse in the Mediterranean and try to reverse the tide. The decision on how to execute TORCH would have far reaching effects.

This new divergence in Allied thinking was only worsened by events and decisions elsewhere. King moved quickly to exploit the rift caused by TORCH to establish a tactical offensive in the Pacific and generate momentum for further efforts. There were good strategic reasons for moving into the Solomons to prevent the Japanese from consolidating. Unfortunately, logistic patterns had been tailored to maintaining current positions and sending forces to the developed U.K. base. The immense distances

and lack of infrastructure meant that an early escalation by two drives, MacArthur's push in New Guinea and amphibious assaults in the Solomons, would stretch logistics so far as to leave the new campaign hanging on a shoestring. Yet King had to move fast, to prevent Japanese consolidation and retain Marshall's support while feelings ran high over the fate of SLEDGEHAMMER/ROUNDUP. As a result landings were made on the island of Guadalcanal, which led to a serious imbalance of American effort. Japanese resistance was fierce and a major campaign loomed.[149] Dogged by a combination of strategic conviction, political calculation and structural confusion, Washington let American grand strategy become disoriented.

The British experienced far less disruption in their current plans, because they saw TORCH as fully in line with them. Churchill and Brooke went to Cairo determined to ensure that the resources lavished on the theatre brought lasting success. A council of war on 4 August underlined a British consensus- the centre of gravity was the Middle East, but the point of primary focus was the active front in Egypt. Churchill insisted Eighth Army receive priority for reinforcements en route and launch an early attack to crush Rommel's forces once and for all. Tedder felt that RAF power would suffice, provided his replacement flow continued. Auchinleck, however, claimed that German superiority in first class armoured forces ruled out attack before mid-September. This exchange clinched two existing decisions- no diversions from Egypt before clear victory, and the sacking of Auchinleck.[150] Auchinleck's defensive success in July had not restored London's confidence in him. The stakes were too high. With years of intense effort and prestige invested in north Africa, Churchill could not countenance being seen to be rescued by the Americans and TORCH. A prior British victory was politically imperative. Brooke accepted the change because he lacked faith in Auchinleck's judgement of subordinates and felt Auchinleck had not exploited recent improvements in his intelligence and materiel.[151] The change of command underlined the perception of Eighth Army as the pivotal force.

A new separate Persia and Iraq Command(PAIQ) was then created. The feeling that Cairo had spent too much time looking over its shoulder - vis Auchinleck's "tactical problems in Egypt" - carried the day. Divided command would allow it to focus on

Egypt. PAIQ Command was even first offered to Auchinleck, who rejected it. While far from a backwater, it was clearly not meant to be the point of emphasis. Wilson took the new command. Alexander, a favourite of Brooke and Churchill for his imperturbability, took over Middle East Command. Through Brooke's advocacy and the untimely death of Churchill's candidate, Montgomery emerged in command of 8th Army. Brooke engineered these choices, which underlined his priorities. Both Alexander and Montgomery were successively transferred from command of the British TORCH component, prompting Eisenhower to question the COS commitment. Brooke even refused the offer of Eighth Army for himself, an example of professional rectitude. Brooke had the confidence of Churchill and the Army and it was no time for disruption at the centre. Brooke's sole concern was to put the strongest possible team where he felt the need greatest. Alexander's breadth and detachment would help him handle the stress in Cairo and allow the field commander to get on with the job. Brooke considered Montgomery the finest field commander in the Army, despite a difficult personality and reluctance to countenance supervision. Brooke was confident this team could restore Eighth Army's confidence and at last bring out the power invested in it.[152]

It should be noted that the new men arrived at an opportune time. With Rommel halted, the steady flow of reinforcements and better intelligence began to take effect. The COS pressed efforts to interdict the central Mediterranean and organized, at great cost to other theatres, a major supply convoy to replenish Malta. The convoy, PEDESTAL, fought through only five of 14 merchant ships, but this was enough to keep the base going. Tedder complained of inadequate forces, especially torpedo bombers, but better use of more accurate signals intelligence and better service co-operation helped offset this. The replenished Malta forces increased their toll of Axis shipping. The rich "Ultra" intercepts which opened up Rommel's intentions and logistic problems greatly assisted Montgomery in laying his plans. In fact, the British became so well informed of Rommel's plan to launch another attack that Brooke had to hustle Churchill home from Cairo to let the new team carry on without hindrance.[153]

Montgomery inherited some advantages - a prepared defensive position and plan, better intelligence, more first rate equipment. But he also made an immediate and

dramatic impact on Eighth Army. Austere but charismatic, ruthlessly professional, Montgomery projected such confidence and determination that Eighth Army's spirit and cohesion began to revive quickly. The long practice of tinkering expedients was replaced by declared intention of root and branch reform, to compel all arms to fight in unison. Montgomery conducted a skilful first battle, using Eighth Army's prepared positions, the concentrated power of its excellent artillery, and excellent intelligence to good effect to break up Rommel's attack, from 31 August to 4 September. He then sat tight. This was the correct decision. Eighth Army was still convinced its armour would not fare well in an encounter battle with its skilled opponent. Montgomery was convinced that only under optimum conditions and after the most rigorous preparations could Imperial troops measure up to Germans. Montgomery may have inherited advantages, but he also had a clear grasp of strengths and weaknesses. Success bought him time to prepare Eighth Army in order to make no mistake when applying the crushing force now at last at hand. His force of personality even won Churchill's agreement to an offensive delayed until the new commander felt prepared.[154] The right man was indeed in the right place at last.

Eighth Army's front attracted attention because it was an area of active operations. But the ultimate priority in the area was to retain the Middle East oil resources, to sustain the Imperial war effort and deny urgently needed relief to Germany. As early as April the COS ordered serious study of the effect of the loss or disruption of the oil resources. The responses reflected the characteristics which marked British strategic thought and the central threads which ran through it. In May Cherwell warned that the loss of Middle East oil would hurt the whole war effort. The U.K. was supplied from North America, but this loss would fatally strain tanker capacity and deprive overseas positions of their source.[155] In July the COS reviewed the position in extreme secrecy. The "worst case" was seen as the loss of Suez and a German pincer offensive, from there and through the Caucasus. Three guiding principles were agreed: if forced to choose between holding the Canal and the oilfields, the latter would be priority; the Soviets could not be trusted to hold the Caucasus, so a defence must be prepared; but the prime effort would be propping up the active front, until a choice was unavoidable. The governing consideration was that while the British desperately needed the Soviets to

hold the line, they neither felt able to help or confident of Soviet success. As before, co-operation would be explored but securing British positions came first. The COS reacted impatiently to suggestions reinforcement of the Middle East would break the April "agreement" with Marshall. They had always seen existing positions as an unconditional first charge and would now act on that basis.[156]

The COS were informed in late July that the loss of Abadan and the oil fields would reduce Imperial war power by 20%. Brooke cited this figure and posed the stark choice at the Cairo conference on 4 August. The COS put the issue to Cabinet the next day.[157] Some steps were already underway to build up Wilson's new 10th Army, including the transfer of three Polish divisions from Soviet control.[158] The uncertain factor, given the attention lavished on the active front, was the northern flank. The COS resisted all efforts to lure Turkey into the war by increased supplies. In fact, they proposed to gamble that the Germans would be too preoccupied in Russia to launch any new drive through Turkey. It was a sound decision. The Turks seemed unwilling to take the risk of affronting the Germans.[159] Once the German offensive in Russia began in late June, it quickly became obvious that this was their main grand strategic effort. Cairo and London were soon debating whether the Caucasus would be held and how soon Wilson's forces might be in contact. London could reach no conclusion on the German ability to sustain a drive south of the Caucasus. The conferees in Cairo concluded that the problems the Germans faced in their new offensive afforded the British time to strike in Egypt. This conclusion was supported by a JIC report that termed a Soviet collapse and a German drive south before the spring of 1943 "unlikely."[160] It is hard to resist the conclusion this decision to settle British efforts first was based less on faith in the Soviets and more on a gamble on the obstacles facing the Germans. The alternative was a greater effort to assist the Soviets directly, an unpopular course in Whitehall. The lure exerted by an active front was the clincher.

The German advance brought the whole debate over strategic co-operation with the Soviets to a peak. There were three main issues: supplies, a "Second Front," and land contact in Iran. Whitehall thought was dominated by preconceptions and two constant assumptions - the Soviets were carrying the main strategic burden and could not

be abandoned, but Allied weakness and Soviet unreliability severely restricted Allied options. From April every major strategic issue was considered in the context of the dominance of the Eastern Front. Yet the Soviets did little to aid supply convoys, offered little strategic information, and treated Allied representatives rudely. Whitehall expressed the dilemma in early June:

> "...the main front is exclusively concern of Russia which so far has shown no desire for military consultation with its Allies, except in so far as concerns the supply of arms and equipment to the Russian armies..."[161]

The German offensive, launched on 28 June, greatly increased overall tension. Their attack fell on Red Army forces weakened by their spring offensives and rapidly drove eastward. Their objectives were to crush the Soviet forces, penetrate to the Volga, establish a hard shoulder, and overrun the resource rich Caucasus region. A rapid advance forced the Germans to grapple with problems of expanded space and divided aims which are now well known; in London, the advance made the questions of how to assist the Soviets or insure against their defeat very urgent. Three themes ran through Whitehall thought: a sincere desire to assist the Soviets, suspicion of their stamina and intentions, and fear of the effect of their demands on British grand strategy.

The first victim was the convoy route to Murmansk. In a move that sparked lasting controversy, Pound ordered convoy PQ 17 to scatter on 4 July as a reaction to the possibility that the **Tirpitz** might have sortied against it. The result was a catastrophe. Twenty three of the 34 merchant ships were sunk by aircraft and U-Boats. When the full extent of the disaster had been absorbed, Pound insisted that against the triple threat of surface vessels, aircraft and U-Boats, "he could not guarantee a single ship would get through." Churchill, who had been prepared to accept 50% losses, agreed. The DC(O) cancelled the next convoy. Stalin's angry reaction strengthened Whitehall's desire to find other ways to assist the Soviets, especially because it was clear that Moscow would respond even more violently to the news there would be no 1942 "Second Front." Several proposals emerged from the swirl of ideas, defined in an exchange of Churchill-Roosevelt telegrams from 29 to 31 July. The flow of supplies via Iran should be increased. Another PQ convoy should be run in September. JUPITER should be

prepared. An offer of squadrons to operate in the Caucasus should be organized. Finally, Churchill would go to Moscow to brief Stalin personally on the new Allied plans.[162]

The attempt to execute these ideas illustrated the limits Whitehall felt bound to observe in taking risks on the Soviets behalf. The Soviets refused to accept cuts in the Second Protocol, even to aid BOLERO. Roosevelt was determined to meet the Protocol, but the Pacific route was too qualified, the Murmansk run too dangerous, and the primitive infrastructure in Iran already strained by Wilson's expanding forces. Harriman suggested the U.S. Army take over the supply route and increase its capacity. This was agreed in principle in late August, but it would take time for American resources and expertise to have effect. There was also the issue of whether increased capacity should be devoted to Soviet aid or PAIQ Command needs. The British were forced to accept American help but did not want the CCS deciding such vital policy in a "British sphere." The needs of TORCH forced Cabinet to rule on 11 August that PQ convoys could not be resumed until TORCH and WS requirements were met.[163] The trends were familiar - British weakness forced them to accept unwanted help and place their own needs before assistance to the Soviets.

McNaughton's report on JUPITER emerged on 7 August.* In 233 pages it concluded that JUPITER would founder because of inadequate air support and that even the attempt would throw shipping co-ordination into confusion. The Prime Minister was advised that the operation should only be launched if it were politically imperative, a pointed warning the professionals would accept no responsibility.[164] The issue of co-operation in the Middle East was treated similarly. Cairo pressed for talks with the Soviets to concert plans and warned it could not hold off both Rommel and a northern threat without at least five divisions and 30 squadrons over and above scheduled reinforcements. The COS knew no such forces were available, but gave only perfunctory support to the plea for consultations. Sick of a steady diet of blunt impossible demands for supplies and invasions and Soviet fanning of popular agitation, they held little hope of a useful exchange of views. This was reinforced by a steady stream of warnings from

* *See above p.245*

British representatives in Moscow of the folly of unconditional aid. Nor did the fact that the COS were forced to rely on "Ultra" for information on the Eastern Front improve their view of Soviet benevolence.[165] Ironically, consensus was reached over the proposal to offer 17 to 20 squadrons as an expeditionary force for the Caucasus.

The DC(O) approved the plan, hoping to use it to spark better co-operation. The COS saw in it some potential benefits. It might turn attention away from the Arctic death run. It might help shield Iran. It would involve the Americans in the area and be a visible symbol of direct co-operation. There was one condition - the offer could not be unconditional, as this would risk diverting forces from Tedder that he might need to pursue victory in Egypt. Much to the COS delight, Churchill accepted this condition and told Roosevelt the offer could only be unconditional if the Americans provided most of the forces. Churchill made this categorical on 4 August, promising no forces would be taken from the "decisive effort" for a "minor role in the Caucasus."[166] In fact, Churchill and the COS reached a broad consensus over grand strategy and the Soviets through this plan, codenamed VELVET. Even though it was militarily and politically desirable to assist the Soviets, no one was willing to repeat the mistake of Greece and accept a new obligation before existing vital positions had been definitively secured. On this basis the COS supported Churchill's trip to Moscow, as an attempt to convince Stalin Allied grand strategy had been revised with the Soviets very much in mind.

Churchill hoped his visit to Moscow would establish a personal bond with Stalin which would lead to better overall co-operation. This desire brought up a perennial problem in his relations with the COS - the Prime Minister's tendency to depart from agreement on fundamentals and invest plans and intentions with a more optimistic and aggressive gloss than the COS considered wise. The discussions, codenamed BRACELET, took place in the Kremlin from 12 to 15 August. In what had become a familiar pattern in dealing with the Soviets, Stalin adopted an initially genial attitude but followed it up with harsh accusations of bad faith. Churchill almost walked out of the conference; Clark Kerr, Cripps successor as Ambassador, was able to dissuade him only by stressing the political repercussions of such a move.[167] Stalin and Churchill finally

did reach consensus, but the price was an excessively firm pledge of future specific offensive action.

The main issue was of course the "Second Front." Churchill was obliged by Roosevelt to give Stalin firm but general notice of TORCH, for which in return Roosevelt allowed Harriman to join the party to demonstrate Allied solidarity.[168] Through the ebb and flow of talks and Soviet mood swings, positions emerged. The Soviets insisted that the pledge given Molotov in June had been binding and that on that basis they had laid their own plans. Stalin taunted Churchill, insisting the British shied away from an early "Second Front" only because they were afraid to confront even the weak German forces in France. Stalin made it clear that he did not regard TORCH as a worthy substitute. Churchill foolishly allowed himself to be lured into an argument over current German dispositions, even though he knew full well that the real objection to cross-Channel attack was the perceived German ability to concentrate superior forces. Churchill and Brooke dismissed in sequence the complaints of Stalin and Voroshilov regarding the June pledge and the feasibility of a 1942 move. Churchill's violent reaction in particular seems to have cleared the air and made Stalin realize he had pushed as far as he dared. However, the united front broke down over the issue of future plans.

In an infamous metaphor, Churchill depicted TORCH in expansive terms as the creation of a base from which the Allies could threaten "the soft underbelly of Europe." Delighted by Stalin's receptiveness to joint study of VELVET and JUPITER, Churchill expanded his theme to depict TORCH as the means to pave the way for ROUNDUP, described as the firm apex of Allied plans. TORCH would force the Germans to stretch their forces by increasing their commitment in southern Europe, to fill the vacuum that would be created by pressure on Vichy and Italy. TORCH was thus specifically linked to ROUNDUP in the thesis that it would allow the Allies to increase pressure on the Germans enough to make strategic offensive possible in 1943. Brooke was not present when this vision was advanced and would go no further than agreeing to launch ROUNDUP "as early as possible."[169] On his return to London Churchill told Cabinet that a solid new basis of co-operation, based on personal confidence and a grand strategic consensus, had been achieved. Stalin had assured him the Soviets would fight on and

accepted the merits of the TORCH decision. Cadogan agreed that Churchill had improved personal relations and put across the difficult "Second Front" case.[170] This was excessively optimistic. The root issue was still mutual trust. The Soviets still considered Allied explanations of the strategic problems facing SLEDGEHAMMER and the PQ convoys evidence of sinister indifference to the Eastern Front. The British felt Stalin wilfully misunderstood these explanations and remained haunted by the spectre of again being left to fight on alone by a Bolshevik government. To make matters worse, Churchill and Brooke left Moscow with different perceptions of Soviet prospects.

Churchill accepted Stalin's assurance the Caucasus would be held. Brooke and Tedder noted few signs of prepared defence when they flew over the area. This combined with Soviet reluctance to offer information on their position confirmed their predisposition not to rely on Soviet survival more than was necessary. Even Brooke's impression that Churchill's fiery riposte to Stalin had done much good indicated the prevalent Staff belief that the only way to deal with the Soviets was to return truculence in kind. Brooke considered unconditional aid folly. He also continued to view the German advance through the prism of a threat to British positions.[171] The COS remained more concerned with insuring against Soviet defeat than taking risks to prevent it which they felt Allied weakness did not justify. Their attitude was coloured by prejudice but it was basically a military decision. Churchill leaned to optimism by nature and from his wider perspective saw the need to be receptive to coalition pressures. The COS agreed with his construction of what TORCH might lead to and how desirable ROUNDUP was; but they went no further than wanting to do it if the situation allowed. To Brooke the most important task of his journey had been the command shuffle in Cairo, not the Moscow showdown.[172] This clear signal of COS priorities augured future trouble at the coalition level if TORCH failed to fulfil all Churchill's hopes.

The long months of rancorous debate culminating with Churchill's rash pledge in Moscow made two things clear: operations across the Channel were now a fixed factor in Allied grand strategy; the COS, however, were still determined to secure vital positions first and would agree to continental operations only within the "wear down"

framework. Two developments, immediate action across the Channel and the attempt to redefine the "Second Front" within "wear down," best illustrate this. No sole or even dominant factor but rather a combination of pressures made a cross-Channel move in 1942 almost unavoidable. Public opinion insisted on action to assist the Soviets. Politically, Churchill was in no position to ignore it. The Soviets and the Americans pressed in the same direction. The Germans expected some sort of Allied assault. As early as March Hitler ordered special attention be paid to port defences, fearing a bridgehead attempt. The U.K. rumour mill flourished. It was obvious that the limits of RAF range and weather would force any assault to be made somewhere between Calais and Brittany sometime before October. The Germans progressively increased their alertness on this basis alone.[173] The only mysteries left were the form, scale, timing and target of the operation.

The interaction of several factors produced answers to these questions. The COS could not ignore pressure for cross-Channel action but were seriously distracted by current overseas priorities. They all agreed some form of "Second Front" must eventually be launched. Therefore, a smaller scale rehearsal was considered a military necessity, in order to ascertain strengths and weaknesses in doctrine, equipment and methods and gain some active experience for Home Forces. Strategic thought and bureaucratic jockeying drifted towards a large raid as the solution to all problems. Mountbatten had the initiative with his preparation of RUTTER, the proposed raid on Dieppe. Action emerged from his interaction with the COS and the noted broader context. From late June there were two decisive factors. Combined Operations desperately needed an operation to establish its credibility and entrench its role. The COS wanted to restrict both action and Mountbatten's influence but dared not scuttle his plan categorically. Mountbatten fought hard for RUTTER against several obstacles, including nervous hesitation on Churchill's part. This obstacle was overcome when on 30 June Brooke insisted that he considered some sort of rehearsal before a decisive invasion tactically imperative.[174] That meant that if a move had to be made in 1942 for whatever reason it would be RUTTER, the only option left.

Poor weather made RUTTER the latest in a long series of cancellations on 6 July, but Combined Operations could not afford to let another project die. Mountbatten exploited the fact that the COS needed something available at short notice as the SLEDGEHAMMER debate neared its crisis. Mountbatten's hand was strengthened because the Canadians were involved, and for reasons similar to his own, were equally unwilling to face further inaction. On 6 July Mountbatten persuaded the COS to allow him to consider reviving the plan and reassembling the force at a later date. From 17 July Mountbatten launched a determined effort to have the operation remounted as JUBILEE, on terms that would have left him in executive authority and cut out the Commanders-in-Chief. It cannot be conclusively established that duly constituted authority approved the specific execution of JUBILEE. It can be established that the COS: 1) saw through and blocked Mountbatten's ploy regarding executive authority; 2) approved the assembly of JUBILEE and actively considered it within the planning matrix; 3) never ensured the operation was properly connected to the multiple security, support and covering procedures necessary to bring U.K. based forces to action in properly co-ordinated fashion. Brian Villa's specific argument that Mountbatten exploited the conjunction of pressures to launch JUBILEE without final authority, even though the "rolling seminar" was well aware the operation was at hand, was convincing.[175]

There is abundant evidence that the "rolling seminar" went quite far in acquiescing to the preparation of a large raid. The COS dismissed complaints by the ROUNDUP planners on 4 August that their preparations were seriously in arrears because Combined Operations had assembled landing craft and crews for early action.[176] But the really vital evidence came from a higher plane. On 29 July Churchill told Roosevelt he would brief Stalin on "plans for commando raids." During BRACELET, on both 12 and 15 August Churchill gave what amounted to a promise to stage a large raid, unmistakably referring to JUBILEE - a reconnaissance in force by 8,000 men and 50 tanks, to land, stay for a day and a night, wreak havoc, pose as the invasion, and "most important ... call forth a big air battle."[177] These commitments clearly tied the JUBILEE concept to the grand strategic debate. Before the TORCH decision Churchill and the COS had to let preparations proceed because it seemed certain

some ready operation would be necessary to address coalition pressures. However, after the decision they kept JUBILEE alive in case it became clear that this was still necessary, but resisted Mountbatten's attempts to implement it in hopes it would no longer be needed. This was a forlorn hope, but Mountbatten clearly used the prevailing confusion to jump the gun. The arguments that the raid was executed merely to appease either the Soviets or popular pressure are monocausal. The accusations that JUBILEE was a deliberate sacrifice to demonstrate the impossibility of a "Second Front" or cover Allied deception ploys are pathetic.[178]

The story of the Dieppe raid is familiar enough to allow focus here only on its grand strategic aspects. The real question is not "how did Dieppe happen" but rather "how could something like JUBILEE not have happened?" Action was essential, given the pressure cooker of the strategic debate. Strategically, Mountbatten had the planning initiative and only JUBILEE met all needs. Tactically, failure at Dieppe sparked post-facto wisdom. Nobody expected ordinary German troops, even in fortified positions, to cut 2nd Canadian Division to pieces. There is no evidence to the contrary. There is, of course, abundant evidence that this confirmed prevailing views of the folly of continental operations before the Germans had "cracked"; any event which confirmed the very core of grand strategic assumptions would naturally have been cited as such. The tactics used at Dieppe were in line with current doctrine. But defeat was a nasty surprise which quickly led to anger on the COS, especially when it became clear even the long desired air battle had been a German success. Mountbatten's first report on 20 August made it clear that this was a fiasco, not a sacrifice. The report advised that the lesson of the operation seemed to be that the real problem of cross-Channel assault would be pushing into the interior and building up enough force to hold the position.[179] Brooke did not need a disaster to illustrate what he had been saying for six months. JUBILEE turned out as it did partly because the Imperial Army was still incapable, for many reasons, of bringing about a successful battle on the continent. It came about, however, because the desire to meet a spectrum of pressures and still retain "wear down" led to an operation that slipped through the cracks, not one ruthlessly calculated to demonstrate its validity.

JUBILEE was a pathetic legacy of six months of internal and coalition private and public debate over whether grand strategy should be revised on the basis of a concerted effort to seize the initiative. Nobody emerged from this tense period with unalloyed credit or blame except the objective facts of relative power. All three Allies deliberately put their own interpretation on the loose ambiguous decisions of April to June because they were desperate men buying time in the hope events would drift in their favour. The confusion stemmed from the intangibles - political furore, changing margins of power, American ambitions. National outcry made Churchill more eager than ever for offensive action. The COS remained convinced that such action was militarily unsafe. They were especially certain the Army could not return to the continent until the Germans had visibly weakened. London found that consensus on this, the core assumption of "wear down," remained strong enough to offset American pressure. The JCS insistence that their concentration policy be adopted was strategically premature. Brooke and Marshall would have found consensus on the basis of settling for existing efforts in 1942 and organizing a concentration in the U.K. which left both their main aims in play for 1943. Roosevelt and Churchill overruled them because it seemed politically imperative to knit the coalition together by launching a new campaign in 1942. It is ridiculous to quibble over whether the "political" or "military" stance was correct. There were elements of both in all positions, as there always were at the grand strategic level. What is clear is that the British were caught most acutely in the clash between perceptions. The Axis retained the strategic initiative but the Allies were becoming strong enough to consider how to wrest it away. TORCH was the wise decision, but the nature of its adoption increased JCS suspicion of British probity. The fact that they themselves were more to blame, for their premature attempt to seize control of grand strategy, was irrelevant. Perceptions of changing power exerted powerful influence. The Americans saw their growing power opening up new options. The British saw it as a means to at last clear up existing problems. The jockeying for position, the political override and the different perception of power prospects broke the eclectic CCS consensus and set coalition thought adrift.[180]

The clearest example of the emergent co-existence of continuity and change in Allied strategic thought was the resulting redefinition of the "Second Front." In this respect, the convergence of pressures had three main results: the first serious steps were taken to organize U.K. forces for offensive action; the vision of "final phase" operations evolved; but it evolved within a revised but intact "wear down" framework. Seen from this further perspective, it is clear that by August 1942 Whitehall was committed to concrete steps to prepare for a specific strategic offensive but insisted it remain within a redefined "wear down" outline, contingent on its success. The early tinkering with departing from the defensive shell for U.K. based forces accelerated in spring 1942. On 17 April the term "Second Front" appeared in COS minutes. In May SOE received a formal directive to concentrate on efforts to assist amphibious invasion. Churchill put the issue of plans for continental operations on his roster of regularly solicited reports. On 11 June Cabinet confirmed the reservation of 21 divisions for ROUNDUP. The administrative reorganization of BOLERO accelerated. ROUNDUP became a factor in COS discussions of overseas deployment. De Gaulle insisted the Free French be included in all plans and preparations, an unwanted reminder to Whitehall that French problems remained close to the surface.[181] All this activity contributed to the emerging redefinition of the concept: how to reconcile the American vision of ROUNDUP with the prevailing concept of "final phase igniter assaults."

The vision of concentrated conventional advance now confronted the theme of widespread non-linear forays. Here as well, two perceptions of relative power prospects collided. Serious study began with a redefinition of ROUNDUP accepted by the COS on 27 May:

> " ...implies a return to the Continent against substantial German opposition and the subsequent defeat of the German Army on land."[182]

This assumption challenged the founding concept of "wear down," distilled in 1940 and painfully confirmed since - do not challenge an unweakened German Army anywhere it could in theory concentrate in force. Not surprisingly, this sparked a thorough review of strategic assumptions. Brooke considered the eventual appointment of a Supreme Commander essential, on its own merits and to solicit American support. But he resisted

the move, considering it would be the vital step which would create a vested interest to propel ROUNDUP forward.[183] A turning point was reached in June, when planners realized that whatever action ensued in 1942 would affect prospects for 1943. Churchill now felt that although widespread armoured invasions were the best initial step, they must lead to a new strategy. After bold penetration into the interior, relying on "sudden violence," SOE ignited uprisings, RAF support, and deception measures, a consolidated bridgehead should then lead to:

> " ...the further course of the campaign may follow the normal and conventional lines of organization and supply. It then becomes a matter of reinforcement and concerted movement. Fronts will have developed and orderly progress will be possible."[184]

This was an attempt to synthesize the weakness of "igniter" assaults and the power of ROUNDUP. As often happened, Staff thought was in similar motion. Brooke felt the problem would be to link widespread bridgeheads into a "cohesive front" and then reinforce faster than the enemy. On 17 June the Combined Commanders submitted the first draft outline plan for the invasion phase of ROUNDUP. The objective was to secure a bridgehead with port and air base facilities, from which a campaign could be launched to destroy the German forces in northwest Europe in 1943. Simultaneous assaults in the Calais-Seine area and the Cherbourg peninsula by a total of six divisions, covered by concentrated airpower, would stretch the Germans but allow the Allies to consolidate in the latter area. But this could only be risked if the Germans had suffered a setback in Russia and a general deterioration in morale.[185]

Two concepts were now in play. The old "igniter" concept assumed a disorganized but still dangerous enemy, to be attacked by widespread mobile assaults relying on speed and chaos. As the power needed for conventional buildup was not expected to be available, dispersal had to be made an asset. The new concept was a concentrated assault and conventional buildup, to destroy an unbeaten enemy in the field. The prospect of American participation fostered optimism. The lingering fear of relative weakness and feeble combat power fostered caution. The result was a curious hybrid which envisaged the power drive of ROUNDUP based on the prerequisites and initial "igniter" strategy of "wear down." This hybrid rapidly became an active factor in

attempts to redefine grand strategy and sparked a closer look at how British forces might fare on the continent. The commitment of 21 divisions meant the deployment of the Army's strongest and last mass of power in the most dangerous area possible. Brooke realized this would be the most crucial military decision of the war for Britain. The Army had always been slated to return to the continent; the issue was under what conditions. Understandably, the Army had been organized to perform the tasks that had arisen: defend the U.K. and fight overseas. There had not been time or resources to do more than lay out paper plans, exercise along experimental lines, and revise plans and training postures. Taking stock in July, Brooke considered the Army unprepared in every respect for a continental campaign. A sensible reorganization of some divisions into "new model" establishments - more infantry and less tail in armoured divisions, more armour in infantry divisions - and a comb out of static defensive and miscellaneous formations was far from complete. The target of 22 divisions, 15 U.K. units, could be met; but that would be the limit. The remaining 15, only seven fully capable of offensive action, would be the last global pool. The COS had agreed on 27 May that Home Forces training should now become entirely offensive and to preserve the ROUNDUP pool, although defence remained operational priority. Brooke envisaged the creation of a separate Expeditionary Force and command from within Home Forces when the time was ripe.[186]

Portal came to similar conclusions regarding the RAF. His inclination was to retain function based commands but shift Fighter Command to an offensive focus, to ensure:

> "...the existing organization as adapted above* shall project itself over the Continent."

Shipping constraints, logistics and strategic priorities ensured that the main combat power of the RAF remained in the U.K. But a drain caused by the need to succour overseas commands and shortfalls in American supply left it well short of predicted strength. While there were 178 active squadrons of all types in the U.K. by July, there should have been 213.[187] Brooke and Portal saw their respective forces as having fallen

* *See below, p.317*

between two stools - too weak to succeed in intermediate operations overseas, too weak to launch a strategic offensive from home. These practical considerations set limits to the momentum building for cross-Channel operations. These limits were rooted in the belief that the Germans could divert enough forces from their main effort to crush any Allied foray into France, a belief strengthened by events since April.[188] In this context TORCH swallowed up resources slated for ROUNDUP. On 28 August the COS accepted the need to make changes. SLEDGEHAMMER would live only on paper. ROUNDUP would be the long term focus but all preparations would have to start anew as its resources drifted to TORCH, and it would be tied to the "wear down" prerequisite.[189] The decisive factor was that TORCH had a responsible commander specifically charged to carry out the operation at a set time. There was no countervailing force for ROUNDUP. It had definitely become a concrete factor but had also slipped to a residuary legatee. This situation would prevail until the COS decided that the time was ripe to crown now more serious preparations by charging them to a specific authority.

The ebb and flow of the war through the spring and summer of 1942 did not conceal from Whitehall one vital point: Imperial armed forces seemed unable to execute successfully the cautious vision of grand strategy so laboriously defined. Setbacks overseas brought the government to the political point of no return, ruptured Imperial unity, and coloured the "rolling seminar's" approach to the attempt to flesh out the ARCADIA outline. The emergence of a new focus in Allied debate sparked a serious dispute over both fundamental and current grand strategic approach. It was channelled by a diktat from the summit, but precise definition, and the full consequences of the clash, remained uncertain. Another difference of emphasis had also emerged inside, between Churchill and the COS. However, once again the existence of a prevailing body of agreed basic assumptions enabled the British to forge a consensus on fundamentals.

ROUNDUP became the focus of plans and administrative change. Allied forces would continue to flow to the U.K. But they would not sortie until "wear down" had clearly begun to succeed. That aim would be pursued in 1942 through existing

campaigns plus TORCH. This new outline reflected the basic Allied situation. Whitehall considered the Soviets an integral - indispensable - part of "wear down," and agreed that ROUNDUP must be the stroke that offered them succour. But they also insisted that relative Allied weakness meant it could not go until the approach that relied on the Red Army as the "grinding agent" had already succeeded! Britain had more power deployed, so its current agenda triumphed. But the U.S. had more potential power being mobilized, so its long term agenda remained operative. It was only potentially true that the Americans' own weakness had forced them to conform to British priorities. This was a grand strategy extended by default.

To underline the point, Churchill had every intention of escalating the offensive; he saw TORCH as the beginning of a new phase, not the end of an old one. The COS did not rule out this prospect but never lost sight of the central fact: the Army did not seem to be able to risk a return to the continent before a visible decline in German power.[190] This clarity of perception did not extend beyond fundamentals, nor could it have. The whole course of Allied debate had already raised two more very serious broad issues: exactly what British structure was capable of putting forth and how this affected grand strategy, and on what terms the Allied war effort would be integrated in practice. These pressures combined with problems in other seminal campaigns to emphasize - as will be seen below - a point the "Second Front" debate had already raised. Whitehall still saw "wear down" as indispensable. But if British power could not make it a success, where would that leave the U.K. if coalition pressures forced a turn to a bolder approach? To this question destined to become the national dilemma, no definitive answer had yet emerged.

Endnotes to Chapter 4

1. American cryptographers had broken and were reading Japanese naval and diplomatic cyphers for quite some time. This had helped warn of Japanese intentions in 1941, although the Pearl Harbour attack had not been tipped off. The great expanse of operations forced the Japanese to increase traffic complacently considered secure. Effective circulation of intercepts proved decisive in American deployment and operations. See Lewin, R., "A Signal Intelligence," ICH, vol.16, #3, 1981, 505.

2. Trevor-Roper, #40 "Competence of Commanders in Coastal Areas," 23/3/42; #41 "Spring Campaign in the East," 5/4/42.

3. Erickson, 338-342.

4. Nicolson, N. (Edit.) The Diaries and Letters of Harold Nicolson 1939-1945, New York, 1967, 11/12/41 entry, 196, 27-29/1/42 entries, 207-209; Lee, 42; PRO, CAB65/25, War Cabinet minutes, 22/1/42; Thompson, G.M., Vote of Censure, London, 1968, 98; Churchill, W.S., The Hinge of Fate, Boston, 1950, 57-62.

5. PT, vol.5, Churchill-Auchinleck telegrams, 25-28/1/42.

6. PT, vol.1, Churchill-Wavell, 64733, 10/2/42; Kimball, vol.1, C-27, 11/2/42.

7. PRO, CAB65/25, War Cabinet minutes, 16/2/42; Nicolson, 12/2/42 entry, 211; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/V, 2/2/42 entry and retrospect; PRO, CAB69/4, DO (42) 17, 16/2/42.

8. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/V, 11/2/42 entry, 18/2/42 entry and retrospect; Pownall Papers, 25/2/42 note and notes on ABDA command, n/d; Kennedy, The Business of War, 198; Nicolson, 27/2/42 entry, 214; Gilbert, M., Road to Victory, London, 1986, 59.

9. Addison, 190.

10. Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 66-71; HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D83, Cripps to Churchill, 29/1/42; Bullock, 153-154; D83, "Suggested Alternative Scheme," 3/2/42, Beaverbrook to Jacob, 4/2/42; Harris, K. Attlee, London, 1982, 194.

11. See for instance HLRO Beaverbrook Papers, D82, Beaverbrook-Churchill correspondence, 18-22/12/41. The comment "Committees take the punch out of war" perfectly illustrated Beaverbrook's style.

12. HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D419, Beaverbrook to Churchill, 18/2/42.

13. See for instance LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/V, 28/1, 19/2/42 entries; Bullock, 153-155; Gorodetsky, 295.

14. Thompson, 144-149; CCA, Hankey Papers, 4/34, Hankey to Hoare, 12/3, Kennedy to Hankey, 27/3, Hankey-Ismay correspondence, 31/3-2/4, Hankey to Chatfield, 2/4, letter to The Times, 4/4, notes 9/4/42; PRO, PREM 3/119/7,Amery to Churchill, 9/4, 10/4/42; Kennedy, The Business of War, 229. Kennedy's retrospective account was at odds with his contemporary exchanges with Hankey.

15. CCA, Hankey Papers, 4/34, Hankey to Chatfield, 19/3, Hankey to Hill, 29/4, Hankey to Page, 10/3/42. It is perhaps risky to cite Hankey's links to "The Club" and Churchill's to the "Other Club" as a peripheral factor, but such was the social milieu in which government functioned.

16. PRO, PREM 3/119/4, Churchill-Ismay correspondence 25/3-1/4/42; 119/9, Churchill-Barrington-Ward correspondence, 14-22/4, uncirculated proof of Hankey paper labelled WP (42)168, Ismay draft White Paper 14/4, notes of House of Lords debate 5/42; CAB 65/26, War Cabinet minutes, 20/4/42. Curiously, there is a closed file in CAB66/23 where Hankey's paper would have been filed. The White Paper was published as Cmd. 6351, an indication of how seriously criticism was taken. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/V, retrospective notes on 2/42 political crisis.

17. CCA, Hankey Papers, 1/7, diary entry, 19/5/42.

18. Addison, 195; Thompson, 183-212; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 342-355; Churchill's brief account of the heated spring controversy over the "Great General Staff", 78-79, is incomplete; Nicolson, 1-2/7/42 entries, 231-232; Harris, 198-199; Bullock, 177; HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D420, Churchill to Beaverbrook, 14/6/42; D90, handwritten notes, n/d, Cripps and political crisis; Lyttelton, The Memoirs of Lord Chandos, London, 1962, 312-315.

19. PRO, CAB80/33, COS(42) 41, 22/1/42; CAB65/25, War Cabinet minutes, 22/1, 26/1, 2/2/42; CAB79/18, COS minutes, 20/2/42; Kimball, vol.1, R-78, 30/1/42; CCA, Hickleton Papers, A4/410/4.15, Halifax to Eden, 23/4/42.

20. Horner, 159-160, 175.

21. Horner, 189-191; Kimball, vol.1, R-106, 18/2, R-108, 21/2/42; PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 17/2, 17/3/42; CAB65/29, War Cabinet minutes, 9/3/42.

22. LHCMA, Brooke Papers 3A/V, retrospective note on Australians, 2/42; PRO, CAB65/29, War Cabinet minutes, 25/2; CAB80/33, COS (42) 62, 29/1/42. British irritation at Australian demands to decide the use of Australian divisions

emanates through the prophylactic phraseology in revealing strength. Kimball, vol.1, C-37, 5/3, R-113, 7/3/42; PRO, CAB79/20, COS minutes, 28/4; 79/56 COS minutes, 12/5, 28/5/42; CAB65/30, War Cabinet minutes, 21/5,22/6/42; CAB88/1, COS minutes, 10/6/42; PT, vol.6, JSM 270,13/6/42; CCA, Hankey Papers, 1/7,31/8/42 entry; Horner, 223, 436-438.

23. Moore, R.J., Churchill, Cripps and India 1939-1945, London, 1979, 71-74; PRO, CAB65/25, War Cabinet minutes, 5/2, 4/3, 7/3, 9/3/42.

24. Moore, 75; CCA, P.J. Grigg Papers, 8/4/29, Grigg-Linlithgow, 2/42, Linlithgow-Amery, 13/2, Linlithgow-Churchill 14/2/42.

25. PRO, CAB65/26, War Cabinet minutes, 2/4, 6/4/42; CAB66/26, WP(42)283, 6/7/42; Moore, 96-120.

26. PRO, CAB65/27, War Cabinet minutes, 13/7, 29/7, 6/8,17/8, 31/8/42.

27. PT, vol.5, Wavell-WO, 23/1/42; PRO, CAB65/25, War Cabinet minutes, 5/2/42.

28. Kimball, vol.1, C-34, 4/3/42; PRO, CAB66/26, WP(42)318, 27/7/42; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 177-190.

29. For example, PRO, WO212/358, Order of Battle, India, 5/42; CAB79/20, COS minutes, 1/4/42; Allen, L. Burma: The Longest War, London, 1984, 93.

30. Balfour, 285; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 477; PRO, CAB66/26, WP(42)298, 17/7/42; Addison, 206-207.

31. PRO, CAB66/26, WP(42)297, 18/7/42; PREM3/119/7, Cripps to Churchill, 30/7/42; Addison, 206-207. The rebuttal in The Hinge of Fate, 480-483, is a convincing argument for the unification of advice and responsibility in the Whitehall context.

32. Butler, vol.III, 611.

33. Burridge, British Labour and Hitler's War, London, 1976, 78, was the best discussion on this point.

34. PRO, PREM3/499/9, Attlee to Churchill, 10/7/42; Harris, 199, 585-588. Harris, the sponsored biographer, understated Attlee's anxiety but recognized the importance of the paper by including it as an appendix.

35. PRO, PREM3/499/9, Churchill to Attlee, 29/7/42.

36. Kitchen, 100-102.

37. PRO, CAB65/29, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annexes, 6/2,25/2, 25/3/42; 65/30, 7/4/42; Ross, G. The Foreign Office and the Kremlin, Cambridge, 1984, 21.

38. PRO, CAB65/30, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 4/5, 25/5; CCA, Hickleton Papers, A4/410/4.15, Halifax to Eden, 23/4, reply 27/4/42.

39. HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D96, "Controversy of Russia," 28/2, notes on Margesson and Anderson comments, 2/3, "Policy over Russia," 25/3/42, D247, Beaverbrook to Eden 3/3/42; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 7/3/42.

40. HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D96, "Controversy of Russia," 28/2/42; D240, Beaverbrook to Churchill, 1-2/3, 17/3/42. Churchill's account in The Hinge of Fate, 66, of his link to Beaverbrook is essential; his silence on the failed attempt to distract Beaverbrook in the U.S. and the later "Second Front Now" agitation can be explained therein.

41. HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D96, "Controversy of Russia," 28/2, notes on Margesson and Anderson comments, 2/3, "Policy over Russia," 25/3/42, D247, Beaverbrook to Eden, 3/3/42; Taylor, A.J.P. Beaverbrook, London, 1972, 515-520; Moran, Lord Churchill, Boston, 1966, 33.

42. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/V, 30/1/42, diary entry, retrospective on supply policy 2/42; PRO, CAB65/29, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 25/2/42; CAB79/56, COS minutes, 25/3/42.

43. Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 224-226; Roskill, vol.2, 130; PRO, CAB79/18, COS minutes, 27/2, 79/20, 1/4, 10/4/42; HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D420, Churchill to Beaverbrook, 27/2/42; D427, Beaverbrook to Eden, 8/3/42.

44. PRO, CAB65/30, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 15/4/42.

45. PRO, CAB65/26, War Cabinet minutes, 20/4/42; 65/30, confidential annex, 24/4, 18/5/42; CAB79/21, COS minutes, 15/5/42; Kimball, vol.1, R-141, 26/4, C-80, 28/4, R-143, 29/4, C-85, 1/5; PT, vol.6, JSM190, 18/4, COS(W)136, 20/4, COS (W)168, 2/5/42; Beaumont, J. Comrades in Arms, 94-99.

46. Leighton & Coakley, 223-226; Kimball, vol.1, 397.

47. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 16/3, 23/3/42; Matloff & Snell, 141, 147-158, 161, 177, 181-183; Steele, 92, 102-106; Morison, The Two Ocean War, 13; Stoler, M.A. The Politics of the Second Front, Westport, CN, 1977, 30.

48. BL, Cunningham Papers, 52561, Pound to Cunningham, 28/1/42; Kimball, vol.1, R-79, 30/1/42; Danchev, A. Very Special Relationship, London, 1986, 6, 11-16,21, 135; PT, vol.6, COS(W)38, 6/2/42.

49. PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 23/1, 3/2, 10/2/42; CAB65/25, War Cabinet minutes, 26/1; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/V, 22/2/42 entry, retrospective 9/2/42; PT, vol.6, Dill-COS, 2/2, COS(W)35, 5/2, COS(W)41, 9/2/42.

50. PRO, CAB79/18, COS minutes, 18/2,20/2, 23/2/42; CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 23/2, 3/3, 17/3, 24/3/42; PT, vol.6, COS(W)76, 23/2, JSM50, 18/2, Dill-COS, 21/2/42; Kimball, vol.1, R-115,9/3/42; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 9/3/42.

51. Kimball, vol.1, C-46,17/3/42; PRO, CAB79/22, COS minutes, 3/4/42.

52. PT, vol.6, JSM32, 6/2, COS(W)102, 4/3/42; PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 10/2, 24/3/42; CAB79/87, COS minutes, Secretary's Standard File, 11/3/42. Ismay's retrospective contention, Ismay, 245, that the smaller Allies were not frozen out of central forums, is preposterous.

53. PRO, CAB88/50, CCS papers, CPS note, 26/3/42; 88/1, CCS minutes, 24/3/42; CAB79/19, COS minutes, 5/3/42; Kimball, vol.1, R-115, 9/3, R-129, 1/4/42.

54. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 21/1, 20/2/42; 79/20, 25/3, JIC(42)94, 30/3/42; 79/18, 18/2/42; PT, vol.2, Wavell-COS, 4/4, 12/4, 14/4, Wavell-Brooke, 28/5/42.

55. CCA, Somerville Papers, 8/1, Somerville to Pound, 2/3, 11/3/42; PT, vol.1, Somerville-Pound, 16/2/42; Roskill, vol.2, 23; PRO, CAB79/19, COS minutes, 9/3, 16/3/42; PT, vol.2, Wavell-COS, 11/3, 15/3, COS(I)42, 19/3, Admiralty to Somerville, 18/3/42.

56. PT, vol.2, Somerville-Admiralty, 10/4, 11/4, Wavell-COS, 14/3/42; vol.1, Wavell-COS, 22/2/42; Roskill, vol.2, 29; LHCMA, Pownall Papers, 13/1/42 diary entry; PT, vol.2, Somerville-Wavell, 6/3, Wavell-Brooke, 8/4/42. See Appendix C.

57. PT, vol.5, Auchinleck-Churchill, 30/1, 7/2, Churchill-Auchinleck, 26/2/42; PRO, CAB79/18, COS minutes, 20/2, 24/2/42.

58. PT, vol.5, Auchinleck-Churchill, 27/2; PRO, CAB80/61, COS (42)55(0), 1/3/42; CAB 69/4, DC(O) minutes, 2/3/42.

59. PRO, CAB79/19, COS minutes, 2/3/42; CAB65/29, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 25/2/42; CAB69/4, DC(O) minutes, 20/3, 22/3, 26/3/42; PT, vol.5, COS(ME)241, 3/3/42; Hinsley, vol.2, 350-351; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/V, 30/1/42 entry and retrospective; BL, Cunningham Papers, 52561, Cunningham to Pound, 19/3/42; PT, vol.4, C's in C Mediterranean-COS, CC/21, 15/4/42; CCCA, Portal Papers, 7/11, Portal to Douglas, 29/3/42.

60. PRO, CAB69/4, DC(O) minutes, 22/4/42; CAB79/56, COS minutes, 8/5/42; CAB65/30, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 8/5, 10/5/42; PT, vol.5, Churchill-Auchinleck, 30/4, 8/5, Auchinleck-COS, CC/36, 6/5/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/V, 8-10/5/42 entries; Hinsley, vol.2, 364; PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 10/5/42; PT, vol.5, Auchinleck-Churchill, 19/5/42.

61. PT, vol.2, Wavell-COS,27/3, 28/4, Wavell-Churchill, 27/4, 2/5, Churchill-Wavell, 19/4, 30/4, 5/5/42.

62. PT, vol.5 Auchinleck-COS, CC/48, 19/5, Auchinleck- Brooke, 30/5, 31/5, 1/6, 2/6, 6/6, 7/6, 11/6, 13/6, 14//42; Pitt, B. The Crucible of War, vol.2, London, 1982, 63; Jackson, 194; Hinsley, vol.2, 369, 383,727; PT, vol.5, Tedder-Portal, 27/5, 1/6, Auchinleck-COS, CC/48, 19/5, Auchinleck-Brooke, 11/6/42; Bennett, 112.

63. PT, vol.4, Cunningham-Admiralty, 25/5/42; Roskill, vol.2, 46; PRO, PREM3/284/9, Jacob to Churchill, 14/3, 14/5/42; WO216/425, Eighth Army Order of Battle, 28/5/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/V, 28/5/42 entry.

64. PT, vol.4, Auchinleck-COS, CC/35, 3/5, Churchill-Auchinleck, 4/5/42; vol.5, Churchill-Auchinleck, 20/5, Auchinleck-Churchill, 22/5/42; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 271-272.

65. PRO, CAB80/62, COS(42)87(O), 4/4/42; CAB79/56, COS minutes, 8/6/42; Callahan, R. The Worst Disaster, Newark, 1977, 257.

66. PRO, CAB79/17, COS minutes, 31/1/42; 79/18, 6/2/42; 79/87, Secretary's Standard File 12/3/42; CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 23/1, 27/1, 20/3/42.

67. PRO, CAB79/20, COS minutes, 1/4, 7/4, 15/4/42; 79/56, 13/3, 22/4, 23/4, 24/4/42; CAB65/30, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 24/4, 27/4/42; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 196-207; Kimball, vol.1, C-44, 14/3, R-119, 16/3/42.

68. PT, vol.2, Somerville-Admiralty, 28/5, 7/6; Roskill, vol.2, 33. Somerville tried to bribe the Admiralty into reconsidering diverting his carriers for the Malta convoy, by offering action, but to no avail.

69. PRO, CAB79/18, COS minutes, 2/3/42.

70. PRO, CAB79/87, COS minutes, Secretary's Standard File, 16/3/42; CAB65.25, War Cabinet minutes, 2/2/42; 65/29, confidential annex, 29/1/42; PT, vol.2, Churchill-Wavell, 27/3, 19/4, COS(I)50, 16/4/42; UW, JCS Papers, Pacific, Reel 14, JIC 12, 21/4/42.

71. PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 27/1, 23/2, 17/3/42; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 16/3/42.

72. PRO, CAB79/18, COS minutes, 9/2/42; CAB69/4, DO(42)16, 15/2/42; CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 17/2/42; UW, JCS Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 6, JPS 16/1, 25/3, CMT 14, 13/4/42.

73. PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 10/3/42; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel, 1, minutes, 7/3/42.

74. PRO, CAB79/20, COS minutes, JIC(42)75, 17/3, 4/4, JIC(42)152, 27/4/42; PT, vol.2, COS-Auchinleck, Wavell, 23/4/42; CAB80/61, COS(42)71(O), 21/3/42; Fraser, And We Shall Shock Them, 276.

75. PRO, PREM3/119/6, Churchill-Pound correspondence, 4-7/3/42; LHCMA Brooke Papers, 3A/V, 7/3, 8/3/42 entries; Villa, 170-172. Villa offered the plausible argument that Mountbatten's appointment was also meant to appease Beaverbrook, who considered him a protege. "Above the line" referred to placement on the attendance roster and awarded a member the right to table issues without solicitation. Those below the line often present at Cabinet, COS, or other committees were termed "constant attenders," and had no full say in the consensus conclusions.

76. PRO, CAB79/17, COS minutes, 2/1, 21/1, 25/1/42; CAB79/18, 13/2/42; CAB84/4, JPS minutes, 5/1, 4/2/42.

77. PRO, CAB79/19, COS minutes, 5/3, 10/3/42, 79/87, Secretary's Standard File, 10/3/42; Gwyer, vol.III, 568.

78. PRO, CAB79/20, COS minutes, 30/3/42; HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D240, Beaverbrook-Churchill, 17/3/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/V, 10/3, 29/3/42, diary entries; Taylor, 523-529.

79. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 13/3/42; CCCA, Portal papers, 7/10, Douglas to Portal, 22/3/42.

80. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 17/3, 21/3, 79/20. 21/3/42; CCCA, Portal Papers, 7/10, Portal to Douglas, 22/3/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/V, 6/3/42, diary entry.

81. PRO, CAB80/34, COS(42)126, 21/2/42; CAB79/20, COS minutes, 21/3, 24/3/42; 79/56, 28/3/42; CAB80/62, COS(42)77(O), 27/3/42.

82. PRO, CAB80/62, COS(42)79(0), 30/3, COS(42)92(0),7/4/42; CAB79/56, COS minutes, 8/4/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/V, 8/4/42 diary entry.

83. PRO, CAB79/20, COS minutes, 6/4/42; PT, vol.6, COS(W)144, 6/4/42. This telegram was actually in response to JSM notification of the Eisenhower proposal and their own reaction. The COS pointed out that preparations for 1943 offensives should not prevent doing something "however small, this summer," a cryptic point of great importance when smoked out in the subsequent Anglo-American debate. Marshall was well aware of the state of British opinion on a "Second Front" and how they saw it as a factor in grand strategy: UW, JCS Papers, Europe, Reel 1, CPS 26/1, 3/4/42.

84. Steele, 113; Stoler, 36-39.

85. Kimball, vol.1, C-62, 1/4, Roosevelt to Churchill, 3/4/42; PT, vol.6, JSM175, 8/4, JSM178, 9/4/42.

86. Leighton & Coakley, 353-361; Matloff & Snell, 177-183.

87. PRO, CAB79/20, COS minutes, 9/4/42; 79/56, 9/4/42.

88. Kimball, vol.1, C-68, 12/4/42.

89. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 10/4/42; CAB80/62, COS(42)97(O), 13/4, COS(42)99(0), 14/4/42. In CAB 80/62 there is one file, COS(42)98(O), which may shed light on this matter when opened in 1993.

90. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 14/4/42; CAB69/4, DC(O) minutes, 14/4/42; Kimball, vol.1, C-69, 15/4, C-70, 17/4, R-139, 21/4/42. It became steadily more difficult to distinguish between formal CCS intercourse through the Churchill-Roosevelt channel and more personal exchanges. This was the first instance in which that confusion was to have serious consequences.

91. PRO, CAB65/30, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 29/4/42; CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 21/4/42.

92. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/V, retrospective comments on April 1942 discussions. Brooke was scathing and consistent in his denunciation of American plans as premature departure from relative power prospects. Matloff & Snell, 187-190; Stoler, 116,was correct as far as he went but missed a deeper dimension brought out by Steele, 39. Howard, M., The Mediterranean Strategy, London, 1968, 29, was unusually misleading. Stafford, "The Detonator Concept," 190-191, was simply wrong to suggest that in 1942 this new American concept "replaced" the British vision of 1940-1941; Ben-Moshe, 510-512, was the best analysis of the clash on the fundamental approach.

93. Butler, 575, must be read carefully but a fair comment. Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 281-283, not unreasonable.

94. PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 12/5, 19/5/42; CAB80/62, COS(42)143(0), 20/5/42; PREM3/333/7, Bridges to Churchill, 6/5/42; PT, vol.6, COS(W)163, 27/4/42.

95. PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 25/2, 7/4/42; PT, vol.6, JSM211, 6/5, JSM233, 18/5/42; Leighton & Coakley, 377-380; Matloff and Snell, 217-221; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 6/4, 4/5/42.

96. PT, vol.6, JSM182, 11/4/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/V, 5/5, 18/5/42, Brooke to Dill; PRO, CAB 88/1, CCS minutes 5/5/42; Eisenhower, D.D., Crusade in Europe, New York, 1948, 32-33.

97. PRO, CAB80/62, COS(42)103(O), 18/4/42; CAB79/20, COS minutes, 27/4, 12/5/42; PT, vol.6, COS(W)137, 20/4, COS(W)163, 27/4/42.

98. PRO, CAB80/62, COS(42)120(O), 2/5, COS(42)126(O), 7/5/42; CAB79/56, COS minutes, 5/5, 8/5/42.

99. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 27/5/42.

100. PRO, CAB79/20, COS minutes, 9/5/, 11/5/42; 79/56, 5/5, 27/5/42. Favourable attention on the U.S. side: UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 4/6/42.

101. PRO, CAB79/19, COS minutes, 17/3/42; 79/20, 2/5/42; 79/56, 6/5/42, 79/20, 11/5/42; CAB80/35, COS(42)195, 30/3/42; 80/36, COS(42)244, 5/5/42; 80/52, COS(42)1390(O), 9/5/42; Villa, 174-177. CHARIOT had actually been planned under the Keyes regime in 1941.

102. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 13/5/42.

103. CCCA, Portal Papers, 3/1, Portal to Churchill, 5/3, 1/4, Churchill to Portal, 8/3/42, 7/11, Portal to Douglas, 29/3/42; PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 21/4/42; CAB80/62, COS(42)106(O),19/4/42; PT, vol.6, COS(W)164, 27/4/42.

104. PRO, CAB80/62, COS(42)102(O), 16/4/42; PREM3/333/19, DDMI(I) to Churchill, 22/5, Ismay to Churchill, n/d [5/42]; CCCA, Portal Papers, 3/28, Cherwell to Churchill, 13/5/42; Wilt, 31; NCA, Cherwell Papers, G518, German Order of Battle, 12/3/42.

105. PRO, CAB66/24, WP(42)219(revise), 10/6/42; CAB65/30, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 26/5/43; Erickson, 394; Ross, 25.

106. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 27/5, 1/6, 5/6, 8/6/42; 79/21, 28/5/42; CAB80/63, COS to Churchill, 6/6, COS(42)167(O), 12/6/42.

107. Kimball, vol.1, R-152, 31/5, C-92, 28/5/42; Steele, 133-142; Erickson, 398.

108. PRO, CAB66/24, WP(42)220,9/6, WP(42)254, 15/6/42; CAB65/30, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 11/6/42; Kimball, vol.1, R-145, 2/5/42.

109. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 27/5, 1/6, 5/6, 8/6, 15/6/42; CAB80/63, Churchill to COS, 2/6, COS(42)168(O), 13/6/42; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 303-307.

110. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 1/6, 8/6/42; CAB80/63, COS to Churchill, 6/6, COS(42)167(O), 12/6/42; CAB65/30, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 11/6/42.

111. PRO, CAB80/62, COS(42)146(O), 26/5/42; CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 4/6, 11/6, 12/6, 16/6/42; PT, vol.6, COS(W)193, 3/6/42.

112. Kimball, vol.1, C-92, 28/5/42; PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 10/6, 16/6/42; Eisenhower, D. Eisenhower at War 1943-1945, New York, 1986, 84-86.

113. PT, vol.6, JSM271, 15/6/42; CAB79/21, COS minutes, 16/6/42.

114. PRO, CAB79/21, COS minutes, JIC(42)200, 4/6, 13/6, 16/6/42, JIC(42)232, 19/6/42; CAB80/37, COS(42)305, 15/6/42; 79/56, COS minutes, 15/6/42; HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D427, Beaverbrook to Eden, 30/5/42; Burridge, 71, made the valuable point that throughout this spring debate Churchill and the Labour faction of Cabinet came to a strong consensus on the basis of current grand strategy and the prerequisites for a "Second Front."

115. Kimball, vol.1, C-92, 28/5/42; Matloff & Snell, 234-236.

116. PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 19/6, 20/6/42; CAB88/6, CCS 83, 21/6/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/V, 19/6, 20/6/42 diary entries; UW, JCS Papers, Europe, Reel 1, Memorandum for Information #14, 19/6/42, made two points very clear: 1) BOLERO was to focus on a 1943 assault; 2) a 1942 move would be a contingency only.

117. PRO, CAB80/63, COS(42)189(O), 29/6/42; Kimball, vol.1, C-102/3, 20/6/42.

118. PT, vol.5, Casey-Churchill, 14/6, 21/6/42, Auchinleck-Churchill, 15/6, 16/6/42, Churchill-Auchinleck, 13/6, 15/6, 16/6/42, Auchinleck-Brooke, 16/6, 19/6, 20/6, 21/6/42, MEDC-COS, 20/6, 21/6/42.

119. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 8/6, 18/6/42; 79/21, 21/6/42; CAB65/30, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 16/6/42. Auchinleck wished to stiffen the resolve of his troops in contact with the enemy as well as those in rear establishments. Cabinet's decision was surprising, given this further indication of the general scepticism as to the Army's capability and resolve.

120. Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 332-333, an unforgettable description; PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 20/6, 25/6/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/V, 21/6, 24/6, 25/6/42, diary entries; PT, vol.5, Casey-Churchill, 14/6/42; UW, JCS Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 13, White House conference, minutes, 21/6/42.

121. Fraser, D. And We Shall Shock Them, 227.

122. CCCA, Portal Papers, 12/9, Tedder to Portal, 12/7/42; PRO, CAB65/30, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 21/6/42; CAB79/56, COS minutes, 23/6/42.

123. PT, vol.4, Casey-Churchill, 7/6, WO-Auchinleck, 10/6, COS(ME)270, 11/6, Tedder-Portal, 16/6, Gort-MEDC, 21/6/42.

124. PT, vol.5, Auchinleck-Brooke, 28/6, Churchill-Casey, 30/6/42; PRO, CAB65/27, War Cabinet minutes, 3/7/42; 65/31, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex 3/7/42.

125. PT, vol.6, JSM281, 1/7, COS(W)214, 2/7/42; LHCMA, Ismay Papers, Hop/12a, Ismay to Hopkins, 1/7/42.

126. Hinsley, vol.2, 376-380, 396-397; Bennett, 126; PT, vol.5, Auchinleck-Brooke, 2/7, 5/7, 7/7, 15/7, 28/7/42.

127. PT, vol.5, Churchill-Auchinleck, 12/7, 27/7, Auchinleck-Churchill, 14/7, 15/7, 17/7, Casey-Churchill, 31/7/42; PRO, CAB79/22, COS minutes, JIC(42)258(O), 13/7/42; PREM3/284/9, Jacob to Churchill, 19/7/42; CAB65/31, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 1/8/42; Hinsley, vol2., 406.

128. PT, vol.2, Churchill-Wavell, 15/5/42; PT, vol.2, Admiralty-Somerville, 3/6, 25/6, 26/6, COS(I)66, 16/7/42, vol.6, Pound -Little, 10/6/16/6, Little-Pound, 11/6/42; vol.1, Pound-Somerville, 11/7/42; PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 13/7, 10/7/43; CCA, Somerville Papers, 8/1, Somerville-Pound, 4/7,15/7/42; Roskill, vol.2, 38, 222-223. The "fast" battleships were **Warspite** and **Valiant**, both nearly 30 years old.

129. PT, vol.2, COS(I)55, 8/5/42.

130. PT, vol.2, Wavell-COS, 15/5, 3/6, 9/6, 2/7/42; CCA, Slim Papers, 6/1, report on "Road Communications," 9/8/42; PT, vol.2, Churchill-Wavell, 12/6, Wavell-Churchill, 14/6,22/6, Wavell-Brooke, 29/6/42.

131. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 10/7; CAB80/63, COS(42)202(O), 12/7/42.

132. PRO, CAB79/22, COS minutes, 14/7/42; PT, vol.2, COS(I)68, 18/7, COS(I)71, 29/7, Wavell-COS, 23/7, 31/8;vol.6, COS(W)269, 1/9/42.

133. Wavell brought out the problem of repeated experience of inferiority in the air very poignantly in PT, vol.2, Wavell-Churchill, 8/7/42; see also, COS(I)64, 9/7, Wavell-Churchill, 1/9/42.

134. PRO, CAB79/21, COS minutes, 27/5/42; CCA, Slim Papers, 6/1, report on air base construction, 20/4/42; PT, vol.2, COS(I)64, 9/7/42. The problem was compounded by the cumbersome appointment as both American forces commander and adviser to Chiang Kai-Shek given to Lt. Gen. Joseph Stilwell and by his extreme anglophobia. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 25/8/42. The JCS were not, however, under any illusions regarding the combat efficiency of Chinese forces; they considered support for China strategically essential because an active Chinese front would continue to pin the bulk of the Japanese Army. Papers, Pacific, Reel 13, JIC Memorandum for Information, 4/7/42.

135. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 2/6, 79/22, 10/7/42; PT, vol.2, Pound-Somerville, 25/6/, Wavell-Churchill, 5/5/42. A good example of the effect of Anglo-Chinese suspicion was reflected in CAB79/57, JIC(42)325, 28/8/42.

136. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 30/6, 1/7/, 6/7, 8/7/42; CAB65/31, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 7/7/42.

137. Kimball, vol.1, C-107, 8/7/42.

138. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 8/7, 9/7, 16/7, 17/7, 18/7/42.

139. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 21/6, 10/7, 14/7/42; Matloff & Snell, 256-273; Morison, The Two Ocean War, 324.

140. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 10/7/42; CAB65/31, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 8/7/42; Kimball, vol.1, C-108, 8/7/42; PT, vol.6, Churchill-Dill, 12/7/42.

141. PRO, CAB65/31, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 22/7/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VI, 22/7/42 diary entry; Pogue, F.C. George Marshall: Ordeal and Hope, New York, 1966, 304-349.

142. PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 24/7/42; 88/6, CCS 94, 24/7/42.

143. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 10/7, 28/7/42; PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 25/7, 30/7/42.

144. Kimball, vol.1, C-123, 27/7, R-170, 27/7/42; Steele,177.

145. The long debate can be followed in PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 2/8, 7/8, 10/8, 11/8, 12/8, 13/8/42; CAB80/64, COS(42)239(O), 22/8, COS (42)242(0), 23/8/42; Smyth, 196.

146. PRO,CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 28/8/42.

147. PRO, CAB79/22, COS minutes, 23/7, 24/7/42; 79/56, 27/7, JIC(42)299(0), 4/8/42; 79/57, 24/8/42.

148. PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 6/8/42; CAB79/56, COS minutes, 27/7, 28/7, 4/8, 11/8/42; 79/22, 1/8/42; 79/57, 21/8/42.

149. Leighton and Coakley, 385-389; Matloff and Snell, 299-306; Morison, The Two Ocean War, 139.

150. PRO, PREM3/76A/12, minutes of 4/8/42 Cairo conference.

151. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/VI, 18/8/42 diary entry; Liddell Hart Papers, 11/1942/52, 26/6/42 notes.

152. PRO, CAB65/31, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 7/8/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/VI, 6/8/42 diary entry and retrospective; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 398-410; Fraser, Alanbrooke, 285. This decision reversed the fusion of Iran and Iraq into Middle East Command the previous December.

153. PRO,CAB65/31, War Cabinet Minutes, confidential annex, 1/8/42; CAB79/22, COS Minutes, 10/7, 2/8/42; 79/57, 19/8, 31/8/42; BL, Cunningham Papers, 52561, Pound to Cunningham, 24/8/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/VI, 18/8/42 diary entry and retrospective; PT, vol.5, Tedder-Portal, 12/7, 26/7/42; Roskill, vol.2,307.

154. PRO, CAB65/31, War Cabinet Minutes, confidential annex, 25/8/42; PT, vol.5, Alexander-Brooke, 31/8, 4/9/42; Butler, vol.III, 618; Pitt, vol.2, 222; Bennett, R. Ultra and Mediterranean Strategy, London, 1989, 143-146; Hinsley, vol.2, 412-420 and Appendix 2; Bidwell, S. & Graham, D. Firepower: British Army Weapons and Theories of War 1904-1945, London, 1982, 239-245.

155. PRO, CAB79/20, COS minutes, 3/4/42; PREM3/331/1, Cherwell to Churchill, 20/5/42.

156. PRO, CAB79/22, COS minutes, 13/7, 15/7/42.

157. PRO, CAB80/37, COS(42)352, 29/7/42; PREM3/76A/12, minutes of 4/8/42 Cairo conference; CAB65/31, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 5/8/42.

158. PRO, CAB79/22, COS minutes, 11/7/42; PT, vol.5, Kerr-Foreign Office, 30/6/42.

159. PRO,CAB79/19, COS minutes, 2/3, 4/3/42; 79/20, 20/4, 30/4/42; 79/21, 15/6/42.

160. PRO, PREM3/76A/12, minutes of 4/8/42 Cairo conference; CAB65/31, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 5/8/42; CAB79/22, COS minutes, JIC(42)285, 3/8/42.

161. PRO, CAB79/21, COS minutes, 2/6/42.

162. PRO, CAB79/22, COS minutes, 10/7/42; CAB69/4, DC(O) Minutes, 10/7, 13/7/42. These minutes stand out from the usual neutered record to reveal the emotion and depth of Cabinet's desire to assist the Soviets coupled with revulsion at the cost and the surliness of the recipient. Kimball, vol.1, C-124, 29/7, R-171, 29/7, C-125, 31/7/42; Roskill, vol.2, 140, and Hinsley, vol.2, 217-223, offered slightly different lukewarm criticisms of Pound's decision. Roskill in particular seemed to lean toward harsher judgement.

163. PRO, CAB79/22, COS Minutes, 10/7/42; 79/57, 31/8/42; and below, p.363, all of which shed disingenuous light on LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VI, 12/8/42 retrospective; Leighton & Coakley, 551-566; CAB65/31, War Cabinet Minutes, confidential annex, 7/8, 11/8/42.

164. PRO, CAB80/64, COS(42)222(O), 7/8/42.

165. PT, vol.4, Casey-Churchill, 9/6, MEDC-DC(O), 9/7/42; PRO, CAB65/26, War Cabinet minutes, 15/6/42; 65/27, 13/7/42; CAB79/21, COS minutes, 20/5/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VI, 13/8/42 retrospective; Hinsley, vol.2, 58.

166. PRO, CAB69/4, DC(O) minutes, 13/7/42; CAB80/63, COS(42)217(O), 2/8/42; PREM3/76A/12, minutes of 4/8/42 Cairo conference; PT, vol.4, Portal-Tedder, 21/7/42; Kimball, vol.1, C-124, 29/7, R-171, 29/7, C-125, 31/7/42.

167. Ross,G. "Operation BRACELET: Churchill in Moscow 1942," in Dilks, vol.2, 113; Moran,74.

168. Kimball, vol.1, C-124, 29/7, R-171, 29/7/42.

169. PRO, CAB66/28, WP(42)373, 23/8/42, is the official record of the discussions through morning 15/8/42; PREM3/76A/12 has the quasi-official notes of the Stalin-Churchill talk the evening of 15/8/42.

170. PRO, CAB65/31, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 25/8/42; CCA, Hickleton Papers, A4/410/4.16, Cadogan to Halifax, 29/8/42.

171. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VI, 13/8, 15/8/42 diary entries and retrospective.

172. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VI, 24/8/42 diary entry.

173. Trevor-Roper, Directive #40, 23/3/42, 171-177; LHCMA, Liddell Hart Papers, 11/1942/48, notes on conversation with Lloyd George, 14/6/42; PRO, CAB79/22, COS Minutes, JIC(42)278(O), 21/7/42.

174. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 21/6, 24/6, 25/6, 30/6/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/VI, 30/6/42 diary entry.

175. PRO, CAB79/21, COS minutes, 16/6/42; 79/56, 6/7/42. Mountbatten's push for executive authority can be traced in CAB79/22, COS minutes, 20/7, 21/7, 27/7/42 and LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/VI, 20/7/42 diary entry and retrospective. Important information retained in the still restricted CAB121 files has been brought to light in Villa, 44-49, 203. Hinsley found the question important enough to devote to it an entire appendix, #13, vol.2, 695-704, but Villa, 44, was correct in arguing the minute found in CAB79/22, 12/8/42, can not support Hinsley's conclusion.

176. PRO, CAB80/63, COS(42)220(O), 4/8/42.

177. Kimball, vol.1, C-124, 29/7/42; PRO, CAB66/28, WP(42)373, 23/8/42; PREM3/76A/12, Churchill-Stalin minutes, 15/8/42.

178. Among too many shallow interpretations, see: Dunn, W.S. Second Front Now - 1943, Alabama, 1979, 196, D'Este, C. Decision in Normandy, New York, 1983 31, Cave-Brown, A. Bodyguard of Lies, New York, 1976, 85-91.

179. CCA, Ramsay Papers, 8/18, Expeditionary Force Staff Study, 6/42, is a good example of British doctrine regarding cross-Channel operations in 1942. There is abundant evidence that the COS were nervous about the prospects of any cross-Channel attack at this time, capped by Brooke's final veto of IMPERATOR and its interior penetration. PRO,CAB80/63, COS(42)220(O), 4/8/42, warned of many specific tactical weaknesses exposed at Dieppe. However, none of this or any other evidence this author has seen supports the contention that responsible authorities knew in advance JUBILEE would be an utter disaster, a point that must be established to make the ulterior motive thesis credible. The story was one of distraction, desperation and confusion, not murderous cynicism. The complacency in LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/VI, 19/8/42 diary entry deteriorated rapidly to the anger in 3A/VII,1/9/42 diary entry and CAB65/31, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 20/8/42, CAB79/22, COS minutes, 20/8, 21/8, 22/8, 26/8/42.

180. The American Official Historians, Matloff & Snell, 278-293, Leighton & Coakley, 361, 385, Greenfield, K.R. American Strategy in World War II, Baltimore, 1963, 58, were candid on the weakness of the JCS case and the clash of motives in July. Their accounts of the complexity and self focused improvisation of the JCS position have been well amplified by more recent work

which stressed the "political" element of the policy - Steele, 144-167, who did however overrate Churchill's influence on Roosevelt, Stoler,58-63, and David Eisenhower, 77-80, who also indicated his grandfather estimated the chances of holding a bridgehead as one in fifteen, 94-95. Kitchen, 128, was incorrect to claim the British aide-memoire of June was disingenuous; Stoler,51, had a better grasp of the expediency adopted all around.

181. PRO, CAB79/18, COS minutes, 10/2/42; 79/20, 16/4, 17/4/42; 79/21, 23/5, 16/6/42; CAB80/62, COS(42)133(O), 12/5/42; CAB80/63, COS(42)212(O), 25/7/42; CAB65/30, War Cabinet Minutes, confidential annex, 11/6/42.

182. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, JP(42)517, 21/5, 27/5/42.

183. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 27/5, 28/5/42.

184. PRO, CAB80/63, COS(42)169(O), 15/6/42.

185. PRO, CAB80/63, COS(42)174(O), 18/6/42; CAB79/56, COS minutes, 15/6/42.

186. PRO, CAB80/63, COS(42)197(O), 4/7/42; CAB79/56, COS minutes, 27/5/42; 79/21, 16/6/42; Barnett, C. Britain and Her Army, London, 1970, 469.

187. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 27/5/42; CAB80/37, COS(42)349, 18/7, COS(42)351, 21/7/42.

188. PRO, CAB80/62, COS(42)133(O), 12/5; CAB79/22, COS minutes, JIC(42)265, 18/7, JP(42)679, 20/7/42.

189. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 27/7, 28/7, 12/8/42; 79/57, 22/8, 26/8, 28/8/42.

190. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/VI, retrospective on 7/42 CCS conference; Fraser, Alanbrooke, 268; Strange, J.L. "The British Rejection of Operation SLEDGEHAMMER," passim; Matloff & Snell, 294-297.

Chapter 5

A Common Pool?

> **"The next twelve months will be a period of great economic strain, in which the present achievements in economic mobilization will have to be surpassed. Both in reducing civilian requirements and in organizing the military sector to greatest advantage, there will be substantial adjustments to be made. Their precise extent and nature will require further study, particularly in relation to the production programme of 1943-1944 and the strategic requirements of 1944."**
>
> **- JWPS, 30/5/42**

Prevailing mobilization plans assumed that successful Imperial efforts plus increased American assistance would allow war production to peak in 1942. This did not happen. Unforeseen problems in the field and with American supply, and unwelcome limits to national capacity, forced the British government to extend the policy of all out economic mobilization. This raised in acute form the other only indirectly operational but truly vital aspect of grand strategy: the absolute and lateral limits of structural power. The execution of war plans heavily depended on producing the right amount of the right balance and types of equipment, properly allocated and distributed. There were two questions. Could enough munitions be produced in overall terms? Would it be possible to organize production along agreed strategic priorities as originally intended, or would the limits of structure force war plans to conform? As the decision to fight beyond national means was irreversible, none of these problems could be solved by the U.K. alone.

The problem can best be traced as an integral aspect of grand strategy. First the context of the problem will be outlined, by analyzing British attempts to reorganize structural policy and identify the critical pressures. Then it will be necessary to assess the interaction of the central grand strategic debate and an attempt to integrate the Allied war effort on a more formal basis. Finally, the central facts of the British situation regarding the connection between structure and strategy, and the attitudes of the "rolling seminar," will be drawn out by an examination of the pivotal "defensive" and "offensive" campaigns and the power components devoted to them. Two themes will emerge. Whitehall came to feel compelled to press the "common pool" as the ultimate solution,

but did so with a fatally ambivalent attitude. This added to the convergence of pressures building towards a further serious imbalance in British grand strategy and structural policy.

After the establishment of the Ministry of Production in February, a dual administrative track soon evolved in Whitehall. The LPC absorbed control of macroeconomic issues - what level of resources to devote to war production at the expense of civil production and how to achieve this. Production attempted to lead the co-ordination of resources allotted to war production, while the DC(S) became an arbiter of disputes. Personal political power again proved decisive. Bevin and Anderson virtually took over the "Home Front" through the LPC, supported by the Economic Section of the Cabinet Office. The Statistical Branch expanded its influence after Cherwell decided not to dismantle it when Beaverbrook stepped down.[1] Lyttelton was the new man and much would depend on what he made of his new mandate.

Early in March, the LPC approved an important "Quarterly Survey of the General Economic Position." The report warned that the worsened military situation would force a further contraction of civilian consumption. This was felt to be possible, ironically because of the prevailing erroneous belief that German mobilization was more intense. Cabinet agreed and the policy of contraction was extended by tighter enforcement of existing powers. By May the focus was on concentration and contraction of civilian production.[2] The Ministry of Production began to operate seriously in March. On 10 March, Sir Walter Layton surveyed progress in service programs and reported that U.K. war production would match German output in 1942, but at the price of heavy destocking. The Army and RAF programs were rather more than halfway complete. Most importantly, the changed strategic context obliged a thorough review of the overall level and balance of forces required. Layton felt U.S. war production would equal U.K. output by May, Axis output would be surpassed if even 60% of U.S. targets were achieved, and overall the Allies could double enemy output in 1942.[3] Layton's report caught the swell of a wave of thought set in motion by the erosion of ARCADIA decisions caused by unexpected defeats. As late as May, the Production staff reported

good progress on the "Victory Program" basis, but they were behind developments. On 25 March, Brooke claimed that the 1941 attempts to relate programs to strategic needs had become obsolete. He suggested two causes: the extent of Japanese success and the failure to connect realistically American programs and strategic needs. As a result the Allies were off balance. More naval and amphibious power and a rethinking of Army roles, and especially proper co-ordination of American programs, were required. The next day the COS agreed in principle to "relate production to strategic needs," although Portal insisted each department consider its own adjustments.[4] A consensus was clearly building behind the need for major structural policy changes. Lyttelton tried to use it to establish his office.

Lyttelton saw his mandate as the creation of a channel for better co-ordination of British programs in the face of fluid strategic needs but more rigid physical limits. This could then be reproduced at the coalition level. He had some advantages: a seat on the War Cabinet, public pressure for central control, the spur of necessity and control over raw material allocations. Against this was the resistance of departments to cede real control of the execution of policy and Bevin's grip on manpower. What emerged in practice was a piecemeal extension of influence rather than power.[5] To Lyttelton's people the central issue was the "gap" between the central definition of policy and its decentralized execution at national and coalition levels. Without an agreed "Combined" program, the rapidly changing situation would result in a waste of resources on unnecessary equipment. The MAB could only assign what was built. There had to be a central forum to ensure that the execution of programs was synchronized with changing strategic needs. On 20 March, Lyttelton proposed to establish a Joint War Production Staff (JWPS), chaired by Layton and consisting of program directors from service and supply departments. It would be the key forum where strategy and structure could be adjusted and foreign supplies co-ordinated, especially if the Americans formed a similar body. Cabinet approved but departmental resistance to the cession of powers over program execution ensured that, as usual, the process of friction would decide the fate of the latest forum for tighter central control. Lyttelton secured agreement on the need for a "war production plans staff" to complement the JPS and make the "common pool"

viable. The JWPS was given a strong secretariat and directed to reconcile clashes and define a clearer picture of the overall situation. In return Lyttleton agreed it would not supersede existing channels.[6]

It soon became clear that the JWPS was the best forum to define consensus appreciations of current problems and long term objectives. More regular cross fertilization strengthened the swirl of ideas. In ad hoc fashion a division of labour emerged: the LPC would define the overall structural position, the JWPS propose specific measures. By late spring contrasting long and short term dilemmas were clear. The long term dilemma was familiar - inadequate means. The short term dilemma, termed a crisis by the LPC on 30 June, was shipping. Heavier losses, increased production and decreased imports reduced the stock margin to the danger level. Unless American production and shipping assistance were increased and better co-ordinated, shipping deficiencies seemed likely to render the U.K. unable to meet the probable expanded strategic needs of 1943.[7] In order to reorganize British policy, American policy had to be defined with certainty.

The expansion of the war worsened the uncertainty and imbalance of the shipping situation but, in essence, it remained the same - until the needs of overseas forces could be met, the obligation to parcel out shipping all over the globe would restrict strategic options. The COS were obliged to raise increased demands for shipping for overseas needs at the expense of U.K. imports. On 4 February the Import Executive set the minimum acceptable import level for 1942 at 26 million tons, itself a serious risk given consumption was estimated as 31 million tons. Extreme steps were necessary if the unlikely prospect of a balance in 1943 was even to be pursued. These steps were taken - cuts in some food types, an end to the basic gasoline ration, even a dilution on the milling ratio of wheat - to save shipping space.[8] Churchill turned his attention to the services, insisting on 16 February that their extravagant "tails" aggravated the problem. Cherwell warned that Army equipment scales, much higher than the Japanese, were so high that the new need to ship greater tonnages such great distances would saturate global carrying capacity. The WO replied that forces in undeveloped areas, including India,

required more support in order to replace non-existent infrastructure.[9] The end result was another decision to risk eventual rather than current power.

On 14 June, the Shipping Committee warned that despite all steps there would be an import deficit of 8.4 million tons through June 1943. This deficit could be met by destocking and reduced overseas traffic but only if a categorical assurance of specific levels of American aid was received.[10] Unfortunately, the circumstances and habits which prodded Whitehall departments to concert efforts were weaker in Washington. The American service departments resisted all efforts by civilian agencies to loosen their control of resources, especially shipping. The new WSA could not even determine the total size of the American shipping pool. The Americans balanced their own needs in May. But while British requirements expanded, and losses increased, British production had been set at an absolute plateau of approximately 1.2 million tons a year. It was still believed that no more could be built without excessive disruption to other programs. That resulted in a steady net decline in the British controlled fleet, totalling nearly a million tons by mid-summer. This meant that the Americans would now have to be relied on completely to meet the crucial margins.[11] In this context, Whitehall's attitude towards the CSAB was incomprehensible. The JSM warned that if some sort of attempt to set an example regarding the "common pool" was not made, the USN would gain a stranglehold over the vital "surplus" pool.[12] Yet rather than submitting a full accounting of British resources, Whitehall treated the CSAB as a device to shield the British pool while making claims on the Americans.

Once again, London's sure internal touch of difficult but definite compromise deserted it at the coalition level. A CSAB attempt to gain control over shipping allocations received no support. An empty compromise was drafted, giving the national departments control in principle "subject to emergency requisition by theatre commanders." No commander would release a single ship in time of strain, so nothing was gained.[13] The failure to breathe life into the CSAB was indicted by the severe measures already noted. Even a bread ration was proposed, rejected by Woolton on the grounds that the irreducible minimum had been reached in this most basic power component. Cherwell renewed his efforts to restore imports to first priority in July,

calling the LPC measures "a mortgage on the future." Cabinet were forced to agree. American assistance, up to the level necessary to secure 25 million tons in 1942 and 27 million tons in 1943, would have to be sought. In addition, a committee chaired by Attlee would study service tails; the Americans would also be pressed on this point.[14] This was an extraordinary picture. In the face of expanded needs, a new internal consensus on the critical item had been forged; yet continued ambivalence at the coalition level threatened to leave it all for nought.

This ambivalence was all the harder to understand given that plans for escalated action clearly portended increased requirements. Whitehall's ambivalence flew in the face of a dramatic problem which emerged very clearly by late spring: in every element, British structure looked to be having real problems in generating one or more of the right type(s) of equipment British forces needed to pursue Allied plans. The clearest and most vital examples were landing craft, tanks and aircraft. Even before the whole concept of ROUNDUP changed, the COS advised that the British on their own could not build enough of the new large landing ships for tanks and other vehicles (LST), and LCT necessary to launch and maintain a new campaign. U.K. capacity could only sustain one division, even in 1943; the rest was needed for merchant shipping.[15] Cabinet pressed for ways to increase output and avoid dependence on the U.S. but with little success. On 27 April Cabinet demanded simpler designs which could be produced in general works. Mountbatten warned that designs could not be pared down any further and British yards were incapable of newer mass production welding methods. Stop gap measures were subsumed by coalition developments.[16] The belated increase in landing craft production ordered by Roosevelt resulted in new forecast requirements of 4,000 of all types, 1,300 LST and LCT, by April 1943. The British were expected to provide 1,100. Their forecast of LCT available by then was down to 343. The point was clear - British resources were so heavily committed to existing programs nearing peak that drastic adjustments would have to be met in the U.S. The CCS agreed, but tied allocations to ROUNDUP and "limited" operations elsewhere.[17]

Past experience and future plans made it clear that the Army's ability to carry a greater offensive burden rested heavily on whether or not it could be supplied with

effective armoured fighting vehicles. It was also clear that if British structure could not meet this need, British dependence on the Americans would only increase, with unwelcome effects on British influence. CRUSADER revealed that British tanks were badly under-gunned. Beaverbrook blamed the consistent extension of current types at the expense of development, difficult decisions on which he had had support. His rebuttal to Hankey's criticism of administration, which he himself had requested in hopes of vindication, was less convincing. Beaverbrook insisted the "practical men" of the general engineering industry were best suited to handle the problem because of their expertise in motive power.[18] This ignored the need to develop the tank's other weapon, its gun. Duncan had to pick up the pieces and revise policy from a focus on spectacular numbers to a proper balance of finished equipment, spare parts, and newer types. In August, there was a wholesale reorganization. A new Chairman of Armoured Fighting Vehicles Division, led by a Vickers Armstrong executive, took over tank development.[19] At last the program would be in the hands of professionals at all stages.

A new firm policy based on the development of a specific design, carrying the 6 pounder but capable of further development, was also defined. The DC(O) considered the whole problem on 11 August. It was now agreed that the new Cromwell family of "cruisers" - an all purpose design with superior power to weight ratio and capable of further development - should become the main type. Unfortunately, an engine shortage had forced the use of an inferior engine for the first variant, some groups of firms would be dislocated if taken off Churchill output before the full order was done, and the WO feared being caught short in the transition. On military grounds the DC(O) approved the call for a focus on Cromwells; on production grounds, it approved a full run of Churchills and production of the inferior Cromwell I, the Cromwell III to be phased in when possible.[20] This marked a turning point in British tank policy and the demise of the doctrine of completely different types for many different roles. However, two years of frantic improvisation left its mark. The pressures of 1941 had left Cromwell design with many quirks still to be solved. The transition would be a risk; because only Vickers Armstrong, the one truly expert private firm, had a firm grip on the program, if the Cromwell ran into problems other groups' output could be badly disrupted. This

recurring pattern of industrial rigidity posed an unwelcome obstacle, in this case at the very least not eased by Beaverbrook's eccentric style.[21]

The correct decision had in fact been taken, but far too late. In March, Layton had urged the adoption of the new American medium tanks - being developed with the benefit of British and Canadian experience - as a main battle tank, to offset British problems. This raised the ugly dilemma of immediate need versus long term consequence. A tank mission was dispatched to Washington which between March and May concluded a series of agreements which together approached a "Combined" policy. The M4 Sherman was to become the Allied medium tank and be produced in North America. The British would reduce their number of types, but both would continue work on "medium heavy" designs to meet probable future needs. Cromwell would be the British focus. The Americans expected to produce 19,000 medium tanks in 1942 and 35,000 in 1943, but the British decided to proceed with a target of 9,000 Cromwells in 1943.[22] This reflected the classic dilemma of a nation determined to retain independent capability but dependent on an ally's overall policy in the process. London would not countenance utter dependence. Unfortunately, the Sherman was at hand but the Cromwell was still untried. Neglect, poor administration and improvisation forced the British into a gamble with irreplaceable resources because they had not themselves been able to meet the need.

The adjustment in aircraft allocation and air force deployment should have made it clear that British policy was falling between two stools. The reason it did not summed up the conflicting perspectives on coalition policy. On 3 March, Dill warned London that pleas for more air assistance for overseas positions were raising American hackles. Arnold agreed on the need to hold essential positions but also subscribed to the desire to concentrate forces in the U.K. Arnold also felt that the ARCADIA aircraft allocation accord might prevent the USAAF from becoming strong enough in time to preserve a fully autonomous role in defining grand strategy. Arnold determined to scrap the accord and reinforce Marshall's plans by increasing the American share of Allied airpower. This stirred visceral fears in Whitehall. RAF expansion plans had been based on a disproportionate share of U.K. capacity and large allocations of American aircraft to

RAF squadrons; it was also sincerely felt that the Allied cause was best served by filling out the experienced force first. Dill proposed to lobby on these lines and suggest Arnold's force receive priority only after completion of RAF expansion, in order to allow the Axis no respite. Such a logical division of labour could only have worked on three conditions: American agreement that RAF combat power was superior; Roosevelt's willingness to face criticism over delayed expansion; most of all, a truly "Combined" air policy. Portal saw the delicate nature of the problem and opted to press for a true "common pool" because in practice it would greatly favour the British.[23]

On 12 May Arnold told the CCS that he intended to visit the U.K. to reach needed agreements in revised aircraft allocations. Dill specifically suggested "operations on the continent in 1942" would be dependent on those decisions. This was a crucial point. The spectre of serious cuts in American supply was the second and greatest factor which shaped Portal's tortuous course on the SLEDGEHAMMER debate.* RAF plans were so dependent on American supply that Portal went to great lengths to find ways to influence Arnold's plans. Roosevelt's was the decisive voice and all parties played to it. The British suggested that, as 1942 action was priority and the RAF was better prepared, existing plans should stand. The JCS persuaded Roosevelt to increase targets and change policy. On 20 May, Roosevelt informed Churchill of his decision - as many American planes as possible were to be crewed by American forces, so Arnold and Portal should devise a new program to accelerate and increase the USAAF's operational role. This was the first overt notice of American intention to use structural power to impose revised strategy. Portal's reply, signed by Churchill, played the strategic card. A larger American role was applauded, but the suggested cuts would reduce the RAF's peak expansion target by 100 squadrons; as a result:

> "the whole structure of our plans would collapse and an entirely new view of the war would have to be taken."[24]

Thus was joined the most dangerous form of coalition debate - where each side was moved by a combination of strategic sincerity and political self interest but felt the other was moved only by the latter. The British sincerely felt Arnold could not rapidly

* *See above, Chapter 4*

deploy effective formations on a large scale and as a result pressure on the Axis would lapse. They faced the fact that the 1941 decisions left them utterly dependent on the Americans for transports, light bombers and good naval types, heavily dependent for all types for India and the Mediterranean, and desperately hoping for heavy bombers. It was easy to believe Arnold's plan was aimed at securing the lead role. There was some justice in this. It was precisely this point which won Roosevelt's support. The Americans were also fed up with impediments to their own expansion and determined not to scatter small forces under foreign control. But they also sincerely believed in the intrinsic merit of strategic concentration and were convinced the USAAF could rapidly assume heavy burdens. Washington felt London's case was aimed to secure British interests and there was justice in this as well. Objectively, interdependence was obvious enough to suggest the possibility of a bearable compromise. Had London listened more closely to the JSM's advice, it might have secured one.

London at first heeded Dill's warning to conclude the talks in Washington but after that his advice fell on deaf ears. Dill practically begged the COS to realize that Washington did not see as self-evident the need to save shipping and maintain current efforts by concentrating on the more prepared force. London would have to present a convincing explanation of how dilution of RAF supplies would hurt Allied interests and avoid all deprecation of USAAF prospects.[25] The combination of emotional atavism and justified scepticism subsumed Dill's warnings. Arnold was treated to a dry recital of the "wear down" outline and an obtuse plea that he accept further delay in his expansion because the more experienced Imperial forces were the only means available to hold the line. London could not see what was so clear to the JSM - the expectation of exponentially larger power convinced Washington American power could enter the fray with enough weight to prevent serious Allied reversals.[26]

A somewhat rattled Churchill made a personal appeal to Roosevelt when the talks resumed in Washington, but the deed was done. Clear strategic interdependence did dilute Arnold's plans to some extent. Light bombers were to continue to flow to the U.K. and the Mediterranean and fighters to the latter, in reduced amounts which, however, would be maintained. The rest of the accord was less generous. Medium

bombers were to be retained from August. Transports would be retained but used in a "pool." This was the overall theme. Rather than sending planes, which the British preferred, the USAAF would send more of itself - by spring 1943, four combat groups in India, nine in the Mediterranean and 60 in the U.K., including 17 of heavy bombers. To maintain full impact on the enemy, the Americans would continue to supply Imperial forces until they replaced them. Instead of being able to maintain 159 squadrons on U.S. types, the Air Staff expected to reduce that number to 110. Slessor, the chief negotiator, doubted Arnold could meet the commitments of full deployment on time.[27] There was again no guarantee Dill could have done better, but there was no doubt Whitehall's vision of self evident superior capability could not offset growing dependence on American supply. This ended all plans to maintain the RAF in the lead role by American support and exposed the gambles of 1941. London's failure to look past current American weakness was a serious mistake which would prove expensive.

These sectoral accords could not solve the basic structural problem - imbalance. British power was nearer to completion and more fully engaged, but dependent on American margins. American power was just beginning to boom but would never make the U.S. powerful enough to ignore British views completely. The Combined Boards had been established in the hope that a more fundamental integration of effort could be achieved. The desire to reduce uncertainty by co-ordinated long term policy, the human tendency to demand a "plan" to impose order on chaos, was strong. The issue was whether it should be a loose framework to guide policy or a more rigid schedule to impose specific courses on events. From a structural perspective, the desire to maximize output through long term certainty conflicted with the clear need for flexibility in the face of changing circumstances. The result was a dialogue which crossed national lines to institutionalize coalition debate on the underpinnings of grand strategy. Together with the dialogue on current grand strategy, it set the parameters of policy decisions.

The issue arose specifically through the attempt to establish the mandates of the Combined Boards. The basic fact was the rapid but uneven expansion of American war production, which doubled in the first half of 1942. This raised a new set of problems.

Overall shortage seemed likely to disappear, but in its place the issue of balance emerged. Roosevelt raised all major targets in May despite short run deficiencies in many areas. Nelson fought to improve WPB control over American production in the teeth of American military aversion to civil participation in decisions with strategic implications. Somervell built his logistics arm into a virtual empire of war production, using the ASP as a comprehensive basis for controlling pace, balance and allocation.[28] This raised British frustration. The continued American focus on building up basic capacity raised the prospect of failure to achieve a proper balance of output. A convergence of aim steadily emerged between the British and the WPB. The initial focus was on the MAB, the only Combined board with powers to execute decisions. The COS continued to try to turn it into a mechanism to secure American supplies without ceding any control over Imperial output. This blatant lobby led to the key problem - how to co-ordinate structural policy. The British considered first priority to be the definition of the relative priority of active theatres. The Americans considered full conversion to war production more vital. This was the familiar "buildup versus aid" debate in a new guise. The JSM notified London on 2 March of a proposal that would mean the end of the 1941 policy of building a "common pool" sector by sector;[29] the new proposal arose out of the new pace and scope of war, the prospect of rapid change, and the swirl of ideas in London and Washington.

The proposal was tabled in the COS on 3 March in the form of a draft directive for MAB. It called for allocations to be distributed according to agreed estimates of theatre priority and intensity of operations and active theatres to be filled up first along standardized equipment scales. MAB would draw up an estimated Order of Battle in all theatres; once established, the procedure could be adjusted monthly. Determined execution of this proposal was greatly in Britain's interest. As far more Imperial forces were deployed in active theatres than American and the guiding policy was "Europe first," this would have forced the buildup of American ground forces to be governed by existing overseas needs. Marshall specifically noted that his buildup would suffer under this policy.[30] This set off the debate in earnest. Dill and Marshall offered contrasting proposals on 24 March. Marshall suggested the American target of 16 fully equipped

and 28 partly equipped divisions by June be met first. Dill suggested, as had Hopkins that certain threatened areas - the U.K., the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean - receive priority. The dilemma was obvious - only five American divisions were deployed in "active areas," compared to over 40 Imperial divisions. In lieu of the current crisis the CCS accepted Dill's proposal on a one month trial basis.[31] Dill urged London to seize this breakthrough - here was a chance to entrench the policy of basing allocations on strategic needs regardless of national lines. London should quickly forward a forecast strategic outline and Order of Battle, to seize the tantalizing prospect of harnessing American power to British grand strategy. Dill offered his own proposed outline on 1 April: a strategic defensive in 1942, with aid to the Soviets by escalated bombing and diversionary operations and preparations for a strategic offensive in northwest Europe in 1943.[32] The deal was clear: support Marshall's prognosis for 1943 in return for support for "wear down" in 1942.

London was this time not slow to consider the problem, in the face of rapidly increasing American mobilization. On 14 April, Dill's advice was accepted. Brooke expected serious friction over 1942 plans and the desire for an enormous U.S. Army along the lines of the Victory Program. As 1941 arrangements were now becoming obsolete, a 1942 and 1943 strategic and Order of battle forecast could take their place in the attempt to strike a favourable balance in structural policy. The COS would draft a strategic forecast and the JWPS collate estimates for all theatres and programs through April 1943 as a first step.[33] The irony could not have been lost on Dill. Flexibility and opportunism were the essence of British grand strategy, but the need to organize had forced definite structural decisions from 1940. London wanted coalition grand strategy to remain fluid, but again the need to organize power forced it to seek a definite framework. Dill was directed to suggest Orders of Battle by theatre be estimated as of each April in order to guide production the previous year; for 1943 it should be assumed ROUNDUP was under way but operational spheres retained. This meant London would decide if ROUNDUP was ripe. This, of course, was in line with a cardinal tenet of "wear down": only the British would decide when to abandon it. The proposal then entered the bureaucratic maelstrom.[34]

Ministry of Production officials came to grips with the problem on the coalition level in late May. While American output was set to boom in late 1942, a Combined deficit was still expected in many items. Without a consensus framework, supplies to Britain might fall short and the Americans might produce more equipment than they could ship overseas. British prospects were worse. Strains on shipping capacity and raw materials and a possible 60% increase in service programs to meet new requirements threatened to stretch manpower capacity to excess. To meet expected greater overall needs in 1943, further manpower adjustments, increased imports and an absolute guarantee of American supplies to some fixed level were essential.[35] Together with the LPC reports, this reflected a consensus: a turning point in power prospects had been reached. The policy of total war effort plus reliance on U.S. supply could not be relaxed. The British would now have to make the "common pool" the dominant coalition policy in order to accrue the necessary strength. Armed with this brief, Lyttleton went to Washington to close the "gap."

Lyttleton's arrival helped Nelson overcome Roosevelt's fear of political opposition to closer integration with the British. Roosevelt and Churchill agreed that Lyttleton and Nelson should form a new Combined Production and Resources Board (CPRB). Nelson and the British hoped to use it to prevent the American services from pursuing their own programs unrelated to any central consensus. On 18 June, the new CPRB met with the CCS to discuss responsibilities. Lyttleton and Nelson proposed a directive which, if executed with conviction, might well have established a co-ordinated program relating production decisions to agreed grand strategic forecasts. The CCS were requested to draft strategic and deployment forecasts for the end of 1942 and 1943; this would enable the CPRB to execute its prime task, enforcing and guiding the maximum possible contraction of civil production. The CPRB also proposed to address specific bottlenecks, all revealingly related to the completion of British programs. The right phrases went on record. Marshall effusively welcomed the CPRB as the apex of Combined machinery which, together with the new Combined Food Board, would at last knit together the "common pool." These were empty platitudes. The JCS had no intention of allowing a civilian body such control over munitions allocations. Dill had already tried to have

the CCS submit a strategic forecast to help the CPRB assist an increase in production of escort vessels. King insisted the CPRB stick to the production aspect of issues referred by the CCS.[36] To the JCS, the CPRB was to no be more than a means to reduce civil output.

The American motive is not difficult to understand. The fact that their own unreadiness meant any basis of strategic needs could commit them to unwanted grand strategy reinforced the standing aversion to civilian access to strategic plans. The JCS saw the CPRB plan in terms of what, to a great degree as far as London was concerned, it was - the latest guise of the British attempt to tie American power to British grand strategy. By now London was beginning to understand the importance of personal channels in Washington and the Americans' determination not to risk loss of control by delegating real authority to bodies outside of Washington. Thus the agreement to allow Harriman and Lyttleton to form a parallel CPRB arm in London should have been seen for what it was - a signal that the JCS had no intention of allowing it to entrench long term forecasts as a framework of coalition policy.[37]

Warning signals continued to flow from the satellite Whitehall in Washington. In July it was noted that the War Department intended to revise the ASP unilaterally and replace a forecast Order of Battle by theatres with a forecast of total U.S. forces to be mobilized, with no regard to location. The British insisted these steps could not replace agreed strategic and deployment forecasts. However, when Lyttleton tried to give some teeth to the CPRB - albeit clumsily, by a transparent call for the BWSC to be placed under his authority and Supply "regrouped" - he was as usual resisted by departments unwilling to cede control. Cabinet told Lyttleton to increase his authority in practice and agreed the BWSC was to remain a loose body co-existing with bilateral channels.[38] Whitehall clung to the illusion that it would achieve the "common pool" by using Combined Boards to secure American resources with no concessions in return. Again, it is not certain that a more co-ordinated British voice would have made the CPRB a success. The point is that the failure to try illustrated the fatally ambivalent perceptions which dogged the whole issue.

The CCS gutted the directive to oversee a grand strategic forecast and Order of Battle by theatres. The latter was diluted to an estimate of the global needs of Allied forces, to be compiled by departments. The first draft of the former was submitted on 16 July. Based on the estimated situation in April 1943, it was a patchwork of compromise. The "basic concept" was to secure vital bastions and lines of communication and then expand offensive operations. The "primary aim" was a strategic offensive in northwest Europe as soon as possible. The "means" had a more British ring - bombing, blockade, subversion, peripheral operations to secure current positions, with SLEDGEHAMMER as an "emergency" operation but neither it nor limited offensives against the Japanese to prejudice any of the above.[39] This document, CCS91, and the decision to offer only a global mobilization estimate illustrated an often overlooked undercurrent to the grand strategic debate then nearing its climax. The JCS would not allow the CPRB to reorient coalition policy because it would have favoured British operations at the expense of American mobilization. However, they also signalled their willingness to accept the need to secure existing positions in 1942 in return for ROUNDUP in 1943. This was an integral part of the marathon debate on current grand strategy. In tandem it reflected contending visions of relative power prospects and grand strategy. The Americans expected to harness irresistible power but were afraid it would be committed piecemeal. The British were willing to consider a concentrated offensive but only if current dangers were met first and "wear down" visibly progressed. Fearful of unilateral decisions, they pushed for certainty in structural policy and flexibility in grand strategy. The JCS approved CCS 91 only as a guide to MAB for 1942 military and naval needs. Air forces and overall needs were pointedly deferred.[40] This was a clear signal that the Americans' willingness to support British current grand strategy depended on British support for American overall grand strategy and that the JCS would use structural leverage to enforce this bargain.

This nascent bargain was exploded by Roosevelt's command decision on TORCH and the JCS reaction. This reaction included the view that all other American plans should be shielded from British proposals because London's real objection had been to ROUNDUP all along. The JSM warned London on 25 July to stress that TORCH was

meant to seize the initiative and clear the way for ROUNDUP, not just to secure British positions. It was too late. After a series of angry discussion in the JCS, Leahy informed the CCS on 30 July that in lieu of the TORCH decision all the papers meant to establish a framework for co-ordinated Allied war policy - CCS 97, the Order of Battle forecast, CCS 94, current grand strategy, and CCS 91, the grand strategic forecast - would have to be revised. The British saw the TORCH decision as a realistic acceptance of prospects and priorities in line with overall grand strategy. The Americans saw it as a calculated reversal of the April decision engineered by the British to further their own agenda.[41] Revision of CCS 94 raised the spectre of a Pacific escalation, while that of CCS 91 and CCS 97 indicated a new attitude towards allocating American resources. This must be seen as the most important result of the defeat of the JCS plans - a serious loss of trust in British probity outside the White House.

The unwelcome result for the British was that the concurrent debates on grand strategic and structural fundamentals had to a large extent hoisted the COS on their own petard. Dill and Cunningham warned repeatedly that a bolder strategic forecast would have to be offered, to offset the JCS views, if the CPRB were to have a chance to establish an agreed framework. The COS remained determined to convince the Americans that the TORCH decision did not represent a revision of agreed overall grand strategy. This was a fine line. TORCH was to be depicted as opening up offensive options, but specific future commitments had to be avoided for fear they would lead to a premature grand strategic offensive. Vague optimistic language was the tactic. Dill loyally carried out instructions. On 6 August he and Marshall offered contrasting drafts of a revised strategic forecast to take account of TORCH. Marshall's was close to pure "wear down." To guide production to December 1943, it should be assumed that in April 1944: the Atlantic was contested, strategic bombing escalated, African operations continuing, ROUNDUP prepared in a secure U.K. base, and the Pacific reinforced at BOLERO's expense. Dill's version had three crucial changes: ROUNDUP would be "in prospect if not already in progress," the Mediterranean would be open, and the Pacific would be reinforced "only as far as operations against Germany have allowed." Dill saw that the COS had in fact been too successful in claiming relative weakness ruled out an

early grand strategic offensive, because the JCS now felt that the "dispersion" of effort forced on them by Roosevelt would only worsen this condition. His solution was to argue that by at least the latter part of 1943 "wear down" would succeed and clear the way for a concentrated offensive. Dill ran afoul of both sides. King declared his draft at odds with CCS 94.[42] The COS reaction was more severe.

The COS reaction can only be understood by appreciating the depth of the "wear down" consensus and the fear that the Americans would use structural leverage to compel its premature abandonment. The more Dill warned of a turn to the Pacific, the more they insisted he demand full adherence to "Europe first" as a self-evident priority. The COS decided that the TORCH decision only affected 1942-1943 grand strategy, whereas the WW1 consensus of ARCADIA was a distinct pledge on overall grand strategy. This led to the incredible conclusion that Dill had overstepped his bounds by suggesting an optimistic ROUNDUP forecast before "Europe first" had been reaffirmed. The rebuke Dill subsequently received was totally unjustified.[43] Given the drain on resources TORCH would represent, it was absurd to argue it would not affect fundamental policy unless TORCH was seen to conform to an existing vision of that policy. The COS reaffirmed their view of TORCH as an operation to consolidate a grand strategy already established and based on relative weakness. It would not itself affect the overall balance of relative power. The Americans had to be made to understand that their power was still only enough to salvage "wear down," not to change it. Dill knew this argument, especially if portrayed as self-evident, would greatly irritate the Americans. His attempt to mitigate the damage caused by London's failure to see the need to demonstrate its case or show its resolve revealed how unwilling London now was, after the fall of Tobruk, even to consider a paper pledge to a fixed departure from "wear down."

Dill returned to London to warn the COS that the real debate was over "wear down versus concentration"; Pacific agitation was only an aspect of the larger issue. London should reserve its position on the issue of TORCH's impact on WW1 and press for as optimistic and detailed a forecast for the CPRB as was possible. This time the COS accepted Dill's advice in every particular.[44] Dill returned to Washington to foster a committee style trade-off- a reduced BOLERO for a stronger TORCH and Pacific

moves. The deal was struck over shipping priority: TORCH, other Mediterranean needs, the Pacific, Soviet supplies via Iran all as equal first priority, USAAF moves to the U.K. and China second, Iceland third, BOLERO fourth, the Indian Ocean last. Lytellton and Nelson helped matters by calling on the CCS to intensify efforts to draft forecasts, in order to help guide the contraction of civil production. The CCS agreed on 28 August to give renewed study to forecast equipment needs and Orders of Battle.[45] However, this development was already obsolete because of the divergence in perspective between London and Washington.

London hoped to use the agreed grand strategic forecast to stop the apparently haphazard growth of the American forces. The JCS resisted all attempts to place the American buildup, especially the ASP, under "Combined" control. Whitehall continued to be reluctant to submit claims as a supplicant. Lytellton suggested that a detailed report of British civil consumption be submitted, to demonstrate the intensity of the British war effort as compared to the American and help salvage the concept of a governing framework. He was swimming against the tide.[46] For some time British representatives had been forced to sort out problems piecemeal through bilateral channels while the overall review was stalled. In the process Lt.Gen. MacReady, the WO delegate, established good relations with Somervell and Aurand and adjusted many specific problems, just as before the CPRB's formation.[47] In fact, an awkward hybrid policy was emerging from the clash of mutual reluctance to entrench a degree of "common pool" with the physical compulsions of interdependence.

The problem was that mutual need was locked in battle with mutual trust. The CPRB and the whole "Combined" concept could only flourish if both were strong. Somervell's refusal to submit to the CPRB made it unlikely that central bodies would ever achieve real control over American programs. MacReady was forced to agree to continue forwarding specific problems pending submission of the overall estimates to the CPRB. Nothing could have been more ominous to British hopes of absorbing American resources into British grand strategy. The TORCH decision confirmed JCS fears that British plans would lead to dispersing American forces, which would leave them unable to dominate coalition policy. Their reaction eroded what hope there was that the CPRB

could entrench a "common pool." The British, with most to gain, did little to save it.[48] Whitehall's reluctance to use the CPRB as anything other than a predator instead strengthened the JCS reaction. This was absolute folly.

The clear connection between how British and Allied structure was organized and what it could achieve, and what sort of grand strategy the Allies should pursue, affected all aspects of British policy. Whether the "common pool" could be erected in practice or not, Whitehall still had to grapple with the challenge of organizing British resources, forces and priorities in such a way as to minimize waste yet maximize impact at the sharp end. Churchill attempted to offer a vision related to the changing circumstances in the midst of the great debate, on 21 July.

Churchill's "Review of the War Position" led off with the most fundamental "wear down" assumption in revised form:

> "...the immense power of the German military machine. Because the German armies have been so long busy in Russia, we are apt to forget this terrible engine. When we see what a couple of Panzer divisions and the German 90th Light Division can do in North Africa against our greatly superior numbers and resources, we have no excuse for underestimating German military power in 1943 and 1944. It will always be possible for them to set up a holding front against Russia and bring back 50 or 60, or even more, divisions to the West. They could make the transference with very great rapidity across the main railway lines of Europe. We have no right to count upon a collapse of German military power on the European Continent. In the event of the overthrow of the Nazi regime, it is almost certain that the power would pass to the German Army, who are by no means ready to accept the kind of terms which Britain and the U.S. deem essential to future world security."

Relative weakness on land remained the one constant factor in a changing context. Ostensibly, the most critical front was the Atlantic, where the situation was now grim. Churchill's solution was to continue to improve naval efficiency, apply airpower more effectively, and especially:

> "...come to a solemn compact, almost a treaty, with the U.S. about the share of their new [ship] building we are to get in 1943 and 1944."

Revealingly, even though the Atlantic struggle might "decide the issue of the war,"

Churchill was more precise about American shipping than the use of airpower. Here his focus was shifting:

> "In the days when we were fighting alone we answered the question "how are you going to win the war?" by saying "we will shatter Germany by bombing." Since then the enormous injuries inflicted on the German Army and manpower by the Russians, and the accession of the U.S. have rendered other possibilities open..."

Nevertheless, even greater efforts were to be made to concentrate momentum behind strategic bombing. In addition to its existing virtues,strategic bombing now seemed well suited to a new role:

> "In this way alone can we prepare the conditions which will be favourable to the major military operations on which we are resolved."

The conclusion was categorical:

> "We must regard the Bomber offensive against Germany at least as a factor in breaking her war will second only to the largest military operations which can be conducted on the Continent until that will is broken."[49]

This paper expressed with authority an evolving thesis on how to use the strategic mass of Allied power, based by necessity on the U.K. The negative gain of attrition on the Eastern Front and the positive gain of U.S. power made continental operations feasible, but German power would still have to be reduced first. Airpower, the tactically most flexible arm, could still best help by attacking German power at source. This would give it a new role in a revised grand strategic sequence: to weaken German power enough for Allied armies to land on the continent and fight. The Atlantic, supposedly decisive, would have to be dealt with by U.S. assistance and greater efforts from existing resources. Once again, coalition power and pressures, structural limits and momentum and personal prejudices formed a triangle of pressures. As in 1941, the result was a seriously flawed balance of priorities.

It is ironic that the Americans were largely to blame for the serious deterioration in the Battle of the Atlantic in 1942, as Whitehall had decided in 1941 to rely on American reinforcement to win the struggle that next year. Despite its months of practice and access to British experience, the USN proved mentally and physically unprepared for war in the Atlantic. Roosevelt failed to insist on the early curtailment of civilian comforts in coastal areas. King did not have the forces at hand to organize a

comprehensive convoy system and proved slow to accept RN advice on the effective gathering and application of intelligence. The result was a massacre of Allied shipping in North American coastal waters for seven long months. Global losses rose from 4.3 million tons in 1941 to 7.7 in 1942; 2.4 and 5.2 were the north Atlantic figures, the bulk caused by U-Boats. Of the last figure, 3.1 million tons were lost through July, 2.8 in the U.S. sphere of responsibility.[50] These losses together with increased commitments threatened to absorb increases in shipbuilding and ruin global grand strategy.

This was a delicate issue which Churchill insisted on handling personally. His first complaint to Roosevelt elicited a peevish reply originating from King suggesting a cut in U.K. imports. The CCS decided on 17 March that the best answer was increased shipbuilding. The Admiralty considered this far too complacent. On 24 April they warned the COS that it was unclear whether increases and improvements in Allied forces would outpace losses caused by American unpreparedness. Cabinet was told on 11 May that 75% of Allied losses were being suffered in American spheres; Churchill raised the issue with Hopkins. King's response was a request for the loan of escort vessels to help organize coastal convoys.[51] The Allies faced a three fold problem: the U-Boats could seek out weakly defended areas faster and more flexibly than the Allies could deploy trained forces; there were too few escort vessels; and they had lost their "ears." From January to June Pound could only increase the strength of escort vessels in the north Atlantic from 214 to 252, with only 60% in the pivotal North Western Approaches and Newfoundland Commands.[52] In February GCCS lost its grip on the vital U-Boat operational cipher, after German technical changes. OIC was not as blind as in 1941. Other ciphers, such as logistic keys, were retained, other forms of intelligence had improved, and OIC had more experience of U-Boat practices. But without the information on actual dispositions, its constant plotting of the battle became "intelligent guesswork." This gave the Germans a significant advantage because they were able to exploit their hold on convoy ciphers to use their forces more efficiently.[53] Pound lent King some vessels, but this was not enough. The battle was being lost because the Allies could not apply adequate forces in well co-ordinated fashion and had reduced intelligence to offset their deficiencies.

King managed to organize effective coastal convoys from June but in July again rejected more unified command of the whole theatre, perhaps because the USN deployed only one escort group compared to the four RCN groups in Newfoundland and the six RN groups in the U.K. The U-Boats were able to shift their focus progressively through still poorly defended zones and losses rose frighteningly - remaining well over 500,000 tons a month globally through October, well over 80% in the Atlantic. RN and RCN equipment and training improved but numbers remained largely static through October. U-Boat kills rose from 35 in 1941 to 87 in 1942, but Doenitz' fleet grew from 272 to 382; British forces accounted for 62 kills.[54] Losses were not paced and the assembly of TORCH forces increased the strain. The nomination of the very able Admiral Sir Max Horton to take over North Western Approaches Command on 19 November was only a first step towards recovery.[55] Much greater force and better Allied co-ordination, tactically and structurally, were urgently required. Given the greater global strain on the RN, a greater share of national resources now also seemed essential.

The Admiralty's struggle to increase its share of resources faced some consistent and some new obstacles. The decision to accept the limits of the shipbuilding industry and rely heavily on American assistance helped the other services swallow up general engineering capacity and often crowd out naval orders. Because shipbuilding was such a long expensive process, the quantum leap in RN burdens left its program behind. The Atlantic struggle demanded more anti-submarine forces, but setbacks elsewhere underlined the need for a balanced fleet, able to handle everything from inshore work to fleet action. The Admiralty resented the fact that while the RN's image as the trustee of national power and glory left it vulnerable to criticism after spectacular disasters involving major fleet units, neither these nor its expanding global burdens helped it secure more resources.[56] Claims for the naval program came to revolve around a much larger balanced fleet based increasingly on aircraft carriers. As it had to be laid out for the long term, the Admiralty tried to use the existing strain to secure both wartime needs and the fleet of the future. Churchill and A.V. Alexander initiated debate in March when the latter reported that new carriers would not be ready before 1944, there would be no new battleships - although the three on order would be accelerated - and large

numbers of two types of destroyers were needed - the Hunt escort class and a larger "fleet" type, which would take longer to build. Churchill felt the real need was for speedy deployment of anti-submarine types rather than overall balance. The Admiralty wanted speed and balance. Cabinet considered the call for a new program and greater capacity on 27 April. Alexander asked for two more fleet carriers, four more intermediate carriers, six more cruisers, 42 more destroyers - 26 Hunts - and many smaller craft such as the workhorse corvettes. Cabinet agreed in principle, but the proposal bogged down in the Whitehall trenches.[57]

Through July the Admiralty pushed its claim for greater resources in the JWPS and DC(S). The issue boiled down to whether current capacity was being used to best effect and whether higher priority and more resources, especially manpower, were necessary. In May the JWPS called for a small increase in manpower allocation. Bevin disagreed. He considered the shipbuilding industry, both labour and management, to be needlessly inefficient because of stubborn obstruction to welfare measures, female labour and dilution. The Admiralty felt it would be better to provide more resources than reorganize the industry. Because the program was seriously in arrears Lytellton decided to review the industry, study the possibility of placing more orders with general engineering firms, and allow stop gap manpower increases. Churchill directed that priorities should be the completion of the three battleships **Anson**, **Vanguard**, and **Howe** and the acceleration of destroyer output.[58] The JWPS turned in July to a review of the relative cost to other programs of overall and specific increases in the Admiralty program.[59] To make a definitive case, the Admiralty focused on what now seemed to be the essential factor in naval operations - airpower.

Aircraft carriers were now described as the backbone of the balanced fleet - a vital anti-submarine weapon, indispensable in closed waters, and a means of projecting the main power of the fleet itself. A new type, intermediate carriers, could be built relatively quickly, to provide a fairly early increase in battle fleet power. In August the Admiralty asked for even more intermediate carriers, at the cost of delays in other types. Cabinet struck a committee to consider the issue. Lytellton's people made criticisms which went right to the core of the debate, the limits of national power. They

insisted the Admiralty underestimated the ability of general industry to build smaller vessels, the effect of new prefabrication methods and the relative benefits of dilution The Admiralty undoubtedly resisted entrusting its complex orders to unknown hands and it seemed true that its own industry simply could not keep pace with change sparked by expanding total war. One can sympathize with its reluctance to press controversial change on a fractious industry; but its attempt to exploit the new predicament to secure greater resources and thus ward off both structural upheaval and contracting out was short sighted. Cabinet accepted nine more intermediate carriers and more fleet destroyers, at the cost of a delay in completing **Vanguard**, cuts in cruisers, and a higher ratio of corvettes in escort targets.[60]

This amounted to no less than a national dilemma - the service whose needs cost the most and took the longest to meet faced the greatest burdens with the smallest share of resources. The causes were manifold: the Admiralty's timidity; the industry's weakness; the national inability to maintain the industry before the war, aggravated by the lengthy disarmament policy; Pound's failure to win Churchill's support because of his focus on "defensive" tasks. Even Churchill's belated interest in escorts was confined to resources already allocated. He still did not see the need for a comprehensive sustained anti-submarine commitment as a first national priority. The Admiralty focus on aircraft carriers reflected its own struggle to keep pace with change. Despite the clear promise of the small escort carrier as an anti-submarine weapon, it focused mainly on the larger units which Pacific battles seemed to indicate had become the key component of a battle fleet. The Admiralty tried to recapture the lead role in grand strategy by blaming everyone but itself for the fact British seapower was hopelessly overstretched.

Its case was presented in a well argued paper to the DC(S) on 5 October. The results of a greater increase in burdens than resources since 1940 were a 60% shortage in required escort vessels and an import crisis. The blockade was in tatters. The Eastern Fleet would again be stripped, to fill out TORCH. Even with generous U.S. assistance Imperial power could not meet the full needs of all services. Therefore, clear priorities had to be defined. The basic task was to control the sea lanes. This would require a directive placing it behind only the Air Defence of Great Britain, and an increased share

of resources for the Admiralty program. If this were done, Allied power could be mobilized and deployed to the greatest possible extent. To win its case, the Admiralty needed to win over the Americans and the Air Staff. Because the Americans refused to build major warships for the RN, their co-operation in all other aspects was even more vital. Most especially, the RN needed a powerful Fleet Air Arm and powerful land based air support. Unfortunately, these were the weak points. Only 12 of the 28 escort carriers expected by 1944 were to be built in the U.K. Only 5% of MAP's total effort went to Fleet Air Arm types. The whole naval aircraft program was desperately in arrears and heavily dependent on the Americans in all respects. Coastal Command was still 25% below its agreed strength. This was the result of decisions that needed to be reversed: to increase the "offensive" focus of the air effort at the expense of fixed obligations and rely on American assistance, which fell short, to meet the margins of the latter.[61]

The problem was clear. After being forced to accept third priority, the Admiralty had been unable to make its structural and sharp end resources match its needs. This meant that priority would have to be changed. As the overall naval effort depended in large measure on more effective maritime airpower, this change rested on the willingness of the Americans and the Air Staff to enhance that component. The U-Boats' return to mid-ocean and the emergence of the "air gap" as the problem area underlined the issue and worsened the acrimonious debate on inter-service co-operation. That debate centred, as before, on Bomber Command.

For Bomber Command, 1942 was a year of transition in strategy, tactics, equipment, and its role in grand strategy. The focus was on the future. Improvements were everywhere enough to whet the appetite but not enough to score that decisive success which would entrench strategic bombing in the lead role. Numerically, there was little growth - a daily average of 506 ready crews in November 1941 became 515 in January 1943. Qualitatively, there was real change. The obsolete Blenheims, Whitleys and Hampdens were dropped; the Wellington began to be phased out. Two superb aircraft at last appeared in some numbers - the versatile Mosquito, which became the most sought after British type; and the powerful four engined Lancaster, which equipped

a third of the force by late 1942. These planes were also at last being equipped with technical aids to navigation and bombing. The result was a force which indeed "was an incomparably more efficient weapon in 1942 than it had been in 1941."[62] However, the real point was that Bomber Command's efforts did no more than keep it at the forefront of strategic debate.

February was an important month for Bomber Command. The navigational aid known as Gee was introduced as it became available. Partly prompted by this, the offensive over Germany was resumed under a directive of 14 February, calling for concentrated attacks aimed directly at "the morale of the enemy civil population and in particular the industrial workers." On 22 February Air Chief Marshal Arthur Harris took over as Commander-in-Chief. Portal made the change to try to improve the morale and cohesion of a force discouraged by failure, loss and diversion. It was a fateful choice. Harris was a strong leader, totally dedicated to strategic bombing and the welfare of his command. He drove it relentlessly but pressed equally fiercely for improvements in equipment, support and other areas. He also became obsessed with the belief that strategic bombing was the only possible way to defeat Germany. Experiments with day raids and with Gee equipped planes at night reaffirmed that Bomber Command still could not hit any target smaller than an urban area with any accuracy or bearable losses. This and unavoidable reliance on good weather gave Harris wide latitude to execute his directive based on his judgement of the tactically feasible. This was the original inspiration for the "area" strategy and it implanted in Harris firm convictions of his forces' limitations. Coupled with his convictions on what it should do, a very abrasive personality, and the fact Harris was now point man of the "offensive" campaign, this injected another very loose cannon into the matrix.[63]

In five months Bomber Command's attacks went from too small to mention to the centre of national attention.[64] The escalation peaked in three improvised 1,000 plane raids on the Ruhr in May and June. Churchill, Portal and Cherwell supported all Harris' efforts. Portal and Cherwell even pressed him to form specially trained and equipped units to lead raids, in hopes this would improve navigation and bombing accuracy. Harris resisted this, feeling elitism would disrupt the force. However, German defences

grew and improved steadily and it became clear Gee had not improved standards of accuracy. Harris relented in August and formed the Pathfinder Force; it soon became the cutting edge of his command.[65] Over other factors he had less control. Air Intelligence steadily improved its picture of the German defences in time to watch them double their kill rate. Technical aids were held up by development and other problems. Most importantly, there were endemic delays, shortfalls, and teething problems in the introduction of the new heavy types. These restricted their use and compelled continued technical oversight. Harris and Portal had to reject a call by Churchill in August for sustained attack on Berlin because they feared unbearable losses and another stall. It was yet unclear whether the greater efforts forced on the Germans were adequate return for the effort lavished on Bomber Command.[66]

On the structural side, uneven results in development and production remained a problem. The introduction of new types disrupted output and exposed the fallacies of the late 1941 estimates. Chronic complaints of shortages and delays in the supply of labour, machine tools and plant became steady fare for the DC(S). MAP claimed that the new types were more complex and required more resources. MAP insisted in July that its firms were 40% behind the scheduled intake of labour allocated in December 1941 and this meant the bomber program priority was not being fulfilled. Bevin claimed, with reason, that MAP continued to compile its targets by adding up firms' estimates, themselves based on assuming full provision of all resources plus safety margins. As this was never realistic, neither were the targets. Cherwell confirmed that MAP targets and American deliveries were in arrears. As a result, despite enjoying the lion's share of MAP resources, Bomber Command was still only 20% of the Metropolitan RAF, instead of the expected 50%.[67]

The Air Ministry tried to use this problem to win more and better resources. In September Sinclair pointed out that most RAF types in services were pre-war designs. Even of the 2,200 combat types to be built in December 1944, all but 95 would be variants of types now in service. Because the industry was tooled for and fully occupied with current types, more capacity was necessary to keep output up and introduce new types. This meant transferring resources from other programs. The Arnold-Portal deal

reinforced this by leaving Bomber Command reliant on MAP and threatening the 4,000 bomber plan. Sinclair was firm:

> "We must pay this price or face the prospect of a steady deterioration in our fighting power relative to the enemy's."

Portal agreed; he had already made it clear that capacity was so heavily committed it would take four years to develop a new transport type from scratch.[68] The worst problem was heavy bombers. In this area Air Ministry pressure for phasing in new types ran directly into existing problems. Deliveries rose steadily, from 55 in December 1941 to 249 in October 1942; the target, however, had been 293. The shortfall was consistent. The Halifax reached target twice in 1942, the Lancaster never. The overall picture - 2,190 all types delivered of the 2,269 target in October - was better; but the heavy bombers were critically short.[69] This contributed mightily to a serious escalation of the debate over air policy.

Time and scarcity were the main factors. Airpower in greater strength was everywhere required urgently. The Air Staff remained determined to build up the strategic bombing offensive as soon and strong as possible. But Bomber Command's insatiable appetite and the American policy change ate up the margin of development, production and deployment needed for other efforts. The result was a sustained confrontation over strategic balance and inter-service co-operation focused on the role of airpower and three main issues - the demand for aircraft for overseas commands; the Army's call for greater and more reliable support; and the Admiralty's call for more direct maritime assistance. This forced the Air Staff to defend its whole policy, including the use of bombers. Two main complaints arose: nobody but Bomber Command was receiving anywhere near enough bombers; the bomber program had blocked development of other types.

Attlee, Beaverbrook and Wavell all called for more bombers to be sent overseas. In February Beaverbrook called for squadrons to be "flown forthwith" to Egypt and India. In April Wavell fumed at the news of 200 bombers raiding German towns while Ceylon had only 20 light bombers to attack the Japanese fleet. Portal had several sound reasons to reject these appeals. Heavy bombers could not readily be adapted to torpedo

bombing. The strategic immobility of air force units was worsened by the fact Bomber Command was in a transition phase. Any large move would take time, use up shipping, and in the end be useless. The harsh truth was that the new heavy bombers, with their teething problems and heavy logistic demands, could only be operated from the fully developed infrastructure of the U.K. Portal noted that even in the U.K. Bomber Command could not keep half its new types serviceable. This only reinforced the Air Staff's desire to focus on the strategic offensive and seek other means to meet other obligations. Portal described bombing Germany as the "offensive focus" and resisted using heavy bombers on "defensive" tasks. The Americans, it was implied, should be used as the source for overseas needs.[70] Given the emerging friction with Arnold and the fact that a widespread feeling had arisen that Bomber Command's results did not justify the resources devoted to it, this was a risky proposition.

The question of how many bombers to make and how much effort to devote to other commands was another matter, one which broke COS unity on air policy. The running argument over ground-air co-operation policy and doctrine escalated apace with the Army's raised profile. That evolution, general and sincere desire for consensus, and the emergence of successful doctrine at the sharp end eventually brought the issue close to a workable solution. Brooke resumed the debate in March, arguing that events since November had exposed army-air co-operation as the weak link in British combat power. Portal must either meet existing pledges or allow a separate "Army Air Arm." Portal hoped to settle the issue by promoting Tedder's philosophy of establishing agreed doctrine at operating levels by trial and error. The WO felt that the German model, supposedly a conjunction of doctrine and the subjugation of air to land command, was the key to success. The Air Staff disagreed. It depicted the dispute as one of method, not principle. Offers flew back and forth regarding squadrons and obligations, culminating in the Air Staff's pledge of "full support for a decisive battle." Churchill agreed that pervasive scarcity was the real problem; however, for the first time he also called on Portal to make a sincere effort to find more resources for Co-Operation Command. The COS bought time to settle the issue themselves by blaming scarcity, generally agreed as the basic problem, on American supply arrears.[71]

On 2 May Brooke stated a new definitive WO case. As a first step, 20 Co-Operation squadrons, 2 Group increased to 20 squadrons trained and available, 15 trained fighter squadrons, and transports for airborne units were necessary. Overall, the RAF had to change both its attitude and its organization. The "offensive" emphasis resulted in inadequate forces for other needs and an Air Staff reluctant to acknowledge that only purpose trained and equipped formations could meet these needs. The RAF's expansion could enable it to meet all needs if it found "the true spirit of collaboration." Portal accepted Brooke's first step, leaving for discussion the control of 2 Group, transports, and overseas reinforcements. He responded to the larger issue on 14 May with a surgical dissection of Brooke's paper. Portal argued scarcity rather than attitude was the real problem, especially because it fostered the obsession with direct command. In essence this was a problem of trust, propelled by structural and sharp end weakness. The Air Staff felt airpower could only be really effectively applied if it were under expert command and that Brooke's ideas would compartmentalize airpower and preclude air supremacy. A consensus should be built on agreement to set aside some forces for specific tasks and commit all forces to the demands of a decisive battle.[72]

These were familiar themes but this exchange brought the debate to a new stage. The WO clearly feared that the RAF obsession with strategic bombing would mean it would either never agree on the definition of "decisive battle" or not have the tactical capability to assist when it arrived. This was why it insisted on direct command, even fleetingly considering a separate air arm. These fears of the collateral effects of the strategic bombing focus were justified, but the basic fears and remedy were not. The Air Staff as a whole, especially Portal, never wavered from the conviction that when the Army returned to the continent its campaign would dominate air strategy. They hewed to their faith in expert central control, but the real catalyst of mistrust lay in the context. The Air Staff were convinced - and the WO did not deny - that the Army would not return to the continent before German power had been worn down, primarily by strategic bombing.[73] They were determined not to let Bomber Command's unfortunately rising needs be hijacked by other more problematical claims. This attitude was reinforced by

Arnold's actions and above all by the fact that because Home Forces was not in contact there were no offsetting pressures.

While there could be little progress on the issue of more aircraft, there was progress on new doctrine regarding their use. Two factors, combat in north Africa and "Second Front" reviews, propelled ideas. Tedder and Auchinleck oversaw an empirical development in methods of co-operation which by July had become a workable "system." They had two advantages over the U.K. authorities: an ongoing land battle clearly the core of the campaign, and no competition from a massive vested interest behind "independent strategy." Soldier and airman were compelled to fight the same battle to the same plan, in the closest physical contact at all command levels. It was a fractious process requiring constant nurturing but the central idea was established. The soldier learnt that the airman could best help by deciding how best to use his own forces to conform to Army plans. An unexpected bonus emerged when the lack of dive bombers allowed the improvisation of the fighter bomber to emerge as a superior weapon system. By July Churchill was able to cite these developments in his debate with Attlee as evidence of real progress in air policy.[74] This influenced developments in the U.K., themselves propelled by the focus on ROUNDUP plans.

Portal's paper of 21 July offered a reorganization of the RAF to enable it to project existing structure outward. Area commands, comprising all types of units, would operate on the continent. This would ensure centralized command of airpower yet allow airmen and soldiers to fight the same battle when the time came. However, the function based commands would remain responsible for U.K. operations. Bomber Command would **not** be included in the new battle group structure.[75] This caveat reflected Air Staff thought. Tedder's doctrine had proven itself, but independent capability was to be retained at arms length from other campaigns. Brooke feared a hybrid command divided between current tasks and training for continental operations would emerge. But for the first time the idea of a central air command was accepted, provided it was in close contact with ground command at all levels and had executive powers to support army operations. The DC(O) discussed the whole issue again in October. It became clear that without the spur of necessity mutual trust in the U.K. was still weak. All agreed the

"Libyan model" would be adopted once operations were underway. But Brooke still doubted that a command with other tasks besides ground support would actually be able to meet Army needs when the time came.[76] Now, however, the gap had at least narrowed. The obstacles of scarcity and dogma remained, but at least an eventual goal was agreed.

The debate over air support for maritime campaigns also resumed but was more serious because the RN's requirements were desperate and immediate. The same problems of scarcity, doctrine and suspicion dogged the main issues: how much of MAP effort to devote to maritime types and how strong to make Coastal Command and overseas equivalents. The dispute led directly to the wider issue of the relative value of "offensive" and "defensive" campaigns. For clarity, the interlocked debates over strategy and structure will be traced separately. The structural issue was joined in February over proposals to phase in new medium bombers. The Admiralty insisted that without purpose built torpedo bombers, very long range(VLR) general reconnaissance bombers, especially the American B24 Liberator Mk.I, and flying boats, it could not attack shipping, hunt U-Boats or escort convoys successfully. Sinclair's proposal to meet these needs from American supply and by converting medium bombers was rejected. In March the Admiralty reported that only 947 of the targeted 1,940 maritime aircraft were available. Only 36 were VLR bombers. Few had the 1.5 metre Air-to-Surface-Vessel(ASV) radar now needed to have a real chance of detecting U-Boats, and its supply was in arrears. The only really satisfactory aircraft for convoy escort and anti-submarine warfare was the VLR bomber equipped for maritime duty. The only really effective type was the Liberator, also badly in arrears. Pound asked for Lancasters as a stop gap, but with Churchill's support Portal refused.[77] Portal also rejected on 22 April the accusation that the December 1941 MAP directive had fostered the neglect of the Fleet Air Arm. He was wrong. British production and development of maritime aircraft was by now in a deplorable state.[78] Not until 17 July did Churchill direct that carrier borne types be given serious priority. Unfortunately, the new types - Firefly, Firebrand and Barracuda - turned out to be yet more failed products of the pre-war neglect in this area and hasty improvisation from 1940. This and the revision of American supply policy, so crucial in

this area, left the program in tatters and tempers high.[79] The physical limits of structural power seemed to leave maritime needs insoluble, the legacy of the 1941 decision to focus on bombers and fighters and gamble on American aid.

The ongoing maritime crisis made deployment, not development, the most urgent issue. The Admiralty put its case in the starkest terms:

"We have no margin of naval forces left to seek out and destroy the enemy."

The only timely support possible was a dilution of strategic bombing. A.V. Alexander agreed to accept a renewed offensive only on one condition - 81 more Liberators plus six squadrons from Bomber Command for Coastal Command.[80] This set off one of Whitehall's fiercest battles of the war. Harris responded in his usual abrasive fashion with two themes that drew battle lines:

> "To my mind two things stand absolutely clear- first, we have but one way of winning the war - viz, the accepted Bombing-Partisan-small highly mechanized invasion strategy. Discount the first part and the second and third can never mature...Second, only Hitler would gain from stopping bombing or splitting the RAF."[81]

The Air Staff did not fully share Harris' increasing obsession with strategic bombing as a war winner but agreed it must remain the core of air policy. The Admiralty's claim that it might result in defeat at sea combined with coalition pressures, supply problems, doctrine and prejudice to make a very tense mixture. The specific review of the basic WWI consensus of ARCADIA* actually grew out of this issue in late March. Pound and Brooke saw the need to ward off the Axis onslaught and hold vital positions, including the sea lanes, as the overriding priority. If more resources were not soon devoted to "defensive" needs, a peak strategic bombing force in 1943 would be useless. The Air Staff tried to find ways to enhance maritime airpower without impinging on strategic bombing. They also promoted the thesis that events since ARCADIA made strategic bombing more rather than less necessary. Brooke and Pound set off debate with an amendment to the WWI bombing clause, proposed on 21 March. Strategic bombing could resume:

* *See above, Chapter 4*

> "subject to the provision of the requirements essential to effective operations by the Army and Navy."[82]

Churchill's attitude can only be described as consistently ambivalent. He was eager to boost maritime airpower but unwilling to reduce the power of, as opposed to revising the task of, Bomber Command. This ambivalence fostered one decisive change from 1941: the COS were determined to settle the issue of "offence" versus "defence" themselves. This made compromise almost inevitable. Churchill defined the grand strategic issue in terms which left scope for debate:

> "... Taking the weight off Russia during the summer by the heaviest air offensive versus Germany which can be produced, having regard to other calls on our airpower."[83]

The COS decided to proceed by gauging the relative prospects of strategic bombing and the Atlantic struggle given different balances of RAF deployment. Brooke and Pound were not hopeful of Churchill's support and looked for more empirical assistance. They were to be disappointed. On 10 April the JIC reported that given the prospects of stronger concentrated attacks with better equipment and improved methods, Bomber Command's past results were irrelevant. The "area" strategy seemed to be working and might have an "appreciable impact" within six months, if no diversions were made. The pressure of time made the use of what was available the decisive issue. This committee report was Delphic enough to provoke the COS to call for an independent enquiry on the prospects of strategic bombing. Justice Singleton, the perennial choice, was directed to review likely results given expected strength over the next six, 12 and 18 months. At this point, Cherwell notoriously intervened. In his cap as scientific adviser, he circulated a paper purporting to show by statistical projection that escalated "area" attacks with the new equipment would inevitably devastate 58 German cities, dehouse 33% of the population and break national morale. The case was based on surveys of damage inflicted on the U.K., appreciations of damage inflicted on Germany and projections of the weight and efficiency of escalated attack. The Air Staff delightedly cited this paper to claim German morale could be broken in 18 months if expansion proceeded as planned, at least 50% of Bomber Command's efforts went to "area" attacks, and with full U.S. participation.[84]

Cherwell's claim that the "wear down" point could be statistically calculated sparked the counter claim that the result would be defeat at sea. Statistical operational research was injected directly into grand strategic debate. Cherwell's paper touched off a bitter and well known feud among scientists involved in policy formulation. It may be accepted that his numbers should have been seen as parameters rather than categorical promises. However, Cherwell's case rested on sand. It ignored the fact that the U.K. had not in fact been crippled. Even with the prospect of greater power, it still rested mainly on the instinctive feeling that if pounded hard enough the German people would give up. Given the successive slides by default into strategic bombing and "area" strategy, Max Hastings' critique was not unfair:

> "For all the talk about morale, no one tried to sketch a realistic potential scenario for the overthrow of the Nazi leadership and crumbling of the German armies in the field... At the end of the day, Britain's huge area bombing offensive was launched on the basis of no more concrete expectations - on the part of the Air Marshals at any rate - than that if a large enough weight of bombs was poured on to Germany, something vital must give somewhere."[85]

Cherwell's paper in fact showed how detached Air Staff thought on bombing and morale had now become from reality. The prospect of at last wielding powerful force was used to transform what must be done into what could be done, something implicit in "wear down" from the start. There had never been the opportunity or ability to consider how exactly a "crack" might occur. Increasingly vague intelligence, still marred by the fundamentally flawed estimate of German vulnerability, was no help. One suspects that the "area" strategy was also promoted because it was bureaucratically safer. Morale could always be described as on the brink to an audience unable to verify and predisposed to believe. Cherwell's assumptions seemed to fill the void of some sort of yardstick.[86] They did not, but appearances were enough.

The Singleton Report reinforced the trend in late May. Singleton leaned to the Air Staff in a "lawyers answer" that echoed the JIC report. The Eastern Front was the decisive factor. Strategic bombing had to be escalated to assist it. Bomber Command's tactical prospects seemed bright, with new equipment and methods. It could not win the war, but over a period of 12 to 18 months it could "have a decisive effect on the war

position" by driving dehoused Germans to revolt. It was unfair to expect Singleton to be definitive. He could only interpret testimony. The fact most of it came from airmen explained his tilt.[87] Cherwell supported the report strongly. Pound responded on 16 June. Reports that new technical aids were delayed meant further delay in improved results. This risked an immediate crisis at sea for a long term buildup elsewhere. The RN could not guarantee to retain control of the sea lanes vital to the whole war effort. Current priority had to be "land based RAF aid to the RN." Brooke agreed, insisting that Bomber Command had been detached from the overall context and was out of step. In other words, an escalated strategic offensive was a luxury a power on the overall defensive could not afford. Portal saw the danger and pressed Harris to effect a "radical improvement" in bombing efficiency, to substantiate the forecasts and defend "our whole bombing policy."[88] Once again, Bomber Command had to make its case at the sharp end.

The Air Staff interpreted the connection of their desires with the Admiralty's claims through three themes: the "offensive-defensive" thesis, aid to Coastal Command **without** hurting Bomber Command, and the claim that the best aid Bomber Command could give would be to execute its directive. The issue was global, but the focus was the anti-submarine campaign in the north Atlantic. The Air Staff felt any strengthening of Coastal Command at Bomber Command's expense would be a "massive blunder," but Portal realized the need for action. Joubert was pressed to find ways to make his force more efficient. Harris was pressed to find painless ways to assist.[89] The Air Staff exploited tactical limitations to make its case. Torpedo bombing was now clearly the best anti-shipping tactic, which left that task to Coastal Command. The mining of exit routes was promoted as a more efficient anti-submarine tactic than ocean patrol; conveniently, it could also be done at no cost to the "offensive" by exploiting the vagaries of weather. The Admiralty insisted there were too few purpose trained and equipped maritime squadrons because of the focus on strategic bombing. On 27 March Pound and Joubert suggested a solution. U-Boats might more easily be found by constant patrols over their transit routes in the Bay of Biscay by more and bigger bombers. Portal and Harris offered more mining and attacks on U-Boat yards in Germany. Compromise

emerged from this direction and by late May Portal and Pound felt close to an agreement.[90]

The problem could not be solved, however, by the British alone, a fact recognized by the decision to gamble on American aid in 1941. Churchill's complaints about shipping losses elicited on 19 March the tart reply that Bomber Command should pressure U-Boat yards and bases. This set off an exchange from which two points emerged: Bomber Command needed U.S.A.A.F. forces alongside to escalate the pressure on Germany, while Coastal Command needed more VLR bombers, which could only come from the U.S. The whole matter was then greatly aggravated by the Arnold-Portal agreement on aircraft allocations. Bedeviled by internal disputes over control of maritime operations, Arnold left the RAF with a reduced pledge to maintain 80 Liberators in Coastal Command. The Air Staff accepted reluctantly, because this ruined its hopes that American supply would relieve it of the need to build maritime equipped VLR bombers or divert any standard types to ocean patrol.[91] Portal tried to promote the alternatives on 26 May. Bomber Command would devote up to 30% of its effort to U-Boat yards, as weather dictated. Interdiction patrols in the Bay of Biscay were favoured, but for sustained effort more American purpose built types would be necessary. King shrugged this off as "sufficient answer." Days later the CCS specifically lauded the MILLENNIUM raid on Cologne.[92] The Air Staff used this new atmosphere and Coastal Command's dire straits to press a solution. On 29 May Portal noted there were only five operational Liberator I's with ASV radar and termed the pipelines sluggish. The failure of other expedients exposed the truth of the Admiralty claim that only purpose built types were of any real value.[93] As there were so few, this set up the Air Staff case that their "offensive" alternative was on balance the best answer.

Political pressure, especially the reaction of Bruce, now Australian Representative to the War Cabinet, to the Singleton Report, strengthened the COS determination to find consensus. Bruce demanded an inquiry into the state of air support for convoy escort. On 24 June the COS discussed the issue, on the Cabinet agenda for that afternoon. Portal noted the ARCADIA consensus called for "maximum offensive pressure." He would only accept diversions to "relatively defensive" tasks if it were proven, as it had

not been, that defeat was possible. Pound remained adamant - the U-Boat threat made the shipping crisis the great Allied problem and it could not be resolved without more air assistance. To head off Cabinet, Slessor, the ACAS, and Brind, the ACNS, were directed to report on the most desirable balance of RAF deployment. Cabinet demanded their report in one week.[94] The report was ready on 2 July. There was one significant if grossly belated Air Staff concession - the U-Boat threat was at last acknowledged as an overall crisis, beyond RN control. Three stop gaps were suggested: two Lancaster squadrons for Biscay patrols, accelerated delivery of VLR Liberators to fill Coastal Command up to a front line force of 54 and allow transfers to Ceylon, and more raids on U-Boat yards. Portal accepted the principle but balked at the means, doubtless because Lancasters were involved. In a testy exchange on 8 July Portal demanded a forecast of Atlantic prospects, which Pound considered self-evident. Nevertheless Pound agreed to consider stop gap proposals and reserve the overall position. This laid the final path to compromise.[95]

Cabinet took the full COS report on 18 July. It called for a focus on expanded Biscay patrols by 50 Bomber Command sorties a week until Coastal Command had 54 VLR bombers in action. U-Boat yards would remain in Bomber Command's group of priorities. MAP should expedite output of maritime types and equipment. An RAF Director General of Air Co-Operation would be appointed. Pound was satisfied enough to withdraw a paper on "The War at Sea," in spite of the fact this was clearly a feeble compromise. MAP was only urged, not ordered, to adjust its policy. The 50 sorties a week would be at the expense of mining sorties and mounted largely by training units. The VLR bomber target would not be met before October, and the Admiralty was 800 aircraft short of global needs.[96]

There were four reasons for Pound's decision which together illustrate the overall conjunction of factors: Churchill's attitude, structural problems, strategic perceptions, and efforts to improve Coastal Command efficiency. In the end, coalition pressures, tactical expectations and his own inclination kept Churchill behind "the only agency conducting offensive operations against Germany."[97] The Air Staff argument that it was now impossible to accelerate British output of maritime types was correct, albeit largely

their fault. The crucial point was the Biscay offensive. For a variety of reasons Joubert, the airman with a vested interest in maritime operations, considered the bombing of U-Boat bases to be the best possible RAF contribution and Biscay patrols the best role for his own command. Portal disagreed, arguing Bomber Command needed all its power to overcome stiffening defences in Germany. Also - this took some temerity - the Air Staff had to take the "broadest possible view." This view was based on what Portal termed the principle but was really the dogma "minimum necessary forces for the defensive maximum possible for the offensive." Portal had sounded this theme since 1940 and deliberately cited it in every dispute over air policy and grand strategy.[98] The Admiralty were aware of the pressures for strategic bombing and acknowledged that they had supported the gamble of relying heavily on the U.S. for maritime types. These pressures at the core of a global issue, coupled with faith in Biscay patrols, shaped Pound's unfortunate decision.

There had long been evidence that a combination of surface vessels and ASV equipped bombers on convoy escort was the best way to find and kill U-Boats. Yet the surface logic of patrols in restricted waters commanded support, in the face of still developing operational research.[99] The Admiralty coupled the fact that only Liberators could reach deep into mid-ocean from land bases with Joubert's desire for offensive patrols to elicit pledges of more Biscay sorties, more raids on U-Boat yards and united appeals for more Liberators. In other words the Admiralty settled for guaranteed early potentially useful support instead of holding out for and possibly losing optimum support. Sincere Air Staff efforts to make Coastal Command more efficient played a part. The Air Staff's desire to shield Bomber Command never meant it restricted steps to improve other commands which did not affect strategic bombing. It was a priority, not an obsession. Operational research began to have effect here. Cherwell noted on 4 June that reports indicated there were ways to increase Coastal Command sorties by existing resources. Pressed by Churchill, Portal replied on 5 July that the goal could be achieved by better maintenance, which would increase the Command's availability rate. This was a deep rooted problem, but "planned flying and maintenance" was a short term remedy. The DC(S) agreed and ordered a study of the comparative efficiency of Bomber and

Coastal Commands.[100] In August, Portal went as far as to castigate Joubert for the ineffectiveness of his torpedo bombing campaign against Axis coastal shipping. This was only partly fair. Coastal Command had only four operational torpedo bomber squadrons, none with a purpose designed type. It had only two squadrons of VLR Liberators with ASV radar.[101] American policy hurt but did not account for the fact that the best RAF personnel went to bombers and fighters. Need and inclination did. The real cause of Coastal Command's inability to score real success anywhere was the Air Staff decision, based on both temperament and the need to conserve scarce resources, to focus on other Commands.

Pound and Portal outlined their compromise to Cabinet on 12 August - higher global targets for maritime types, working arrangements in the Mediterranean, and the Biscay patrols. Bruce considered this a grand strategic error because minimum maritime needs were again neglected, but agreed it would be undesirable to cut into Bomber Command's current and future strength. Yet the long debate had revealed that this was the only way the British alone could augment their maritime strength. The debate degenerated into an exchange of "offence versus defence." Only Anderson was recorded as stating the obvious - that distinction was grossly oversimplified because grand strategy was interlocked; its balance had to be defined by changing conditions, not dogma. Cabinet ordered a full report from Sinclair on the air situation and policy, but a corner had been turned. In return for Air Staff recognition of the extent of maritime crisis and their duty, the Admiralty acknowledged that previous decisions plus structural and tactical weaknesses set limits on RAF flexibility. Yet this was only a truce designed to head off political interference. The only point of lasting agreement was that the one true VLR bomber, the Liberator, must be sought from the Americans.[102]

The ROUNDUP planners threw their hat into this troubled ring on 14 August by formally advising that overwhelming air superiority, based especially on concentrated strategic bombing, was an essential prerequisite to a return to the continent. Their paper was fully in line with the new sequence vision of "wear down" and, in fact, laid the basis of what was to become the OVERLORD bombing policy. The COS did not feel the time was ripe for a formal directive,[103] but this further support for strategic bombing had

some effect. It should have been clear by now that the new "sequence" approach, put into practice by the BOLERO traffic, had transformed the Atlantic struggle. It was now both a life line and the means by which Allied power was to be concentrated and projected forth on the offensive.[104] This made convoy escort every bit as "offensive" a task as incinerating German houses, but this turned out to be too subtle a distinction. The RAF was predisposed in thought and balance to deploy its centre of gravity on the more visibly spectacular campaign. Sinclair's report to Cabinet on 2 September brought out the effect of the Arnold-Portal agreement and the effects of conflicting claims between the U.K. and overseas:

	Current Squadrons	1st Line Aircraft	1943 Aircraft Target
Bomber Command	48 (18 heavy bombers)	468	2,250 (heavy bombers)
US 8th AAF	2 (groups)	96 (heavy bombers)	490 (heavy bombers)
Fighter Command	76 (day)	1,338 (day)	1,462 (day)
US 8th AAF (Fighters)		320 (day)	800 (day)
Coastal Command	43 (2 VLR with ASV)	532 (30 VLR)	Under review
Co-Operation Command	20	272	Under review
Middle East Command	62	830 (32 heavy bombers)	658 (80 heavy bombers)
USAAF (Egypt)	3	188 (60 heavy bombers)	229 (35 heavy bombers)
India Command	27	442 (32 heavy bombers)	704 (80 heavy bombers)
US 10th AAF	2	91 (12 heavy bombers)	147 (35 heavy bombers)

There were no VLR bombers or Lancasters overseas and only 6 Spitfire squadrons, all in Malta. All transport aircraft except 200 Yorks were to come from the U.S. The RAF had fallen badly off balance and much would depend on Arnold's pledge to make good early effective USAAF deployment.[105]

This was a picture of airpower caught between two stools on two levels. On the one hand, overseas needs had been a noticeable drain on the home pool. On the other hand, strategic priorities and physical limits prevented adequate power being sent overseas. The U.K. situation was more serious. The airmen's predisposition to direct defence and strategic bombing had been clinched by the situation in 1940. The result was an irreversible decision to concentrate development and combat power in those areas. When American aid fell short of expectations, this left little margin to adjust rapidly to other now urgent requirements. This was further constricted by the Air Staff's persistent refusal to rank inter-service campaigns as an urgent priority. Their sincere faith in centralized control of airpower was strengthened by the fact that the grand strategic context - even the new "sequence" definition - allowed them to insist that the doctrine required them to put the cutting edge of airpower into Bomber Command.[106] Pound had to compromise because Portal refused to accept bombers flying over the ocean. This generated a momentum of thought which led to grave consequences.

By autumn 1942, the imbalance of air effort was extreme. In October, Cherwell reported that Bomber Command was launching 20% of U.K. based sorties but suffering 75% of U.K. losses. Fighter Command's figures were 75% and 20%, Coastal Command 5% and 5%.[107] Bomber Command's ever growing needs ate up structural margins to a point which made it harder for Portal to preserve it from being milked for other commands' needs. This compounded Harris' problem of building up a force strong enough to gain the upper hand and reduce its losses. Airpower was everywhere at a premium. Criticism of the balance of air policy overestimated U.K. resources but helped Portal realize that the decisions and failures from 1940 on had brought the RAF to a cross-roads.[108]

British airpower was strong enough to carry the main burden of only one major campaign. Whitehall, as a whole, had consciously chosen strategic bombing to be that

campaign, knowing that both it and overall efforts were dependent on American policy. Enough structural progress had been made to continue, but, just as in 1941, nowhere near enough operational progress had been made to stifle criticism or allow greater flexibility. The decision to escalate strategic bombing before first ensuring categorically that the U-Boats were defeated had been a major grand strategic blunder. The Air Staff would not have agreed but felt that their whole vision of centrally controlled concentrated airpower was at stake. Harris was more extreme, but he and Portal both felt that to assist other services might erode Air Staff control of air policy. This was the ugly dogmatic side of Air Staff thought, the litany of the "offensive," expressed perfectly by Harris on 24 August:

> "...the purely defensive use of airpower is grossly wasteful. The Naval employment of aircraft consists of picking at the fringes of enemy power.... They attempt to sever each capillary vein one by one, when they could, with much less effort, cut the artery. Bomber Command attacks the sources of all Naval power, rather than the fringes of the one type of enemy naval operation which obviously menaces us - the submarine."

This was nonsense. Bomber Command had yet to make a serious sustained impact on any kind of German power, let alone naval power. But the prospect of greater power was a powerful lure. Also, Harris could and did point to the disruption in his command - only 22 of his squadrons were effective, only 9 with Lancasters - as the real obstacle. If this were remedied:

> "Bomber Command provides us the only means [to assist] the Soviets in time. The only means of physically weakening and nervously exhausting Germany to an extent which will make subsequent invasion a possible proposition and is therefore the only force which can, in fact, hurt our enemy in the present or in the future to secure our victory."

Portal agreed and promised to start a "drive to build up Bomber Command in all possible ways."[109]

This drive by the Air Staff was to set off a sustained revision of overall British structural policy and grand strategy. It was the direct result of the British decision to persevere with the unbalanced emphasis on an "air" policy despite the writing on the wall. British war policy had been based on the assumptions that: 1) American power

would meet all the margins of need beyond Imperial capability; 2) it would be available, as would American forces, as part of a truly jointly handled "common pool," with policy tied to a British defined grand strategy. The basic gamble of 1940 had been vindicated. The U.S. had entered the war, and Lend-Lease had kept a massive Imperial war effort in operation. But the gambles of 1941, however, were dangerously close to failure. The Atlantic was not secure. The Mediterranean was not clear. The Germans had not been visibly weakened. The Japanese had only barely been held. The American war machine would not pour out the full and unconditional flow of materiel that Whitehall had relied on when it decided to channel resources into heavy bombers at the expense of other efforts. British structure could not make up the deficiency. Large American forces and much American materiel were indeed promised, but Whitehall had counted on absorbing then into "wear down." Had that approach been successful, things might have been different. So far, it was not. Instead of being in a position to prepare a grand strategic offensive, the Allies faced continuing uncertainty and were racked by mutual suspicions below a surface consensus.

In fact, a vicious circle had emerged, one which perfectly expressed the relationship between structural and military power and strategic choices: the more forces that were required at the sharp end, the greater the strain on structure. A true "common pool" would have relieved British anxieties to a very great extent, overall and in every major sphere. The failure to establish one pushed this vicious circle nearly out of control. Certainly this was due in great measure to American decisions. But no small part was played by Whitehall's attitude. The "rolling seminar" simply refused to make the open confession of dependence that might have helped the "common pool" lobby, in spite of the clear shortcomings of British structure. It could not accept that a power still not as highly mobilized would so inexorably generate preponderant power that sacrifices were necessary, to preserve British policies, at the cost of British influence. This ambivalence was only strengthened by the impact of the "wear down" consensus. Whitehall chose to persevere in its overall policy, in the hope that its grand strategy would yet succeed.

Endnotes to Chapter 5

1. Lee, 101-102; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F153, Cherwell-Churchill, 9/2/42. Cherwell had considered giving way if Beaverbrook achieved sweeping powers over war programs.

2. PRO, CAB71/8, LPC(42)55, 4/3/42; CAB65/25, War Cabinet minutes, 11/3/42; Hargreaves & Gowing, Civil Industry and Trade, London, 1952, 471.

3. PRO, CAB80/35, COS(42)165, 10/3/42.

4. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/6/3, Program Dept., Monthly Survey of U.K. Production, 4/42; PRO, CAB80/61, COS(42) 75(O), 25/3/42; CAB79/20, COS minutes, 26/3/42.

5. Scott & Hughes, 437-442; Postan, 252-256.

6. PRO, CAB66/23, WP(42)132, 20/3/42; CAB65/25, War Cabinet minutes, 23/3/42; CAB92/39, JWPS(42)1, 30/3, JWPS minutes, 30/3/42; CCA, A.V. Alexander Papers, 5/7/25, minutes of Alexander-Lyttleton meeting, 23/3/42.

7. PRO, CAB71/9, LPC(42)146, 30/6/42.

8. PRO, CAB79/17, COS minutes, 22/1/42, 79/18, 11/2/42; CAB80/33, COS(42)38, 21/1/42, 80/61, COS(42)37(O), 9/2/42; CAB71/6, LPC minutes, 9/1, 20/2, 26/2, 9/3/42; 71/8, LPC(42)34, 4/2/42; CAB65/25, War Cabinet minutes, 4/3, 11/3/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/V, 4/2/42, diary entry.

9. PRO, CAB69/4, DC(9O) minutes, 16/2/42; PREM3/360/3, Leathers to Churchill, 3/6/42; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F154, Cherwell to Churchill, 13/3/42, Cherwell to Churchill, 25/3/42, H97, n/d, [3-4/43] WO to Cherwell.

10. PRO, CAB66/26, WP(42)293, 22/6, WP(42) 294, 14/7/42; Behrens, 303.

11. Kimball, vol.1, C-36, 4/3/42; Behrens, 291; Leighton & Coakley, 208; Statistical Digest, Tables 155, 113.

12. Rosen, 99, 110; PT, vol.6, Director of Movements-Deputy Director of Movements(P), 27/3/42.

13. PRO, CAB88/1, CCCS minutes, 26/5, 10/6/42; Leighton & Coakley, 217. To emphasize this point, it was made an explicit order.

14. PRO, CAB71/6, LPC minutes, 26/6/42; 71/7, 3/7, 7/7, 24/7, 5/8, 4/9/42, 71/9, LPC(42)164, 22/7/42; CAB65/27, War Cabinet minutes, 28/7/42; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F158, Cherwell to Churchill, 17/7/42.

15. PRO, CAB80/34, COS(42)108, 16/2/42; PT, vol.6, COS(W)65, 20/2, COS(W)138, 3/4/42.

16. PRO, CAB79/19, COS minutes, 9/3/42; CAB80/35, COS(42)165, 10/3/42; CAB65/26, War Cabinet minutes, 27/4/42; CAB80/36, COS(42)262, 14/5/42; CAB65/27, War Cabinet minutes, 28/7/42; CCA, A.V. Alexander Papers, 5/7/22, Alexander-Pound discussion minutes, 12/4/42.

17. PRO, CAB88/6, CCS78, 7/6/42; 88/1, CCS minutes, 10/6/42; CAB80/34, CCS(42)91, 5/2/42; 80/36, COS(42)212, 9/4/42, 80/37, COS(42)337, 7/7/42.

18. PRO, CAB70/5, DC(S)(42)9, 4/2, DC(S)(42)12, 9/2/42; HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D119, Beaverbrook to Anderson, 23/1/42.

19. NCA, Cherwell Papers, G505, Lindsell to Duncan, 31/3/42; PRO, CAB70/5, DC(S) minutes, 13/5/42; CAB66/28, WP(42)387, 28/8/42.

20. PRO, CAB69/4, DO(42)52,7/8, DC(O) minutes, 11/8/42.

21. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/1/15, n/d [8-10/42], "Tank Production by Vauxhall Group"; HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D420, Beaverbrook-Churchill, 28/9/42. There was some justice in Beaverbrook's claim that critics wanted simultaneous all out development and production, but this does not excuse his erratic administrative practices.

22. PRO, CAB80/35, COS(42)165, 10/3/42; PREM3/426/13, UK Tank Mission, 1942-1943 estimates, 23/3, Tank Mission-U.S. Tank Committee Policy Agreement, 4/5/42; NCA, Cherwell Papers, G367, Cherwell to Churchill, 13/5/42.

23. PT, vol.6, JSM104, 5/3, JSM172, 7/4, COS(W)145, 9/4, COS (W)154, 14/4/42; UW, JCS Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 1, JCS 30, 5/4/42.

24. PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 12/5/42; PT, vol.6, COS(W)159, 23/4/42; Kimball, vol.1, C-87, 12/5, R-146, 16/5, R-147, 19/5, C-88, 20/5/42; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 4/5/42.

25. PT, vol.6, JSM231, 15/5, JSM240, 21/5, JSM242, 22/5/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/X, Dill to Brooke, 18/5/42.

26. PRO, PREM3/453/2, draft of Churchill speech, 22/5/42; CCA, Hickleton Papers, A4/410/4.15, Halifax to Eden, 21/5/42.

27. PRO, PREM3/453/2, Arnold/Portal Agreement file correspondence, 20/5-16/6/42; CAB88/6, CCS61/1, 22/6/42; Kimball, vol.1, R-157, 12/6, C-102, 13/6/42; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 4/6/42.

28. UW, JCS Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 1, JCS 30, 5/4/42; Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 4/5/42; Leighton & Coakley, 198-202, 211, 262, 298.

29. UW, JCS Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 1, JCS 30, 5/4/42; PRO, CAB79/17, COS minutes, 28/1/42; 79/18, 4/2/42; PT, vol.6, COS(W)35, 5/2, JSM31, 6/2, JSM41, 12/2/42; COS(W)81, 24/2, JSM 86, 2/3/42.

30. PT, vol.6, JSM 86, 2/3, JSM 87, 3/3/42; PRO, CAB88/50, CPS minutes, 17/2, 23/2, 25/2/42; CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 3/3, 17/3, 19/3/42; 88/5, CCS 50, 23/2/42; Kennedy, The Business of War, 213; UW, JCS Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 1, JCS 30, 5/4/42.

31. PRO, CAB88/5, CCS50/2, 23/3, CCS55, 24/3/42, 88/1, CCS minutes, 24/3/42; Leighton & Coakley, 271, considered this decision so vague as to have had little substance.

32. PT, vol.6, JSM144, 25/3, JSM155, 1/4, JSM158, 3/4/42. It seems probable that formal CCS agreement to order an "overall general appreciation on agreed strategic policy and deployment and action in 1942 and intentions for 1943" on 7 April whetted Dill's appetite. Dill had admittedly exploited a request from King for information on the Japanese incursion near Ceylon to secure King's support for a global study.

33. PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 7/4/42; CAB92/39, JWPS minutes, 14/4/42; CAB80/36, COS(42)220, 13/4/42; CAB79/20, COS minutes, 15/4/42; Scott & Hughes, 454.

34. PT, vol.6, JSM193, 21/4, COS(W)160, 23/4/42; Leighton & Coakley, 253-254. The JSM also increasingly feared the effect that internal rifts on the JCS over the relative priority of theatres would have on defining agreed overall appreciations. For example PT, vol.6, JSM224, 11/5/42.

35. PRO, CAB92/39, JWPS(42)12, 30/5/42; CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/1/8, n/d [6/42], "Supply of U.S. Munitions." PRO, CAB92/39, JWPS minutes, 29/5/42; CAB71/5, DC(S) (42)48, 30/5/42; CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/5/6/, Survey of U.K. Production, 6/42; Hall and Wrigley, 3-4; Postan, 277.

36. Kimball, vol.1, R-154, 6/6, C-100, 7/6, 506 note; PRO, CAB88/1 CCS minutes, 16/6, 18/6/42; Rosen, 133-134.

37. PRO, CAB80/37, COS(42)325, 29/6/42; CAB92/62, London CPRB (LCPRB) minutes, 7/7/42; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 9/6, 15/6/42.

38. PRO, CAB92/62, CPRB(42)6, 14/7/42, 92/39, minutes of British War Supplies Committee (BWSC), 14/7, JWPS(42)25, 17/7/42; CAB66/25, WP(42)291, 10/7/42; CAB65/27, War Cabinet minutes, 8/7, 13/7/42.

39. PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 2/7/42; CAB80/63, COS(42)205(O), copy of CCS91, 16/7/42.

40. PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 2/7/42; Leighton & Coakley, 212, made the important point that the drain of their own current emergencies was increasing War Department desires to draft long term policy. See also UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 9/6/42.

41. PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 30/7/42; PT, vol.6, JSM320, 25/7/42, COS(W)230, 27/7/42; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 28/7/42.

42. BL, Cunningham Papers, 52561, Cunningham to Pound, 31/7, 12/8/42; PT, vol.6, JSM333, 1/8, COS(W)240, 5/8/42; PRO, CAB79/22, COS minutes, 5/8/42; CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 6/8/42; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 4/8/42.

43. PRO, CAB79/22, COS minutes, 10/8, 15/8/42; CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 13/8/42. The rebuke to Dill reflected the COS continued reluctance to accept the JSM as a full partner in strategic debate, despite the good personal connections that prevailed.

44. PRO, CAB79/57, COS minutes, 21/8/42; Dill's views reflected Marshall's: UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 11/8/42.

45. PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 13/8, 28/8/42.

46. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/2/3, Clarke to Crowther, 10/7/42; PRO, CAB92/39, JWPS minutes, 22/7/42; 92/62, CPRB(42)19, 26/8/42; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 25/8/42.

47. PRO, CAB92/62, CPRB(42)13, 31/7/42; 92/39, JWPS minutes, 22/7/42; Danchev,84.

48. PRO, CAB92/62, CPRB(42)10, 27/7, CPRB(42)13, 31/7, CPRB(42)24, 15/8, CPRB minutes, 20/8/42; 92/39, JWPS(42)61, 1/9/42; Leighton & Coakley, 277-280.

49. PRO, CAB66/26, WP(42)311, 21/7/42.

50. UW, JCS Papers, Strategic Issues, White House conference, 21/6/42; Roskill, vol.2, 98, vol.3, part II, Appendix ZZ; Morison, The Two Ocean War, 92-104, 489, pulled no punches on this question; Costello & Hughes, 200-204; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 135. There was a good deal of blame transference in Whitehall's attitude here.

51. PRO, CAB65/25, War Cabinet minutes, 2/2/42; 65/26, 11/5/42; CAB80/62, COS(42)110(O), 24/4/42; CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 17/3/42; Kimball, vol.1, R-120, 16/3/42; PT, vol.6, Pound-Little, 21/5/42.

52. PRO, PREM3/387/3, Escort Returns, Average State of Effectives, 1-6/42.

53. Hinsley, vol.2, 179, 230, convincingly argued that the loss of Triton was important but not decisive for the DRUMBEAT campaign and that the delay it caused in the Admiralty's recognition that their obsolete ciphers were penetrated was a more serious result; Beesly, 114-115, 118; Gannon, M. Operation Drumbeat, New York, 1990, 341.

54. PRO, PREM3/387/3, Escort Returns, Average State of Effectives, 7-10/42; Roskill, vol.2, 108, vol.3, part II, Appendix XX; Costello & Hughes, 207, 233; 304; Gannon, 388-415, for strong criticism of King.

55. CCA, A.V. Alexander Papers, 5/7/43, Noble to A. V. Alexander, 1/10/42; Costello & Hughes, 234.

56. BL, Cunningham Papers, 52561, Pound to Cunningham, 28/1/42.

57. PRO, PREM3/322/2, Churchill-Alexander correspondence, 24/3-18/4/42; CAB66/24, WP(42)173, 21/4/42; CAB65/26, War Cabinet minutes, 27/4/42.

58. PRO, CAB92/39, JWPS(42)5, 29/4, JWPS minutes, 1/5, 8/5/42; CAB70/5, DC(S)(42)39, DC(S) minutes, 12/5/42.

59. PRO, CAB65/30, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 25/6/42; CAB92/39, JWPS minutes, 22/7/42; Kimball, vol.1, R-174, 9/7, C-121, 21/7, R-169, 24/7, C-122, 26/7/42.

60. PRO, CAB65/27, War Cabinet minutes, 1/8, 22/9/42; PREM3/322/2, Churchill-Alexander correspondence, 2-21/9/42; 322/3, 24/9-8/10/42; CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/2/3, Robinson to Lytellton, 6/8/42. Intermediate carriers were also designated "Light Fleet Carriers."

61. PRO, CAB70/5, DC(S)(42)88, 5/10, DC(S)(42)90, 9/10/42; CAB65/27, War Cabinet minutes, 22/9/42. Leathers supported Alexander on the main issue, noting that the Admiralty's programs had only enjoyed an 8% manpower increase since June 1941, compared to 24 and 32% for the Army and the RAF programs. See UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 7/7/42, for the U.S. stance.

62. Frankland & Webster, vol.1, 309.

63. PRO, CAB69/4, DO(42)14, 9/2/42; CCCA, Portal Papers, 9/8, Harris to Portal, 23/3, reply, 27/3/42; Frankland & Webster, vol.1, 322-324, 395, 443; Terraine, 459-461, 467-468.

64. PRO, CAB79/18, COS minutes, 11/2/42; CAB66/25, WP(42)250, 10/6/42.

65. CCCA, Portal Papers, 9/3, Cherwell to Portal, 27/2, reply, 28/2, Harris to Portal, 2/3/42; 9/27, Portal to Harris, 19/5, 14/6, reply, 12/6/42; 3/46, Portal to Churchill, 15/6/42; Frankland & Webster, vol.1, 395-399, 410, 431.

66. NCA, Cherwell Papers, F161, Cherwell to Churchill, 11/9/42; CCCA, Portal Papers, 31/16, Portal to Churchill, 20/8/42; Frankland & Webster, vol.1, 401; Hinsley, vol.2, 238-252; Jones, 290-375.

67. PRO, CAB70/5, DC(S) minutes, 7/4, DC(S)(42)63, 10/7, DC(S)(42)64, 15/7, DC(S) minutes, 17/7/42; NCA,Cherwell Papers, F158, Cherwell to Churchill, 17/7/42; Hornby, 198; Scott & Hughes, 397.

68. PRO, CAB 70/5, DC(S)(42)82, 11/9/42; CCCA, Portal Papers, 3/27, Portal-Churchill correspondence,14-20/9/42.

69. PRO, CAB70/5, DC(S)(42)89, 5/10, DC(S)(42)6, MAP Report, 26/1, DC(S)(42)98, MAP Report, 16/11/42; CAB65/28, War Cabinet minutes, 6/10/42; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F163, Cherwell to Churchill, 6/10/42; CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/7/2, MAP Production Charts, n/d.

70. HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D425, Beaverbrook to DC(O), 14/2/42, "not sent" file; CCCA, Portal Papers, 3/25, Attlee to Churchill, 25/2, Portal to Churchill, 26/2/42; 3/17, Lyster to Churchill, 15/4, Portal to Churchill, 24/4, 1/5/42; PRO, CAB79/19, COS Minutes, 12/3/42; PT, vol.2, Wavell-COS, 6/4, 12/4, COS-Wavell, (I)47,9/4, (I)50,16/4/42.

71. PRO,CAB80/35, COS(42)164, 10/3/42; 80/36, COS(42)208, 8/4/42; CAB69/4, DO(42)34, 1/4/42; CAB65/30, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 27/4/42; CCCA, Portal Papers, 8/9, Portal to Barratt, 6/3/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/V, 29/4/42 diary entry.

72. PRO, CAB80/36, Brooke to Portal, 2/5, COS(42)263, 14/5/42; CAB79/21, COS minutes, 19/5/42; Jacobs, 176.

73. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/V, 18/5/42 retrospective; Gwyer, vol.3, part 2, 533, was too easy on the Air Staff; Fraser, Alanbrooke, 184; Kennedy, The Business of War, 247.

74. HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D32, MAP to Production, 14/2, Beaverbrook to Margesson, 15/2/42; Jacobs, 180-181.

75. PRO, CAB80/37, COS(42)351, 21/7, COS(42)364, 1/8/42; Jacobs, 177.

76. PRO, CAB79/57, COS minutes, 5/10/42; Richards, 203-207, treated Brooke harshly, but the asinine comment that because he had not seen an aircraft in the sky over Dunkirk the RAF could not be trusted unless a specific command existed left Brooke open to criticism. The WO objections were by now based mainly on the feeling that the obsession with strategic bombing would leave no room for the "Libyan model" to grow and leave the Air Staff plan hollow. Jacobs, 178-181.

77. PRO, CAB70/5, DC(S)(42)13, 10/2, DC(S) minutes, 12/2/42; CAB79/56, COS minutes, 27/3/42; Roskill, vol.2, 77-86.

78. CCCA, Portal Papers, 3/14, A.V. Alexander to Churchill, 11/4, Portal to Churchill, 22/4/42; PRO, CAB80/36, COS(42)264, 14/5/42.

79. PRO, CAB70/5, DC(S) minutes, 17/7, DC(S)(42)73, 17/8, DC(S)(42)74, 14/8, DC(S)(42)78, 29/8/42.

80. CCA, Roskill Papers, 5/10, "Air Support for Naval Forces," Blake to Pound, 27/2/42; PRO, CAB 69/4, DO(42)15, 14/2/42.

81. CCCA, Portal Papers, 9/3, Harris to Portal, 5/3/42.

82. PRO, CAB79/19, COS Minutes, 11/3/42; CAB80/61, COS(42)71(O), 21/3/42.

83. CCCA, Portal Papers, 3/29, Churchill to Sinclair, 13/3/42; PT, vol.6, Churchill-Dill, 14/3/42; Richards, 199-201.

84. CCCA, Portal Papers, 3/29, Sinclair to Churchill, 18/3/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/V, 19/3/42 diary entry and retrospective; PRO, CAB79/20, COS minutes, 22/3, 26/3, JIC(42)117(O),10/4, 13/4/42; CAB69/4, DO(42)38, 9/4, DO(42)39, 13/4/42.

85. Butler, vol.III, 526-527, and Frankland & Webster, vol.1, 335-336, were neutered accounts of the Cherwell-Tizard-Blackett controversy; NCA, Cherwell Papers, Supplementary #1, file on Tizard controversy; Hastings, M. Bomber Command, London, 1979, 133.

86. Hinsley, vol.2, 153-154, 257-262, convincingly argued that strategic bombing in fact proceeded apart from intelligence support, propelled by other factors. This was the prime example of both dogma and lack of options in grand strategy. The whole question of whether the target was dead civilians or wrecked houses is a red herring. Both were clearly desired and accepted as likely. CCCA, Portal Papers, 3/29, Sinclair to Churchill, 18/3/42.

87. Longmate, N. The Bombers, London, 1983, 133-134, went much too far to claim that the report was drowned in an "anti-Tizard witch hunt"; Frankland & Webster, 335-339, overrated Singleton's ability to reach firm conclusions and overlooked the influence of Air Staff testimony; PRO, PREM3/1/4, "The Bombing of Germany," 20/5/42.

88. NCA, Cherwell Papers, F156, Cherwell to Churchill, 28/5/42; PRO, CAB80/63, COS(42)171(O), 16/6/42; CAB79/21, COS Minutes, 16/6/42; CCCA, Portal Papers, 9/31, Portal to Harris, 14/6/42.

89. PRO, CAB69/4,DC(O) minutes, 18/3/42; CCCA, Portal Papers, 3/29, Sinclair to Churchill, 18/3/42; 8/9, Portal to Joubert, 6/3/42.

90. CCCA, Portal Papers, 9/9, Harris to Portal, 25/3/42; PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 27/3, 30/3/42; CAB69/4, DO(42)34, 1/4/42; CAB80/36, COS(42)264, 14/5/42; CCA, A.V. Alexander Papers, 5/7/27, Alexander to Churchill, 13/4/42.

91. Kimball, vol.1, R-125, 19/3, C-53, 20/3, C-60, 29/3/42; CCCA, Portal Papers, 3/38, Portal to Churchill, 27/3,31/3/42; PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 31/3, 19/5/42; CAB 88/6, CCS73, 19/5/42; PREM3/453/2, Portal to Churchill, 20/5, 16/6, Slessor to Churchill, 18/6/42.

92. PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 26/5, 2/6/42.

93. CCCA, Portal Papers, 2/40, Portal to Churchill, 29/5/42; 8/24, Joubert-Portal correspondence, 21-22/6/42.

94. PRO, CAB 79/87, COS minutes, Secretary's Standard File, 24/6/42; CAB80/63, COS(42)172(O), 16/6, COS(42)183(O), 23/6/42; CAB65/26, War Cabinet minutes, 24/6/42; CCA, Hankey Papers, 1/7,22/5/42 diary entry.

95. PRO, CAB80/36, COS(42)332, 2/7/42; CAB79/56, COS minutes, 6/7, 8/7/42.

96. PRO, CAB80/63, COS(42)204(O), 18/7, COS(42)206(O), 17/7/42; CAB79/22, COS minutes, 22/7/42; Roskill, vol.2, 80-86, became bolder in Roskill, Churchill and the Admirals, 1977, 135.

97. PRO, CAB 70/5, DC(S) Minutes, 17/7/42; PREM3/499/9, Churchill to Attlee, 29/7/42.

98. CCCA, Portal Papers, 8/19, 8/21, Portal-Joubert correspondences, 1/6-11/6/42; 3/32, Portal to Churchill, 13/3/42, for a typical albeit stretched example.

99. There is evidence the Air Staff were convinced of the value of this "offensive" option- CCCA, Portal Papers, 8/32, Joubert to Portal, 20/9, reply 24/9/42.

100. CCCA, Portal Papers, 3/1, Cherwell to Churchill, 4/6, Churchill to Portal, 5/6, 16/6, Portal to Churchill, 15/6, 5/7/42; PRO, CAB70/5, DC(S) minutes, 17/7/42; Terraine, 440; Roskill, vol.2, 86.

101. CCCA, Portal Papers, 8/30, Portal-Joubert correspondence, 11/8-4/9/42; Terraine, 440.

102. PRO, CAB65/31, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 12/8/42; CCA, Hankey Papers, 1/7, 31/8/42 entry.

103. PRO, CAB80/63, COS(42)229(O), 14/8/42; CAB79/23, COS minutes, 2/9/42.

104. Terraine, 401-414.

105. PRO, CAB80/35, COS(42)183, 22/3/42; PREM3/29/4, Metropolitan RAF Orders of Battle, 6/3, 4/9/42; CAB66/28, WP(42)388, 2/9/42. See also Appendix C.

106. Hastings, 139; Terraine, 426-427; Costello & Hughes, 220, pointed out the irony that Churchill withheld more support for the Admiralty just as Hitler finally gave more to Doenitz; Roskill, Churchill and the Admirals, 139, was again rather more forthright than Roskill, vol.2, 77-86.

107. NCA, Cherwell Papers, F163, Cherwell to Churchill, 22/10/42.

108. PRO, CAB80/37, COS(42)32/3, 27/6/42; CCCA, Portal Papers, 9/9, Harris to Portal, 11/5/42, reply 13/5/42; CCCA, Portal Papers, 8/32, Joubert to Portal, 20/9, reply, 24/9/42; 3/10, Amery to Churchill, 14//7, Portal to Churchill, 21/7/42.

109. PRO, CAB66/28, WP(42)374, 24/8/42; CCCA, Portal Papers, 9/50, Harris to Portal, 14/8, 20/8, reply, 22/8/42.

Chapter 6

Strategy Extended: By Design

"People say there ought to be comprehensive plan of the war as a whole, and that the United Nations ought to participate in it. There has always been on our part, since the U.S. entry, a perfectly clear view. I have never varied on the main points."

- Churchill, 24/10/42

Michael Howard, in the relevant volume of the British official history of grand strategy, identified three interlocked priorities in Whitehall thinking in autumn 1942: day to day issues, TORCH, and:

> "the development, in association with their American colleagues, of a long term strategy for the further conduct of the war."[1]

To that must be added growing concern over the way in which the Allied war effort had been integrated and the impact of the escalation of the war on the U.K's prospects. More advanced mobilization could not be relied on to ward off American pressure for changes in coalition policy much longer. Yet Axis power continued to seem too formidable to risk a change in basic grand strategic approach. This made three things very urgent. The tide of events at the sharp end had to be reversed. It would be necessary to forge another internal and Allied consensus on current and overall grand strategy. Finally, an even greater exertion of national power would be required; that made it essential to determine whether structural power was organized along the best possible lines and what, if any, adjustments could be made.

The outcome was one of the most sustained and seminal British and Allied grand strategic debates of the war. Three factors shaped this process: the political context in which Whitehall reoriented its ideas; the perceived state of its own military, organizational and technical power and that of the enemy; the very heavy impact of events in the field. Tracing them thematically will make it possible to focus on the pivotal and multi-tiered debate that then emerged in proper context. But in order to fill out that context, it will then be necessary to return directly to an investigation of the concurrent effort to reorganize British and Allied structural policy and harmonize it with grand strategy. It will be argued that this broad interpretation makes it possible to discern a conscious yet broad and general redefinition of the outline consensus on how

to execute national war policy. This process was underpinned by what had become one central fear: that the grand strategy still seen as the only possible course would fail, leaving the U.K. broken by the strain and facing, at best, dependence on its allies.

Whitehall's response emerged in the form of debates that reflected a growing tug of war between the ideas of 1940-1941 and the circumstances of late 1942. Three loose competing visions emerged, in a confused debate that overlapped in British and Allied circles: a determined effort to secure the vital fixed commitments at all costs; an intensification of the general tilt towards an RAF led grand strategy; a shift towards the preparation of a more direct and more comprehensive grand strategic offensive approach towards the continent of Europe. Personal prejudices were involved, but other factors proved decisive: the momentum of structural and strategic efforts; the perceived prospects and limits of same; coalition pressures; and above all, the reassuring familiar consensus on fundamentals expressed in the basic "wear down" posture. This basic consensus on a prevailing concept provided a framework within which Whitehall redesigned grand strategy by grafting the new onto the old, in preparation for a more forward phase of global total war.

In autumn 1942, it at last began to seem that Britain was learning, with uneven success, how to meet the strains of total global war. Change was greatest where it was most needed, national support for the government and its war policy. The Cabinet crisis played itself out. But it gave way to a fundamental groundswell in national thought. The claims by proponents of a negotiated peace that total victory was an emotional policy not well suited to British interests fell out of favour in the new global situation.[2] Cripps' challenge to Churchill over the direction of the war, the last mortal threat he would face, was fought off by a strong case based on the party line:

> "Any clever person can make plans for winning the war if he has not to carry them out."[3]

Cripps was challenged to move or relent. On 8 September, Cripps made a false step by hectoring the House of Commons for not visibly supporting a Churchill speech. Churchill criticized him for not accepting "silent support" and received full Cabinet

backing. Cripps, a man of many enemies, left himself in a worse position by heeding Attlee's advice to delay his resignation after submitting the letter in early October. Because his criticism was based on the conduct of the war, if the situation improved, Churchill had Cripps at his mercy.[4] Cripps was the last real threat. The Chamberlainite Tories were still hostile but the public no longer took them seriously. Victory at Alamein left Churchill riding high. However, Churchill's actions reflected an acute sense of political balance. Cripps was dropped from the War Cabinet but moved to the important post at MAP. Morrison took his place on the War Cabinet. This reflected an awareness of the new need to consider long term social policy, reaffirmed on 19 November by agreement to institute quarterly reviews of post-war reconstruction policy. A deal emerged - Cabinet would continue to offer important support for war direction while leaving its execution to Churchill, in return for the first serious but careful steps in long term policy.[5]

The nature of Cripps' challenge deserves notice. Cripps, the only real threat, refused to resign before Alamein when he might well have sparked a real crisis. This revealed a sense of broad responsibility, and frustration rather then animosity. This proved to be true of the nation at large, to whom the feud over machinery was anyway remote. After clear victory, popular approval for Churchill in November was rated 91%, for his war direction 75%.[6] Churchill's position as war leader was secure. However, the issue of post-war reconstruction now emerged. The political class, caught up in its own duels, were forced to take heed of a great and growing groundswell of national thought. Whitehall was not caught entirely off guard. The expansion of government control over national life had been so enormous that this government had by now a better grasp of that life than any of its predecessors. This was still a middle class bureaucracy trying to understand the reaction of a nation of working people to unprecedented strain, and it made mistakes. Information reports now reflected a curious balance - a better vision of popular problems and perceptions coupled a with lingering desire for crusading fervour. A consensus LPC report on 6 October was a good example. No defeatism and little war weariness was found but no sense of urgency either, as personal daily concerns took precedence. Victory would ease grumbling over

the war, but the fear was growing that the "betrayal" of the 1920's would be repeated as vested interests moved to obstruct reform. Despite the lingering desire for enthusiasm this grasp of national opinion was far advanced beyond 1940 standards. In place of exhortation, concrete exposition and discussion of post-war plans was advised. Whitehall at last saw the need to respond to rising expectations of postwar change.[7]

This was the spectre Churchill had always resisted as a mortal threat to national unity. What he had not understood, or faced, was that drastic upheaval and intense national effort would affect popular perceptions of what should and could be done in return. This combustible situation was ignited by William Beveridge, supposedly fobbed off in 1941 with a routine study of options for post-war reform of social insurance policy. Beveridge's report was now ready and the timing proved decisive. His proposals merely reflected a gradualist consensus - the state should rationalize and expand existing programs. But his assumptions were explosive - the state could and must reduce economic inequality by much greater permanent intervention in national life. This was a timely chord to strike. The sweeping mobilization of national resources had begun to foster two beliefs - industrial reorganization was possible and pre-war economic hardship had been the artificial result of an unfair division of wealth which the state could adjust, as it was during the war. The essence of the report leaked, which swelled public discussion. Cabinet tried to retain the issue within the reflective atmosphere of Whitehall, but it was too late for that. In the euphoria of belated victories long contained debate on passionately desired reform could not be held in check, and the report provided an instant basis for national discussion. The government's predicament was outlined by Cherwell on 25 November. Beveridge's plan had caught popular interest and full review could not be avoided, but the plan had not thought through the full context. The war effort was being sustained by national solidarity and Lend-Lease. There was no guarantee either would extend into peace time. This meant the government risked being pressured into promises it might not be able to meet. Cherwell advised friendly but noncommittal reception of the plan. Cabinet agreed the next day and agreed to release it as a White Paper on 1 December and allow Beveridge to comment. This action duly made the plan the focus of all the earnest speculation on post-war priorities which had

arisen, based on two broad but conflicting themes. The more widely held view in popular opinion, but growing in the political class, was that the war effort demonstrated the ability of national power to build a fairer society. The other view, more restricted to official and industrial circles, was that the drain of the war effort made rebuilding economic structure, to face an uncertain situation, the first priority.[8]

Churchill supported the latter view, by conviction and to preserve his policy of united focus on the war. On 17 December, he laid down three considerations for all post-war reviews: financial uncertainty and the urgent need to rebuild the export trade; the need to retain strong military power; the need to keep public expectations within probable national means. However, the cork could no longer be kept in place.[9] The groundswell of thought brought forth by the war and given direction by Beveridge obscured the fact that long term financial latitude was already dependent on American policy. Churchill's own action in setting off a "People's War" to eke out every ounce of national power accelerated this by discrediting the policies of his predecessors. Britain had been forced to mobilize so intensely that the nation expected real change in return. It was too easy for the uninformed and some who knew better to dismiss the justified fears of the risk of large commitments on a structure that had proven itself seriously deficient in many ways, and dependent on outside aid, as "the smoke screen of vested interests." Henceforth, this new dynamic of expectation became a growing factor in the calculation and performance of national power.

This was the broad political context. In specific terms, Churchill's policy and his continuance in office now depended on whether the efforts of his government to help the nation and its power components adapt to the demands of modern total war would be seen to be a success. In immediate terms, the first issue was whether the Army could regain national and official confidence. Here there was some clear progress. Two years of exertion and trial by fire had at last begun to have some effect. Brooke was in full control as CIGS, had a strong team at the War Office, and enjoyed wide confidence from Grigg on down. Home Forces training became more intense, benefitting from more and better facilities and equipment, lessons from active operations, and time. Friction over

Imperial command and control continued. British commanders remained irked by the need to treat Dominion units more circumspectly. But this was a small price to pay for the gain of a dozen field divisions and friction declined with the return of all but one Australian division to the Pacific. Criticism of battle doctrine and table of organization persisted, often unfairly overlooking the steps the WO had taken to improve leadership, mobility and combat power.[10] But the immediately critical area was Egypt.

Eighth Army's repeated failure cemented the loss of confidence in the Army begun in 1940. Montgomery was expected to restore its fortunes and regain that confidence; Churchill went so far as to pledge this to Roosevelt in July in return for the vital American materiel.[11] Montgomery's success in September won him Eighth Army's confidence and allowed him to tackle the problem that had ruined all previous attacks - the inferiority of British armoured forces and British inability to match German skill in concerting the power of all arms in unison. Eighth Army had an unnecessarily hard won font of experience to assist his efforts. Great strides were made in understanding German capabilities. From Gazala the 88mm was seen categorically as the killer it was. "Ultra" also helped the WO realize by October how formidable the long barrelled high velocity 50mm PZKWIII and 75mmPZKWIV were and how many Rommel had. This helped settle the debate on equipment development and move efforts away from upgrading the two pounders flooded out by 1941 programs to bringing on six and especially 17 pounders. Attlee's report on armour at CRUSADER, taken by the DC(O) on 25 June, proved seminal. Attlee found problems in every step of the process from developing to deploying the Crusader tank, neatly summarized:

> "...it had been pressed into production before the pilot model had been adequately tested and before defects had been detected and rectified. Large scale production was achieved only at the cost of reliability and fighting efficiency."

This served as an epitaph of the decision to rush types into service in 1940-1941 and the inability of British structure to meet the challenge.[12]

The intrusion of American types now began to affect development policy. The 17 pounder was accepted as the weapon of the next generation but the problem was to match the current foes, the long 50 and 75mm's, the latter of which now made up 50%

of Rommel's tanks. Montgomery had only the six pounder and 75mm and only 33 of Montgomery's Crusaders had the six pounder. He had to rely on his American tanks, as his grinding force.[13] The British had been unable to deploy a reliable tank in numbers for a decisive battle, the aim of all their efforts since 1940. This underlined interdependence as nothing else could. Still Churchill left Cairo in no doubt that Eighth Army must succeed. There was now justifiable reason to feel it should. Montgomery had to rely on Shermans, but he had them. Montgomery knew what he had to do - use his deservedly respected and powerful artillery, suspect but numerous armour, Tedder's well oiled forces, and superior numbers to best co-ordinated effect in a set piece battle dictated by strong defences. On the eve of battle, Smuts for one was confident. Eighth Army's ability to pursue was suspect, but Montgomery had wrought an "unbelievable" change which would bring out its combat power in unified fashion and win a victory.[14]

On area in which British efforts to adapt to total war had been more successful was the application of scientific expertise to decisions at all levels. The escalation of a war marked by rapid technological change in every element clearly made it necessary to inject scientific and technical expertise into decisions on what forces and equipment to build and how to use them. The experience of 1914-1918 left a good legacy. From 1939, scientists were reserved to be used as such and Whitehall absorbed them into the machinery. The process was not without waste or friction, but the Official Historians were correct in their verdict that the process was well advanced by 1942. Naturally this was a complex process, varying immensely, but departmental research establishments became the norm. The process was most successful in the highly technical sphere of the RAF, where Dr. R.V. Jones made Scientific Intelligence an integral part of Air Staff decision making by proving its value again and again - German radar equipment and methods, air defence systems, bombing aids. By autumn 1942 all services had influential civilian experts intimately involved in decision making. A definite general policy was pursued - the earliest possible introduction of effective new equipment. The prevailing method reproduced the Whitehall matrix - constant integrated dialogue between scientists, soldiers and officials, often across departmental lines. The Americans reproduced their own bureaucracy by a system of competitive isolation of scientists tied to departments.

The Germans were hindered by factional strife in government, lack of clear cut long term policy and Hitler's erratic attention. Each approach reflected its context. The Germans produced precision equipment but struggled to connect development to cohesive national war policy. The Americans spent lavishly to produce rapidly. Unfortunately, British resources did not match their organizational skill. The British struggled to bring good designs to timely production, and American support again proved to be of major importance.[15]

The development of the atomic bomb, a familiar episode, was the classic example of the "British dilemma." In October 1941, it was decided American and British scientists were to work together; but an American proposal to shift the last development stage to the U.S., to exploit greater resources, sparked the usual fatal ambivalence in Whitehall when hard facts called for a British sacrifice to entrench the "common pool," especially where connotations of independent power were involved. This proved to be a mistake when U.S. research accelerated in 1942 and Anderson, the responsible Minister, reported that to produce a weapon massive amounts of resources desperately needed elsewhere would be required. Churchill accepted the unavoidable and on his June trip to Washington personally persuaded Roosevelt to agree to a joint program with all results shared between the U.S., the U.K. and Canada, but with physical development based in the U.S. Unfortunately the attitude of lesser Americans proved less satisfactory and the British soon feared being cut out of what might become a major military technological advance.[16] This was the "British dilemma" in microcosm - good organization, inadequate overtaxed resources, reliance on the U.S. and ambivalence regarding the consequences, and heavy reliance on personal contact.

The other major advance in the application of science to war, operational research, hit its stride in 1942. All three services organized expert teams for empirical study of problems in the use of new equipment and the effects on tactics and strategy. The study of air defence, strategic bombing, and especially anti-submarine warfare, racked as it was by inter-service dispute and technological change, really entrenched operational research in strategic planning. Scientists became the auditors in disputes that affected the balance and emphasis of grand strategy, such as whether Biscay patrols or

convoy escort were more likely ways to kill U-Boats. Along with parallel growth in applying statistical analysis to structural problems, this greatly enhanced objective appreciation of national power. Naturally the process was incomplete. Dispassionate scrutiny of more objective evidence was a real advance but did not and could not solve the problem of strategic dispute. Grand strategy and strategy are art, not science, fashioned by biased fallible human beings not amenable to reduction to precise formulae which rule out intangibles. Operational research came to the fore because it could assist judgement, not replace it.[17]

The apex of the system was considered by many its worst weakness - the Cherwell-Churchill connection. Cherwell, as intimate friend and official Scientific Adviser, enjoyed privileged access which allowed him to impart supposedly expert advice on a vast panorama of subjects which really involved the entire war effort. The contemporary and post-war critique was that Cherwell was a mediocre scientist who, because of undue personal influence, helped bring about several major blunders. In fact, the record is mixed. Cherwell was partial to "gadgets" and he did make serious mistakes - aerial mines, the UP rocket, the V weapons, the delay of WINDOW, the use of 10cm radar. On the other hand, he had successes - the Butt Report, anti-tank weapons, aerial bombs, the Pathfinder Force. The real criticism was the point of undue personal influence, fuelled especially by the feud with Tizard over "area" bombing. Cherwell definitely had great influence with Churchill and thus on policy. Churchill sometimes turned on him, as over the silly "Habakkuk" project, but never dismissed him. That project was an example of resources wasted on idiosyncratic ideas not fully put through the matrix of thought. Cherwell reinforced this by scuttling attempts to provide the COS with their own body of scientists to offer advice. This was unfortunate and the inconsistent nature of the Cherwell-Churchill approach probably did as much harm as good in technical questions.[18] However, grand strategy was only really vulnerable when the COS were not united. Overall, British use of scientific expertise was, by 1942, an absolute and relative gain in the use of national power.

Another advance on the credit side of the ledger, and one which reflected the steady turn to offensive prospects, was the development of strategic deception. The COS

made two decisions in February - to integrate the Controllers fully into the central machinery, to avoid cross purposes, and to delay organization of systematic grand strategic deception until the Allies had the initiative and it could be done with some coherence. The XX Committee objected, but this was premature. Their "double cross" network and the deception machinery were both still developing.[19] Deception at the strategic level improved, used by Eighth Army and the Eastern Fleet to confuse the enemy as to their strength and intentions and stretch his forces. The turning point came in June. The "Second Front" debate opened up new vistas, either for concealing real assaults or threatening false ones. The COS decided to strengthen the machinery and ensure it became an integral part of overall plans. On 20 June they gave it a new name, the London Controlling Section (LCS), a new Controller, Col. J.H. Bevan, responsible directly to them, and a new directive - as part of the JPS, prepare and co-ordinate global deception plans to compel the enemy to waste forces. This was an expansive new vision which looked forward to playing on enemy preconceptions, the crucial factor, on a grand scale. It only made sense if the Allies had firm plans to be concealed. Bevan's first task was to prepare cover plans for ROUNDUP. Starting with TORCH, deception became an integral part of grand strategy.[20] The XX Committee, whose network was now much larger and greatly aided by "Ultra" intercepts which revealed which of its agents the Germans took seriously, was directed to conform to LCS efforts. Bevan took a seat on the Committee and decided to work with and not harness it. This was wise, as the double agents had other uses. A picture of German preconceptions and ideas on how to play on them grew steadily. JUBILEE was too early to be assisted, but this was the last case. From autumn 1942, an even better co-ordinated and balanced network fully conversant with central plans was ready to attempt to conceal those plans, thus hopefully adding weight to Allied power.[21] It would have to learn on the job, but at least it was in place.

This is far from a complete picture of the progress of British capabilities. However, the full dimensions can best be grasped by turning now to the direct relationship between events in the field and Whitehall thinking. For clarity's sake, a

concurrent problem will be treated as a general progression from peripheral to central problems, as seen in Whitehall. The obvious place to start was the attempt to gain a clearer picture of enemy capability, potential, and intentions, especially at the grand strategic level. The year started auspiciously with a successful reorganization of GCCS and its channels to departments. The integration of carefully sifted intelligence and its application in decision making improved. But signals intelligence could only assist fundamental appreciations so far. Better use was made of call signs and serial numbers to improve estimates of tank and U-Boat production, but this could not correct the original crucial error - the belief that the German economy had almost no margin left.[22]

The British now better understood what the Germans were doing but not what they could still accomplish. The attempt to define an accurate picture of the German oil position illustrated the general trend - a more sober revision of the 1940 wishful thinking was not taken far enough. Hankey and Lloyd continued to claim potentially decisive results for sustained pressure. Efforts were made to attack oil targets but with little success. In September, the JIC reported that the whole German industry now seemed more vulnerable to a general oil shortage than anything else; but it also went no farther than to claim that intense operations in Russia would force a 25% cut in civil consumption. This touched the heart of the matter.[23] If the estimate of the maximum German macroeconomic capacity was incorrect, then all estimates based on it would also be incorrect regarding margins of capability.

Unfortunately, MEW remained convinced that Germany had been at or near full mobilization for years. In fact, only in February did the Nazi regime finally begin to move seriously towards a total economic war footing, in reaction to the prospect of a long total war. MEW traced this increase and at last began to understand the extent of the exploitation of occupied territories. But the Official Historians were correct to argue that in 1942 assessments of overall German power "were not notably more reliable than those made in the first two years of the war." In fact confusion increased, because the better estimates of actual current output which continued to be used as yardsticks of relative power margins were still based on the original flawed basic estimate.[24] By autumn 1942 this made Whitehall nervous. Ministry of Production reports indicated that

total German arms production was 108 as compared to 100 for the U.K. But this was based on a division of labour force assuming equal output per head. If this was accurate, the Germans had to have deployed 20% more manpower in war related industry; if inaccurate, the estimated level of mobilization would also be incorrect. This seemed like mirror imaging. In fact it indicated perceptions in transition. Selborne circulated on 9 October a paper on "Comparative U.K. and German Economic Mobilization" of distinctly cautious tone. It was now argued that Germany had been able to increase output still more because its industry was more efficient and its government could more ruthlessly concentrate production. This was progress - the former at least was correct. The latter was not, nor was the claim that Britain had been forced to mobilize more labour to produce fewer arms because of a lower start level and more complex tasks.[25] This indicated persistent reluctance to consider that German industry might be much more efficient than British, and have more slack than had previously been estimated.

Cherwell's comments on this paper brought this debate to an impasse. At issue was whether a more intense effort was required in the U.K. Cherwell rejected MEW's claim that the Germans had been able to mobilize armed forces nearly twice as large as the U.K. with only 10% more war workers. MEW explained this by asserting that the German Army drew on the peasantry. Cherwell argued this meant German stock levels in 1939 would have to have been much higher, and German agriculture four times as efficient as British. MEW insisted that the problem was the U.K. was forced to have more labour in "less essential" industries. Cherwell agreed that it appeared German civil industry had been compressed to a greater degree than British but warned MEW's sources were not conclusive.[26]

This had some effect on JIC estimates of German potential. By December, their advice was cautious. The Army and Air Force were overstretched but would remain powerful. The U-Boats were pointedly singled out as a "potent weapon." German war power might be overstretched in 1943 but was not yet near the "wear down" point. Again, this was progress. The illusion of an accessible Achilles heel had given way to a more balanced picture. Yet the beliefs that a totalitarian regime must have fully mobilized before the war, and if pressed would lose the confidence of or control over its

people, were tenacious. They strengthened the lobby for "area" bombing on the instinctive grounds that German morale would "crack." The Foreign Office pressed this case hard. In September they argued that only a deterioration in service morale or loss of cohesion in ruling circles would mean real crisis and neither were apparent. But in December the Foreign Office and the JIC argued that discontent and apathy were rife at mass and elite levels and would become opposition under the increased repression the Nazis would need to sustain the war effort. A sudden "crack" could come at any time as long as pressure was maintained.[27]

This less than penetrating overall image of the power of the main enemy was the backdrop. The catalyst for the upheaval in grand strategic thinking was, as before, the course of current campaigns and grand strategy. Here there was in Whitehall's view a definite order of priority, which reflected the shift in the overall situation. India, in the forefront of concern in the spring, was now at the bottom. Previous plans for offensive action proceeded, but were again eroded by internal unrest, unreadiness for combat, coalition friction, weather and COS priorities. The Indian political situation cooled somewhat, but tempers there and in London and the U.S. continued to run dangerously high over the whole question of India's future.[28] Japanese moves to stir subversion were taken seriously. Grand strategic intelligence was good and influential. On 11 September, the JIC advised that the Japanese now intended to adopt an aggressive strategic defensive, to wear out Allied patience. India was to be neutralized by subversion, air and naval pressure and tactical land offensives; a major fleet incursion was unlikely as all naval strength was needed for the Pacific. The COS welcomed the report. Brooke stressed that it vindicated "Europe first," but also argued the five Japanese divisions and strong air forces in Burma made early counterattack unwise.[29]

This remained the COS position. Wavell would not countenance even limited offensives, let alone ANAKIM, the drive to reconquer Burma, until his forces were much stronger, better trained and more confident. Nor would any advance go beyond logistic limits. The COS agreed and by October ANAKIM was in the background. The current focus was on more limited efforts - CANNIBAL, an overland attack along the Arakan coast in December, clinched by an amphibious assault on Akyab Island; RAVENOUS,

an overland advance in February to the Chindwin area. These would hopefully restore army morale and confidence, secure forward air bases, assist defence of the supply link to China and help improve logistics for the next stage.[30]

What little chance there was of launching these operations was ruined by coalition friction. The essence of a long complex debate was this - the Chinese mistrusted British intentions and capabilities; the Americans wanted to assist the Chinese and retain control of their air forces; the British mistrusted Chinese intentions and capabilities and resented their dependence on American supply and air support and the wedge this gave the JCS to "interfere" in a British sphere. The theatre commanders, Wavell and Stilwell, tried in October to find a consensus. They agreed not to advance beyond logistic capability, and to deploy 30,000 Chinese troops in India under Stilwell who, with 10th Air Force, would co-operate with and conform to Wavell's plans. The COS reluctantly agreed and it was generally felt CANNIBAL and RAVENOUS would proceed. This did not happen. The RAF proved too weak to wear down its opponent and the COS refused to commit large reinforcements. Wavell dropped the amphibious assault just as the COS agreed to push ANAKIM back to October 1943.[31] Chaing Kai Shek then refused to move without prior air and naval superiority; in effect, without victory already assured. The British would not move unless he did. The Americans saw this as an excuse to renege on a commitment. Only Dill seemed to see the whole picture - the advance up north depended on the Chinese, who would not move; the Americans would not relinquish their voice regarding their supplies and forces involved but did not grasp the full obstacles facing Wavell; the COS did not understand that Washington considered the erosion of plans suspect. The result, in December, was a stalled RAVENOUS, the launch of CANNIBAL by a one division assault and, in addition, an American debate between Stilwell and Chennault, air commander in China, over the emphasis of future strategy. Early action was diluted but at the cost of aggravated suspicion.[32]

The Eastern Fleet remained too weak in all respects, especially airpower, to attempt anything other than to cover the conquest of Madagascar, overrun on 5 November. This was in spite of a major escalation of operations in the southwest Pacific. The Allies found in their attacks on New Guinea and Guadalcanal that the

Japanese intended to contest their perimeter literally to the death. A major campaign ensued in all three elements, with the usual magnetic effect on resources and attention. Fierce fighting led, through October, to heavy USN losses, including two fleet carriers sunk, and exposed the hasty logistical improvisations of initial plans. Roosevelt was forced to settle a JCS clash over priorities by ordering the position to be held at all costs. The British were requested to stage a diversion or lend an aircraft carrier. Churchill saw this as a chance to garner some sorely needed credit, but Somerville felt his fleet was far too poorly equipped and trained to offer any assistance. This perhaps took caution to extremes but the COS were able to justify the stand by citing the Americans' continuing reluctance to keep London fully conversant with the situation. An offer to send **HMS Victorious** finally ensued in December, but by then the USN had scored several victories and the tactical tide had definitively shifted.[33] The whole issue underlined British naval weakness in quality and quantity and the differences opening up in Allied grand strategy against the Japanese.

Inactivity in India was meant to allow a decisive breakthrough in north Africa. In effect two campaigns were to converge - the British campaign to hold the Middle East and defeat the Axis army in north Africa; the initial Allied campaign to overrun Vichy controlled northwest Africa. The overriding objective was to rout the Axis and secure Africa once and for all by the end of the year. Whitehall continued to feel that it was politically imperative for Eighth Army to score a clearly decisive success **before** the Allied invasion. Nevertheless, Churchill accepted a postponement of Montgomery's offensive, LIGHTFOOT, to late October, now observing that "late victory was better than early defeat."[34] This change of heart resulted from several factors. Montgomery impressed Churchill with his grip on the situation. Tedder expressed cautious optimism. The balance of forces was favourable. Rommel had 11 divisions but only 50,000 men, 250 tanks and 68 88mm guns. Montgomery would field 11 divisions, 195,000 men, 1,400 guns and over 1,000 tanks. Rommel's logistic situation was nearly desperate. Whether the root cause was disruption of supply convoys or, as Martin Van Creveld argued, the impossibility of supplying forces along so lengthy and primitive a supply line, the end result was the same - Eighth Army had built up a crushing superiority of

force. Last but not least, signals intelligence, now a veritable flood tide, greatly assisted efforts to cut the Axis supply lines and gave Montgomery foreknowledge of almost every aspect of Rommel's situation except the depth of his defence. Montgomery was able to plan confidently a set piece attrition battle, the type best suited to his and Eighth Army's capability. Intelligence, properly applied, was a decisive assist.[35]

In spite of this, London was confident but not complacent. The British had never yet routed German opposition and on the very eve of battle Brooke privately felt uncertain.[36] The battle, launched by a massive bombardment early on 24 October, turned out to be very hard slogging indeed. Axis forces put up a stiff fight behind unprecedently and unexpectedly thick belts of mine fields. After five days, Montgomery pulled X Corps back into reserve, to prepare for a breakthrough. This stirred visions in Churchill's mind of previous commanders breaking off action. He pressed Brooke hard at a tense DC(O) meeting on 29 October, pressure Brooke was able to fend off only by citing Smuts stolid confidence. Montgomery's breakthrough, SUPERCHARGE, at last broke Panzerarmee Afrika under the strain. Rommel wasted irreplaceable time before deciding to defy Hitler's veto and retreat, an exchange overheard by "Ultra." Breakthrough was clear on 4 November and on 6 November Churchill received the signal he had longed for since BATTLEAXE - crushing victory, with the enemy in full retreat and Eighth Army in headlong pursuit.[37] Churchill's reaction speaks for itself:

> "...this was one of the greatest victories ever won by the British Empire in the field, and, on behalf on the War Cabinet, he congratulated the Secretary State for War and the CIGS, together with the representatives of the Dominions and India present, on the brilliant part played by their forces."[38]

The tide had indeed turned in north Africa and Montgomery clearly understood why - the American tanks, the skill and power of his artillery, the power and co-operation of Desert Air Force, and Rommel's strained logistics. Eighth Army won its set piece, obliged by the German decision to stay and be ground down. But now a new question arose - could Eighth Army rout its enemy and sweep through to Tunis before the Axis could recover? Plodding forward would not be enough. Quick advance, to consolidate success, open up new prospects, and forestall further frustration, was imperative. The signs were mixed. The artillery, bulwark of Eighth Army's combat

power, would be less useful in pursuit. The German formations were retreating in good order amid bad weather and it was unclear whether Eighth Army could match their skill in fluid combat. Montgomery had a healthy respect for German power and was above all determined not to outpace his logistics and risk another setback.[39] Against all this, Eighth Army was in full command of the initiative.

Meanwhile, the TORCH plan was finally settled in early September on the basis of a compromise between security and speed. Simultaneous landings were to be made around Casablanca and Oran by the Americans and at Algiers by an American vanguard followed by British troops. The Casablanca landing was reduced to bolster the Algiers force. The USN increased its allocation of warships. This, as Ramsay put it, was "bigger than we expected, smaller than we wished, but enough to proceed."[40] There was some progress in command and staff integration. Eisenhower set a fine and lasting example by insisting on a truly Allied machinery in spirit and practice. The COS response was a directive to Anderson, final choice as First Army commander, which became the model for national commanders under Allied direction.[41] However, the different concepts of the campaign and its prime objective, embedded in the outline plan, proved a great hindrance.

Eisenhower and London feared that abandonment of initial landings east of Algiers jeopardized chances of quickly overrunning Tunisia.[42] Washington did not deny this but was more concerned with consolidating the whole campaign in the face of possible Axis attack through Gibraltar. The decisive factors were French reaction - important enough to be treated separately - and German response. Nye and Anderson felt the Germans would move quickly into Tunisia in force. The JIC disagreed and argued that even with this plan Tunisia could still be "bounced." Their optimism was reflected in the lethargic organization of intelligence machinery for Eisenhower's Allied Forces Headquarters (AFHQ).[43] By and large attention was riveted on the problems of getting ashore, to the detriment of advancing once there. This was probably unavoidable and was reinforced by the repeated disruption of organization schedules by heavy shipping losses. The U-Boat threat forced the Allies to lay on truly lavish naval cover for the assault convoys. The resulting improvisations and transfers upset the whole

global naval and shipping balance and interfered with all other existing efforts. Churchill pressed for an earlier date to ease the problem, but the improvisations themselves ruled this out. The Germans were stung into action in October, in the form of a desperate ten day blitz on Malta in a last attempt to knock it out. It failed, but the Germans continued to pour air units into Sicily to ward off a blow they now expected but whose location they did not discover.[44] Allied forces settled the issue with landings on 8 November.

At great expense to other efforts, a force of 300 naval vessels and 370 merchant ships launched 13 Allied divisions* onto three main bridgeheads, separated by hundreds of miles and relying on one exposed base. In this context the JCS fears were understandable. Yet they agreed with Eisenhower and the British that the key to real success was the rapid conquest of Tunisia. This would ensure the early clearance of all north Africa and put the Allies in a commanding position to carry the war north. Nevertheless, Allied action was uncertain, improvised and divergent. Resistance ceased and the landings were consolidated, with light losses, by 11 November. Anderson moved east that same day, 78th Division in the van. However, all he could manage were improvised amphibious assaults and airborne landings. Given the circumstances this was the correct decision; nevertheless it was not enough. Scratch German forces were in Tunisia by 9 November. The 78th Division ran into strong resistance in rugged terrain on 19 November, well to the west of the vital objectives - the ports and airfields of Bizerte and Tunis. On 21 November Anderson halted, to reorganize his logistics, build up forces and secure better intelligence. The lunge into Tunisia, the really crucial objective, did not have the full weight of Allied power behind it. Elements of two American divisions were forward, but a major blocking force to seal off Spanish Morocco absorbed too much of the rest. Unless Tunisia could be taken quickly before the Germans had time to organize, it would have to be wrestled from their grasp.[45] This was the cost of inexperience, uncertainty and divided priorities.

Nevertheless, from mid-November the Allies were in a position to orchestrate a vast pincer movement. However, the two arms of the pincer both faced serious logistic problems. In between were the improvised German forces in Tunisia and the battered

* *See Appendix C*

but intact Panzerarmee Afrika. Two connected races emerged. Montgomery strove to keep enough forces forward to catch and crush Rommel's remnants. Eisenhower strove to build up enough forces to "bounce" Tunisia before the Germans became too strong. TORCH ironically gave the Germans a chance to build up a stronger base on shorter supply lines.[46] Malta offered the Allies a chance to prevent this. This was the potential reward for the great strain of holding the base - a hammer and anvil move to sweep Africa by the end of 1942.

Montgomery faced a wounded but skilful opponent retreating onto his base. On 11 November, Eighth Army was directed to catch and destroy its enemy and move rapidly westward.[47] On 16 November, Alexander outlined the factors which, to Montgomery, governed the situation - the absolute limit set by the ability of supply lines to maintain strength up front; worsening weather; several good blocking positions; the need to clear newly captured airfields, to retain strong air cover. Through November and December, Montgomery tried three times to bring Rommel to set piece battle or cut off further retreat. Rommel slipped away every time and Eighth Army moved ponderously westward. In late December, Alexander warned that "Maintenance...again and always principal factor" ruled out a concerted drive to capture Tripoli before mid-January. A drive on Tunisia would also have to be carefully prepared and would not be ready until early March.[48] Any opportunity would be seized, but as of the end of 1942 this was the situation.

There can be no denying this was dismal failure. Rommel kept his army in being and prevented early Axis collapse in Africa. Why did this happen and what did it portend? As is too often the case, historians have focused too heavily on personality in a more complex problem. Montgomery has been harshly criticized for moving so ponderously and failing to destroy Panzerarmee Afrika. Recent studies of the intelligence constantly available to him have increased this criticism. Critics reacted adversely to Montgomery's untenable post-facto claim that events always went according to plan, his egotistical claim to have defined the battle doctrine by which the German could be beaten, and his denigration of his predecessors. The question really is whether more was reasonably possible in these two months. Critics have argued that Eighth Army was now

as good, as well as bigger than, its enemy. Montgomery saw it differently:

> "I had an untrained army, due to Auchinleck and his regime, and I had to be very careful what I did with it."

Montgomery later demonstrated willingness to gamble if he considered it justified. His own natural caution and concern for his reputation should not obscure the fact that the Germans **had earned** the respect awarded their combat power. Montgomery felt that Eighth Army had not proven itself in an encounter battle and its morale could not afford another reverse. He also lived by a constant maxim:

> "A commander must plan and conduct his battle so that his operations will be in keeping with the standard of his troops."

Montgomery's personality has clouded the real issue - one battle had not dispelled concern over Army combat power. Eighth Army had the initiative but could not accomplish the new imperative, rapid and total victory. The question as to whether the Army or its commander were more to blame has not been settled.[49] More to the point, the grand strategic consequences were serious, as will be seen below.

Eisenhower's forces had only a few dozen miles to traverse, but they were very rough miles to be tackled by inexperienced, heterogeneous forces with badly strained logistic and air support in seriously worsening weather. A more deliberate advance was organized but it stalled on 3 December. Eisenhower blamed the German reaction and outstripped logistic and air support. This was the key factor - the race to build up strength. The piecemeal German deployment led to underestimation of their available combat power. Incredibly, no really determined move to restrain any Axis reinforcement traffic from Malta was made before 23 November.[50] Confusion over command and control played a part. By 5 December, Cunningham realized the race was lost - First Army's logistics were snarled and really heavy attacks on the Tunisian ports had only just begun. London, Washington and Eisenhower were all eager to press on but the "objective facts" burst the bubble on 25 December. Atrocious weather made difficult supply lines nearly impossible. This ended the chance of a quick "bounce" of Tunis. Now it would have to be done by "methodical infantry advance." Forces would have to be reorganized and a coherent front formed. Limited pressure would continue, but a new

offensive would have to wait for better weather and resolved logistics. This would take two months.[51]

London was stung to the quick by this dismal result. Offers of reinforcements and pressure for early action flew thick and fast as December came to an end. This strong reaction was sparked by this most recent lesson in German combat power. The Germans were able to rush forces in piecemeal, exploit the terrain and knock the Allies off stride. This was a convincing demonstration of military prowess and "marching to the guns." Whitehall wanted no part of a major campaign in the mountainous Tunisian interior, but it was too late.[52] The Germans would have to be evicted by a major offensive, which could not be done before the spring.

Failure stirred Allied recriminations. Brooke blamed Eisenhower's lack of drive. It was widely felt that Anderson had been too cautious. In British circles American combat performance was judged harshly.[53] The real problem was the divergent priorities built into a campaign dogged by uncertainty. Despite their familiarity with German prowess, the speed and power of the German response caught the Allies off guard. In detailed conception and execution TORCH was a cautious uncertain probe into the unknown. The deciding factor in the balance of problems which shaped the final approach was the issue that had bedeviled British plans since May 1940 - the intentions and capabilities of the French.

TORCH reintroduced French power as an operative question in Allied grand strategy. Policy towards the French and estimates of their reaction dominated the campaign in all aspects. British policy was confused. The COS continued to dally with Vichy contacts, spurred by the prospect of possible co-operation with the Armistice Army in any "Second Front." Nothing came of this shadowy intrigue, but it reflected both the tilt towards conventional forces and a profound mistrust of de Gaulle. De Gaulle became a force to be reckoned with as resistance in France grew and he strove to control it. Friction arose over SOE activities, control of liberated French colonies, and especially de Gaulle's demand for greater access to Allied plans, based on his tenacious claim to be speaking for a great power. The Foreign Office became his strongest advocate. Churchill wavered, swayed by the American hope to induce a turn of Vichy

allegiance.[54] Roosevelt was persuaded that at the very least Vichy authority in Africa could be turned by a visibly American show of force, carefully prepared by prior political intrigue. It was easy for the COS to support this; their original aim in the area had been nearly identical. No one but the State Department was prepared to rely entirely on French benevolence but TORCH could not be made strong enough to "bounce" Tunisia without it. By default, the plan was dependent on political reactions for complete success. A rough Allied consensus was reached - appease but screen out de Gaulle and try to detach local Vichy forces. The Allies realized that the Germans would overrun unoccupied France and likely seize the French fleet, but felt that overrunning Tunisia would be a fair trade-off.[55]

Everything rested on detaching local authority; everything went wrong from the start. Giraud, an admired but an unemployed French general brought in as a figurehead to rally support, caused trouble and rallied no support in return. The real blow was the accidental presence of authority - Darlan, the violently Anglophobe Commander-in-Chief of the French Navy and Deputy to Petain, was in Algeria on personal business. This scuttled all covert attempts to rally pro-Allied officials. Eisenhower was forced to support a provisional cease fire agreement based on Darlan's continued political authority. This set off a violent reaction in Allied public opinion about dealing with collaborators. This reaction was emotional and ill informed. There was no other way to prevent any obstruction, let alone secure assistance, for the race to Tunis. The crux of the matter was a French military tradition, rooted in turbulent historical experience, of obedience to legitimate constitutional authority. This made de Gaulle a traitor - he had broken ranks with legitimate authority, the shield of military honour. As for Giraud, he had respect but Darlan had authority. Dealing with Darlan was a military necessity but it only increased confusion. The Germans indeed overran unoccupied France but the French fleet was scuttled. However, in the prevailing political confusion, the Germans were able to move forces into Tunisia while the French stood aside. This was the decisive setback. In time, French forces would be an asset, but right now they were a liability - ill equipped, ill trained, confused about the Germans, resentful of the British. Eisenhower spent most of his time trying to sort out French political matters. Darlan

was murdered in suspicious circumstances on 25 December, which revived hopes for a resolution of internal French squabble; but this came too late for TORCH.[56]

French ports, railroads and airfields needed repair. French forces could not hold the line. French assistance everywhere came too late and slowly. The Allies bogged down in Tunisia because, on top of all other factors, the French factor impeded the Allies just enough and the Germans not enough. Eisenhower blamed the French for his failure, with some justification.[57] It was not certain the French could have held Tunisia at the start, nor did Vichy attitudes rule out landings farther east. However, even given State Department illusions, the Allies had no choice but to rely on French assistance. Their misreading of the political situation compounded the problem; it did not create it. The result was an injection of political confusion into the consequences of early failure. In the long term, TORCH laid open positive benefits - the theatre initiative, a new basis for resolution of French authority and an increase in military power, lessons for Allied co-operation. In the short term, its consequences were negative - strife with de Gaulle and Giraud and other French leaders, Allied recriminations, and an unexpected long campaign to pursue the original intermediate objective.[58] Allied power would certainly clear the Mediterranean, but not quickly and cheaply enough to avoid affecting grand strategy and global logistics. Sharp end problems, on top of other obstacles, had again undone Allied plans. Success so belated and incomplete raised serious new problems in its wake.

These problems would at least be addressed in a new situation, for the Germans had meanwhile lost the grand strategic initiative. Allied efforts had played and would play a growing role, but it took far too much Allied power to inflict a less than crushing defeat on relatively small German forces. The real burden had been borne by the Soviets. The great German offensive peaked in autumn 1942 as the Germans broached the Caucasus and entered Stalingrad itself. By late September, Whitehall considered the situation at breaking point but felt the Soviets would stave off outright defeat.[59] The battle for Stalingrad became the focal point; by mid-November, the Germans were bogged down in intense street fighting. The Germans had been unable to prevent the Red Army from retreating in good order and concentrating strong reserves. On 19

November, they reaped the whirlwind. A heavy Soviet counteroffensive struck the flank positions of Sixth Army held by inferior Axis forces and soon surrounded it in Stalingrad. Hitler's stubborn rejection of a breakout and the failure of a rescue attack left it in dire straits by late December. The great German offensive, focus of their 1942 grand strategy, was broken; now no one held the grand strategic initiative. The Allies could not avoid the fact that their grand strategic context was being defined on the Eastern Front. British reactions illustrated a familiar mixture.

The proposal to cede control of supply lines in Iran to the Americans and the threat to the Caucasus made the problems of Soviet supply and oil field defence one issue. Whitehall's stance was conditioned by estimates of the German threat and the desire to retain operational control. In late September a compromise emerged - the new U.S. Gulf Command would operate the supply lines but Wilson would control the allocation of capacity, subject to appeal to the CCS.[60] The question of priority was settled by events. Wilson prepared far reaching defence plans and built up his forces; but the improving Soviet situation overtook them and undercut COS aversion to risk supplying the Soviets at the risk of their own buildup. The JIC finally reported on 2 December that the threat to the Caucasus had virtually disappeared.[61] Victory at Stalingrad made the oil fields secure and thus removed a great burden from British grand strategy. It also secured the safest supply line to the Soviets and allowed the Allies to shift their focus further west.

VELVET, the plan to deploy 20 squadrons in the Caucasus, was overtaken by the same events. Churchill's and Roosevelt's strong desire for a visible token of direct co-operation kept the plan alive in the face of passive resistance from the CCS and Tedder. The Soviets accepted staff talks, which began in November, but obstructed them by a surly unco-operative attitude. Stalin at last requested aircraft instead of squadrons. This made the whole plan redundant and it was dropped in December. VELVET reflected the transition in Allied-Soviet military relations. Never militarily sensible - it would have taken two months and all Iran's logistic capacity to deploy the force - its political value disappeared after Stalingrad. Stalin now wanted equipment, especially aircraft and motor vehicles, rather than Allied forces to help his budding offensive. VELVET was the last

attempt at direct military co-operation. The CCS, never convinced of the value of such action relative to their own needs, were glad to see it die.[62]

The shift of focus transformed attitudes towards the eastern Mediterranean. British attempts to foster Turkish benevolence and deploy RAF forces in Turkey had been obstructed by scarce resources and constant defeat. Stalingrad and Alamein meant Turkey could now be seen not as a flank barrier but as a base for operations into the eastern Mediterranean. The COS were warned Turkey would proceed with caution. Yet they directed plans to continue nonetheless. As yet early plans, such as a six division force for operations in the area, for which Turkish bases were essential, were speculative. There was no question of any desire to launch a major campaign, let alone forestall the Soviets. But this was the first serious look at offensive prospects in another area where British forces might yet be able to operate.[63]

The two most important Allied-Soviet issues, supply convoys and Allied offensives, revolved around the effects of TORCH. However, Churchill and Roosevelt were determined not to let TORCH subsume all other efforts. Churchill opposed all attempts to delay PQ convoys and pressed JUPITER relentlessly. McNaughton's report had to be supplemented by another JPS paper circulated on 24 September and deliberately drafted to kill the project, which Churchill now hoped could go in mid-winter. Concurrently, the escalating needs of TORCH and the fate of PQ18 aided the Staff case. PQ18 lost 10 of 37 merchant ships to aircraft and U-Boats, despite unprecedented escort strength. The need to protect TORCH troop convoys ruled out any early repetition. Despite pressure from Stalin, the inexorable growth of TORCH settled the issue.[64] Churchill and Roosevelt separately told Stalin TORCH obliged and warranted Allied concentration at the expense of the PQ run. Stalin's brusque reply stiffened political determination to redeem all pledges. The overall naval strain made this a daunting task, especially for the British. A report in September on the First Protocol illustrated the problem. Pledged supplies had been "made available," but no more than 80% of any major category had "arrived." The British provided the bulk of the ships and escorts and took the brunt of the losses. This would only worsen in the Second Protocol, as American control of allocations grew without any corresponding increase in naval

assistance. By November, all routes were in arrears. Losses, TORCH logistics and Pacific needs ate up available resources.[65] The Allies were forced to confront squarely the consequences of escalated operations dependent on badly overstretched maritime resources.

PQ19 finally sailed in December and was carried through attempted surface interception successfully. At the same time, arguments over policy erupted again. Churchill and Roosevelt were still determined to find ways to maintain the flow, but ambivalence began to surface. On 23 November, Churchill assured Pound that subsequent PQ runs could be cancelled if their escorts were needed for offensive operations of clear assistance to the Soviets. The COS considered that, within the "wear down" framework, **all** Allied operations met that criterion. Recent success opened up the prospect of persuading Allied public opinion to agree. As early as September Churchill had agreed that if TORCH led to protracted fighting Allied needs would take precedence. However, after Stalingrad, in response to more genial pressure from Stalin on ROUNDUP, Churchill warned:

> "The changed situation made it all the more urgent for us to start a 2nd Front in Europe in 1943. Our present activities in the Mediterranean, important though they were, could only be regarded as an inadequate contribution compared with the efforts the Soviets were making."[66]

This was a classic grand strategic dilemma. Politically, it was difficult to resist taking a greater share of the burden from the Soviets. Public opinion focused on the visible progress of armies on land as the index of war, not the inchoate campaigns at sea and in the air. Unfortunately, the division of labour on land ran overwhelmingly to the Soviets. Strategically, it was dangerous to have to rely on a surly mysterious ally to contain the critical mass of German power. No one disputed the need to assist the Soviets, just Allied ability to do so. The obstacles seemed legion - exterior lines, belated mobilization, need for crushing force at the sharp end, and the cardinal rule: do not confront an unbeaten German Army on the continent. Unfortunately, Stalin repeatedly insisted that only a "Second Front" would really cement the coalition. Clark Kerr noted in October an alarming rise of Soviet suspicions that the Allies would stay on the periphery and hope the Germans and Soviets exhausted each other. He felt it would

continue "until we are able to give Hitler a good kick in the pants." The Soviets sincerely felt the Germans would not be defeated without a large Allied ground campaign. The COS felt that the conditions in which it would be possible were not in sight. The fluid element, however, was Churchill. In this context of belated but rapid change, the overhaul of British plans would now depend heavily on whether - despite being influenced by criticism of the relative scale of Allied and Soviet operations and his own constant desire for maximum action - Churchill would agree that the limits on Allied power still weighed more heavily than its prospects.[67]

That particular question remained most acute regarding the pivotal "offensive" and "defensive" campaigns emanating from the U.K. itself and the connection between them. This issue was now complicated by the beginning, on a small scale, of 8th Air Force daylight operations over Europe. Whitehall had based British plans on strong active American support but now that it was at hand, contradictory fears surfaced. On the one hand, if American strategy failed, Allied plans would collapse. On the other hand, if American strength grew plans in this pivotal campaign might be altered against British wishes. Bomber Command and 8th Air Force both needed to be much stronger and work together in order to master the stiffening German defences. Portal put Bomber Command's case to Churchill - it was still struggling to inflict serious damage at bearable cost because its growth had been stunted by its use as a pool for other commands. Without a firm commitment to marshal a force strong enough to gain the initiative, the campaign would fail. Churchill put an RAF case to Roosevelt. A concentration of Allied power and its effective use from the U.K. was a grand strategic imperative. American policy should be reconsidered.[68] The strength and role of 8th Air Force became a coalition issue. The Bomber Command appeal renewed the fierce battle of Whitehall.

Portal's appeal gained Churchill's ambivalent support. By mid-October, it was agreed to accelerate Bomber Command expansion - current strength of 47 squadrons, 22 of heavy bombers, to rise to 50 and 34 by late December - by cutting squadrons from other commands and drawing the equivalent of 11 more from production lines. The promises that this would be achieved with minimum drain on other commands by

increased output and lead to a 50% boost in striking power won Churchill's support. The plan, as a "prime military object," was to proceed. This plan aimed to shield Bomber Command and let it grow mainly by cutting into the expected **growth** in other commands. The COS naturally objected but, confident of Churchill's support, Portal stood firm. He agreed only to have an Air Staff committee review the impact on Coastal and Army Co-Operation Commands.[69] Strategic bombing was the focus; other campaigns could be sustained by allotted forces and any necessary **temporary** assistance. However, Churchill's support was not unequivocal. Bomber Command expansion was to accelerate, not increase. If, in 1943, shipping losses remained high, the focus could be reversed.[70] This reflected Churchill's new tendency to waver between building up Bomber Command and regretting the consequences. Portal worked to reinforce the former and assuage the latter. The Air Staff case was simple. Bomber Command bomb lift had risen 40% since late 1941 and could rise more steeply still, enabling the long sought "crack" to be seriously pursued, **if only** it were given the necessary priority of output and protection from diversion it had hitherto lacked. Unfortunately, that required strength now seemed so great that this concentration would have to proceed through 1943.[71]

This time the Admiralty did not take this decision lying down. The Staffs were well aware that the limits of aircraft industry capability meant that firm parameters would be set by any decision on its balance of effort. Pound's advisers were clear - the proposal should be "resisted with all the vigour at the disposal of the Admiralty." Pound threatened to resign if real recognition of the gravity of the Atlantic campaign was again smothered in platitudes.[72] Churchill resorted to a time honoured expedient which reflected the overriding concern - the formation of an "Anti U-Boat Warfare Committee." Its structure was a typically flexible forum integrating Ministers, Staffs and expert advisers. Churchill launched the venture from the chair on 4 November, thereafter sharing that duty with Cripps. Churchill directed the committee to galvanize the anti-submarine campaign but **not** by stripping Lancasters from Bomber Command. A.V. Alexander summed up the position - the Allies, short everywhere in surface escorts, auxiliary carriers and aircraft, especially true maritime VLR bombers with the new 10cm

ASV radar - were not coping with a fleet now totalling 240 U-Boats, 100 of which were routinely on patrol in the north Atlantic.[73]

The belated benefits of bitter experience, closer integration and operational research at last found a proper forum. Calls for a new unified "Anti Submarine Command" arose in varied quarters, but the responsible authorities preferred the system of national and departmental co-operation. The Committee adopted a more incremental approach. The shortage of surface escorts was fundamental. The important commands were reinforced, but the RN still had only 452 escort vessels out of estimated global requirements of 1,050. The shortage of auxiliary carriers was also grim. Thirty of the required 50 would have to come from the U.S.; the target, one per convoy, was "a long way off." The Committee closely followed a major diversion of U-Boats to attack TORCH supply convoys.[74] This brought some relief but only by shifting attention and losses. GCCS scored a major coup by breaking back into the U-Boat operations cypher in December, which quickly improved knowledge of enemy dispositions.[75] The Committee absorbed these developments and arrived at an important tacit conclusion: it was far too late to win the campaign by British remedial measures alone. Only a sustained truly integrated Allied campaign conducted as a unified battle by powerful efficient naval and air forces would suffice. This was not news to the sailors, but only now did the focus generated by the new forum spread the point.

Even so, the legacy of 1941 decisions let the Air Staff continue to shield its priority, which made quality the key factor. The brutal truth was that the Allied navies were still being outfought by the U-Boats. There were many reasons - global strain on surface forces; delays in supply of new equipment, especially to the RCN; cumbersome command and control against a highly mobile centrally controlled enemy. The committee helped identify these problems but its real priority was how to bring about first quick relief then lasting advantage. It was able to identify the means - airpower - but not to achieve a solution. For the first time, operational research was a decisive factor in settling a grand strategic level debate. However, this time it shaped an unfortunate decision. There were only three options, given the grave delay in carrier production resulting from earlier structural decisions - more Bomber Command effort against U-Boat

targets; a more efficient Coastal Command; more true VLR bombers properly equipped. Intense debate revealed options were limited in each case. Eighth Air Force concentrated on U-Boat bases and made optimistic claims which renewed controversy over bombing policy. Harris used their activity and the fact that it was now too late to destroy the completed U-Boat pens to ward off serious diversion.[76]

The efficiency of Coastal Command was also controversial, especially when relations between Joubert and Portal again deteriorated. Joubert suggested to Cripps the formation of a unified anti-submarine command; this ran across Air Staff resolve not to parcel out control of airpower and imperilled Joubert's position.[77] Operational research reports indicating that "defensive" air patrols over convoys were twice as likely to sight U-Boats as "offensive" patrols over Biscay waters now began to circulate. Admiralty researchers and Statistical Branch agreed that purpose built and equipped aircraft properly used seemed likely to become the most effective U-Boat killer. They felt it now seemed possible to estimate how much of each resource would be needed to turn the tide. This had tremendous implications at the grand strategic level:

> "the foundations at least of a proper distribution of effort between anti-submarine warfare, bombing and less direct alternatives could be laid."

The Admiralty had long felt that the optimum strategy was strong air and surface escort, Biscay sweeps and bombing of bases.[78] This had been diluted by their lack of resources and desperation to secure support. Empirical evidence which let the new committee focus on a specific question of tactics to help settle a broader question was a welcome relief.

Unfortunately, it was offset by the legacy of previous decisions which, by delaying aircraft carrier output and fitting British produced bombers for over land operations, left British forces dependent on the American Liberators for timely relief. In addition this highly technological campaign now took a new twist. Sightings declined when the Germans fitted U-Boats with detection gear capable of detecting aircraft with 1½ metre ASV radar.[79] The Allies had the answer - more advanced 10cm ASV radar - nearly to hand. The Admiralty felt it would even allow them to cover the "air gap" with fewer planes, say 40 Liberators. There were now usually only six true VLR Liberators

deployed, but this problem could be solved by February. This would not improve even weaker coverage on the Canadian side and leave the Biscay, south Atlantic and Indian Ocean weak, but it would be a start. Unfortunately, the same equipment was being developed as a navigation and bombing aid, called H2S, for Bomber Command. This meant a direct clash for an initially scarce resource. The first reflex was to ask the Americans for help, specifically for 30 more Liberators with 10cm ASV radar. Strategic arguments, couched also to prevent the Americans from retaining forces in now quiet areas, did not succeed. The committee then decided on 25 November to equip Halifaxes and Wellingtons with 10cm ASV radar as a stop gap, under the impression the initial production run could accommodate H2S as well. The Radar Board asked the COS to overturn the decision and equip the Pathfinder Force first.[80] This brought debate to a climax.

The issue revolved around the relative tactical and security benefits of concentrating on H2S or ASV for the next few crucial months. The COS failed to settle the issue and on 22 December it was settled for them. Pound claimed 10cm ASV radar would immediately improve the maritime situation whereas delay, or its recovery from a downed bomber in Germany, would lead to counter-measures. Portal, Watson-Watt and Cherwell all argued H2S would dramatically improve Bomber Command's accuracy and countermeasures would be faced in two or three months whether it was lost or not. Cherwell, predisposed to favour strategic bombing and convinced Coastal Command could improve itself, pushed, as he had for some time, for allocating new equipment so as to "give offensive apparatus precedence over defensive." This swayed Churchill, who backed H2S on the grounds that a case for greater value in initial focus on 10cm ASV had not been made. This was one of the most controversial decisions of the war and it capped the long Admiralty-Air Staff dispute.[81] It is important to understand what was decided and why. Churchill's directive meant Bomber Command was to get most of the new equipment through spring 1943. It was a result of the momentum of thought generated by the long focus on the prospects of escalated strategic bombing, strengthened by predisposition to the "offensive," the heavy investment in Bomber Command, and a general turn to offensive prospects for 1943. The Admiralty case was weakened by

previous compromises and expedients and reliance on the U.S. for the only effective aircraft. This was the only British means to augment the anti-submarine campaign before spring. But that campaign was already Allied, so Churchill opted to use this lever to augment the largest remaining mainly British campaign.

The specific consequences of the H2S decision were delayed until 1943. The results of the whole effort to strengthen the Atlantic campaign immediately were the stop gap measures and a pledge to equip the flow of four Liberators a month with 10cm ASV. This seriously hampered efforts to strengthen every aspect of the campaign.[82] In the long term the signs were positive. There was at last a general sense of the need for a truly determined grand strategic effort. It was guided by better perception of the factors involved and better mechanisms for sorting them. The intelligence breakthrough was important enough to spur the CCS to acknowledge the need to provide rapidly the means to exploit it.[83] But in the meantime the convoys would have to struggle through with the inadequate forces provided by earlier decisions. This was a situation that should and need never have arisen. From the British perspective, overall weakness was only partly to blame. Whitehall was directly responsible for decisions which left this crucial campaign short of enough of the right type of forces to sustain it. This was inadequate power and power misused, exposed by the failure of another gamble on American assistance. Britain would not escape the consequences.

The shape of the grand strategic debate that now emerged was triangular, but one side was weaker than the others. The Atlantic campaign was a growing concern, but the real issue regarding both current and overall grand strategy was now the relationship between offensive campaigns based on the U.K. and the current campaign in the Mediterranean. Mediterranean success bred optimism and consideration of really large operations in 1943. As early as 30 September, Churchill enquired whether the "next step" was under review. Brooke stressed the need to concentrate on clearing north Africa before committing forces elsewhere but was able to confirm that air and amphibious operations in the central Mediterranean were being considered.[84] With large forces committed to the area and the concerns invested in it since 1940, there was

a natural desire to exploit any success. The COS felt that the speed and extent of that success should govern the next step. The COS and Eisenhower readily agreed that Allied forces should seize any sudden opportunity to move onto the Italian islands of Sardinia or Sicily. More deliberate moves sparked greater discussion. There were two questions. The narrower was whether to invade Sardinia or Sicily. The broader was whether to concentrate in the central or eastern Mediterranean. Brooke favoured a division into operational spheres. The British could develop air operations and pressure Turkey for support from the eastern area, an already developed base; this would finally secure the Middle East. Eisenhower could take over activity in the central area, which might assure American support for further operations. There were two problems. First, it was agreed there would be no move onto any part of the European mainland until the Axis had been "considerably weakened." Second, plans would depend on still scarce amphibious resources not at British disposal; this would likely force the Allies to choose between one area or the other for large scale operations. So far the only consensus was to escalate offensive action.[85]

Events in November narrowed the focus by process of elimination. An opportunity move north was ruled out by logistic problems and U-Boat activities even before problems arose in Tunisia.[86] Three COS priorities emerged: insure against reversal while success lasted; settle basic objectives; define a new consensus. The COS proceeded within the "wear down" opportunistic approach with no fixed plan other than to escalate the campaign on favourable terms. As prerequisites they insisted on provisioning Malta and establishing strong garrisons from Iraq to Tunisia, but this caution lessened slightly as Eighth Army advanced. Directives were issued to Wilson and Alexander to prepare plans for operations from the Caucasus to Italy. Brooke directed planners to focus on how to force the Germans to assume the greatest extra burden without being able to concentrate superior force against any Allied move. At this point he cautiously regarded land operations anywhere as possibly risky commitments which might pull in Allied resources. The only concrete idea was to force the Germans to bring more forces into the theatre.[87] The questions of whether to strike in the east,

where to strike in the centre and how to share control now became caught up in a larger discussion.

The Mediterranean issue reflected the revision of grand strategy writ large. The growth of Allied and Soviet power clearly foreshadowed an escalation of offensive action in 1943. The catalyst for Whitehall discussion was a feeling that this action would prove to be beyond British power as then arrayed. Given Allied friction, this raised the prospect of a revision of the basic "Europe first" consensus or the premature turn to concentrated grand strategic offensive. The British dilemma was serious. Bitter experience at the sharp end underlined the need for unforeseen strength in the field. Bitter structural experience underlined the unlikelihood of it being available. Hard choices of allocation and balance might have to be made. In response to Washington's anger over the TORCH decision, comprehensive review began early in September.[88] The COS hoped to forge their own consensus, then in turn carry the Prime Minister and the Americans. The essence of their problem was this: British power had nearly peaked but had failed to make "wear down" a success; now it was to be called on to make a more intense effort which it could only sustain as part of a fully integrated sincere "common pool." The airmen, feeling they had most to lose, fired the first shot.

In early September, Harris and Trenchard both drafted papers which made extreme claims for airpower and strategic bombing. Trenchard vaguely called for an airman to be named overall Supreme Commander of the Allied strategic offensive. Both made a dogmatic case for the superiority of revolutionary independent strategic bombing over "defensive" campaigns. Their case in summary was that British power was too weak to proceed on the "do everything" basis, so a choice had to be made. Harris considered the choice obvious:

> "When it becomes possible to defeat the German Army on land by [Allied] forces transported overseas, there will no longer be any need to defeat them. They will have broken. The guiding principle should always be to keep the sea between ourselves and the vast bulk of the German Army."

This was pure "wear down" in a new context. Now that the offensive was a concrete prospect, realities of relative power could not be ignored. Churchill considered the case overstated but as a "champion of Bomber Command" had the papers circulated.[89]

Portal followed them and the 50 squadron proposal with a paper on 30 September which marked the first COS challenge to the "sequence" revision of "wear down" in 1941. "Wear down" was still the best way to achieve the prime strategic objective - the defeat of Germany at the least cost and with the least delay. However, diversions and cross purposes had precluded effective co-ordinated Allied execution. Three offensive courses seemed feasible: 1) Course A - the build up of strength for a deliberate assault on the Continent before German power had been broken; 2) Course B - the build up of a combined strategic bomber force powerful enough to "shatter" German power and pave the way for an invasion; 3) Course C - an ineffective compromise between the two. Portal argued that thanks to American pressure for "A," the Allies were stuck on "C." The Allies had the power to pursue either option. The real question was relative power prospects. Invasion leading to a ground campaign would require continued Soviet resistance, the bulk of Allied power and still be risky. The determined concentration of a full 4,000 bomber force on Germany would reap only benefits - enabling a return to the continent, really effective co-ordination of structure and strategy, and still leaving support for other campaigns. But the decision to concentrate resources had to be made before momentum in other directions became irreversible.[90]

Portal's stark "either-or" theme reflected the prevailing view in the COS that British power was overstretched and offensive grand strategy would have to be carefully tailored to efforts best suited to British capability. The stress on the power of the German Army was tailored to address Brooke's deep convictions and reinforce the prevailing theme - an aerial "grinding" to pave the way for a much less intense ground campaign. Portal's case had two serious defects. The bombing offensive was based on massive American concentration and greater efficiency; both were as yet merely prospects. More importantly, it seemed likely to claim so many resources that Portal's assurance of support for other efforts would be subsumed. Brooke responded on 5 October. He doubted strategic bombing could "shatter" German power as opposed to wearing it down. Using a JPS proposal for Channel bridgehead operations and Mediterranean operations to retain American support for "Europe first," he offered his own vision for 1943:

> "Our policy in 1943 should thus be to exert the maximum pressure against Germany on the circumference of Europe, while attacking the heart of the enemy by the heaviest possible air bombardment."[91]

Portal and Brooke, it must be noted, were proffering contending visions **within** the "wear down" framework. Portal felt the sequence concept was as valid as ever. Brooke insisted strategic bombing had to be related to overall context, not subsume it. Positions were clarified on 22 October. Brooke insisted that strategic bombing and peripheral operations be seen as complements needed to extend "wear down" on to the offensive. Portal insisted this was exactly the compromise he feared. The Allies, unable to sustain both, could fall between two stools.[92] This was a profound debate on what options British power prospects seemed likely to allow. There were three critical questions: could the British generate the power to "crack" Germany from the air, exactly what sort of continental campaign best suited British capability, and what would be the structural consequences of such an "air strategy?"

The Air Staff were convinced only a really comprehensive concentration on strategic bombing would make other campaigns, including ROUNDUP, possible. Brooke knew the pressure Portal faced and also wanted a strong bombing offensive. This was an issue of emphasis, but that was critical. It was argued the Allied armies could not go for the Continent until German power was visibly weakened; but the effort to weaken it could not ignore wider commitments, especially the Atlantic. Whitehall opinion was divided.[93] The so called "offensive" options - the strategic bombing campaign, Mediterranean operations, and the "Second Front" - became the focus of COS efforts to build a consensus. A fairly minor issue, the expansion of airborne forces, actually fostered a more precise dialogue.

Airborne forces depended on transport aircraft. Given previous decisions, the only U.K. source was the bomber program. Harris and Portal resisted large forces on the grounds that they were intended for intense continental operations which need never take place if the strategic bombing offensive was allowed to mature. Portal accepted the need for continental operations and airborne forces but wanted them to be easier and smaller respectively. Brooke felt sure enough of an expanded role for the Army to insist

on at least a divisional sized force.[94] This dispute symbolized the larger dispute. Did the need to "wear down" German power prior to invasion hold true even if the effort required hampered all other efforts? Could those other efforts assist the grinding process? How much flexibility did the British still have? Brooke stressed the value of Mediterranean operations in 1943 and a "Second Front" after these and strategic bombing had together worn down German power. Portal stressed the ability of a concentrated bombing offensive to fulfil original expectations. Both looked to redefine the "sequence" concept to forge a consensus.

Churchill tried to reorient the debate on 24 October with a sweeping paper entitled "Policy for the Conduct of the War."* Churchill defended decisions since ARCADIA as having emerged logically from circumstances and in accordance with the basic Allied consensus. As always, the extent of current success "would dictate our main action in 1943." This would depend on a large BOLERO, which alone would enable the Allies to pursue whatever course seemed possible. A revision of priorities was called for. Mediterranean operations were to be pressed immediately. An attack to recover Burma should be prepared but relegated behind all other claims. Aid to the Soviets must continue. ROUNDUP should only go if the situation warranted. Anti-submarine warfare had to be strengthened but, for now, "in spite of [ship] losses, the Bomber offensive should have first place in our air effort."[95] Churchill's paper implied some salient facts of the British strategic position and prospects. Portal's "A or B" distinction was impossible. There would have to be a large combined bombing offensive. The British aircraft program was built around it. Air Staff thought hinged on it. Arnold based American air policy on it. Churchill could not let it go, not least because it was a visible expression of the intensity of Britain's war effort. But there would also have to be an invasion of Europe. British plans had always envisaged it. It was the only way to bring the main force of the Imperial Army into action. The public sentiment behind a "Second Front" was less vocal but still potent. The Soviets demanded it. American war policy was built on it. The real question was how much emphasis to put on which phase of the sequence.

* *See Chapter heading*

The issue of the "Second Front" would clearly determine whatever consensus was reached on Allied grand strategy for 1943. BOLERO was the decisive factor and early in September the COS received the disturbing news that Washington intended to revise the flow of forces to allow for TORCH needs. Only 150,000 ground troops and seven combat air groups were to assemble in the U.K.; the rest were to switch to TORCH. These merely equalled the U.S. forces already in the U.K. and there was no indication whether this was a delay or outright termination. Strong American forces in the U.K. were the basis of the indispensable integration of American power into British plans.[96] An explanation was necessary. This feeling was reinforced by a sudden revision in landing craft allocation. In an action the American Official Historians termed "high handed," King embargoed further shipment of all types to the U.K., increased shipments to the Pacific, and cut overall targets. The JCS dismissed British protests. Without ROUNDUP landing craft priority was unnecessary and would be revised because it had hurt naval output. Dill made a rare misstep when he urged the CCS to accept the continued need to be ready for an "opportunity" ROUNDUP in 1943. This example of faith in "wear down" was exactly what so irked the Americans. They refused to consider a revision except if "a situation developed making a "Second Front" probable." The JCS decided to cut 1942 allocations to the U.K., including a new level of only 25 LST. The remaining 2,675 craft of all types would be deployed by King on the basis of specific need for specific operations - a clear reference to ROUNDUP. 1943 allocations would be deferred until a grand strategic consensus was restored.[97]

This was a clear sign of American willingness to use structural leverage. It was also a reflection of the disarray inside the JCS. Marshall fended off King's efforts to increase the number of squadrons in the southwest Pacific, as had been promised in July after the TORCH decision, by admitting that statement was only meant "to completely eliminate **combined** discussions regarding the use of those planes." The hasty reversal of landing craft policy further upset all Allied plans.[98] London considered these unilateral actions a threat to both Allied grand strategy and U.K. security. Churchill was shocked to see how completely the JCS were convinced that ROUNDUP was now problematical for 1943. He tried to convince Roosevelt that a full BOLERO was a

prerequisite for all 1943 plans. His trump card was strengthened by its sincerity - the Soviets were a "persistent anxiety" so Allied pressure could not be relaxed, but plans would have to be governed by the fact that the Allies could only engage German ground forces under certain conditions.[99]

This pressure was naturally stoked by the Soviets. Maisky went so far as to claim that JUBILEE established the feasibility of landing on the continent![100] These pressures interacted with administrative and logistical preparations, intelligence appreciations and future planning. On 11 September, the COS laid down an administrative directive. The target for the full 1.1 million man BOLERO would be August 1943. British forces would conform, to give the enemy the impression of an all out effort.[101] Mountbatten and the Combined Commanders proceeded with plans for cross-Channel assaults. Churchill ordered as large a raid as possible for October. Mountbatten offered CLAWHAMMER, a smaller version of JUBILEE. The COS approved the outline plan on 30 September subject to no inroads on TORCH.[102] Matters proceeded from this basis, grounded on the evolution of intelligence appreciations and greatly affected by events elsewhere.

The evolution of intelligence appreciations regarding U.K. based forces reflected a cautious but definite reaction to improving circumstances. The COS now considered a German invasion "unlikely," but the structure of home defence, their prime responsibility, was to remain capable of facing any reverse of fortunes. On 9 October, the JIC argued that even if the Soviets made terms and TORCH failed, Allied airpower precluded any invasion. Brooke added the caveat that an excessively denuded U.K. might tempt the enemy to take the risk. On this basis the JIC and JPS were directed to estimate a "worst case" and minimum strength levels. Paget considered Home Forces seven divisions short of the latter - the exact number sent overseas in 1942 apart from TORCH! Brooke decided to settle the tug of war. If the JIC could rule out invasion in 1943 as long as the Soviets were in the war, he would allow Home Forces to complete its reorganization to offensive posture. The JIC duly reaffirmed its earlier advice on 30 October.[103] The JPS agreed on 30 November that if defences were not stripped to an absurd level Home Forces could adapt an entirely offensive stance. Thus after 31

months of serious war - an ominous six months behind schedule - the COS accepted that "that point" had been reached at which defensive needs no longer precluded offensive preparations. The JPS timetable indicated cause and effect. It would take time to upgrade formations and give them new equipment. Assuming 25 full strength divisions, only six were to be ready for continental operations by April 1943, 19 by 1944; six would be left behind for defence and as replacement pools.[104] The COS had at last agreed there was scope to prepare for a strategic offensive, only to find the Army was not ready.

The spectre of JUBILEE was a "constant attender" on strategic debate at this time. Through November, Mountbatten noted that TORCH needs were absorbing all trained landing craft crews and advised that for future operations two reforms were essential: a permanent force to handle landing craft and reliance on overwhelming fire support as opposed to tactical surprise. The COS approved both recommendations and agreed to allocate the next consignment of landing craft for training.[105] However, plans had already been aborted by events. CLAWHAMMER was rejected outright on 13 October, ostensibly to conserve landing craft. TONIC, a plan to seize the Canary Islands, was subsumed by Spanish inertia in the face of TORCH. Mountbatten tried to regain control over amphibious operations by requesting a firm date be named before which none would be attempted. This was rejected on 19 November on the plausible grounds that the situation was "too fluid."[106] Although this was not yet apparent, the raiding phase was over. Allied power could not sustain both raids and deliberate assaults from a stretched amphibious base but overall power was growing too large to delay the assaults any longer. This was very apparent in the evolution of specific "Second Front" plans.

A lengthy report by the Combined Commanders on 4 October marked a definite evolution in strategic thinking. Multiple uncertainties - BOLERO, TORCH, landing craft, air forces - now seemed to rule out a deliberate assault on northwest Europe in 1943. But whatever was done had to be directly related to improving prospects for 1944. Plans had to be prepared and forces made available, but everything must hinge on the "wear down" basis. Therefore, the first task was to weaken the German Air Force. Any

"opportunity" should be seized, but an attempt to hold a bridgehead would have to be carefully considered. The prevailing situation would then govern action in 1944. If a full scale campaign was launched, two things were now deemed essential: 1) the early capture of a major port, in an area less heavily defended than Calais; 2) the concentration of the initial assault force, which should be 10 divisions, to seize and establish a conventional bridgehead, probably in Normandy.[107] This reflected a sense of growing Allied power, the constant aversion to irregular operations, and the firm belief that only crushing force would prevail. This truly spelled the death of the "igniter" vision. In order to understand British grand strategy, the implications of this evolution of ideas must be grasped. The apex of grand strategy remained the return of Allied forces to the continent. The British were now prepared to agree - the COS willingly - that this must be done by conventional military means. But they insisted that this only be launched when the relative balance of capability permitted, as the coup de grace of "wear down." Strategy had changed, but grand strategy had not. There would now be a concerted power drive, but it should be in exploitation of reduced German power, not as an attempt to break that power. This increased the focus on specific plans.

In November, Eisenhower, in his capacity as U.S. theatre commander, called for a designated commander, to breathe life into preparations by fighting for resources in a way a committee of officers with wider tasks could not. The COS came to the reverse conclusion. Given the contingency basis of the plan, the Combined Commanders should turn over their planning task to a sub-section of the JPS.[108] The basic reasons for this motion in ideas were expressed in a concurrent exchange between Douglas and Portal. Douglas felt that even though the feeling there would be no attack in 1943 had dulled the planning edge, preparations should continue because of the usual reasons - the "crack" could come any time, an eventual landing was essential, it could only be done after "the facade begins to crack and the enemy faces defeat in other theatres." A sole commander with no forces could make no headway. The Combined Commanders, who alone could unite the perspectives of plans and execution, should carry on. Portal rejected this last point. Really firm plans and preparations could only emerge after the nomination of commanders, a stage ROUNDUP had never reached.[109] The COS agreed that only

when a responsible commander(s) was named would the operation really be imminent, a point of pivotal importance.* But they intended to make this ultimate campaign a distinct entity which would absorb, rather than be absorbed by, the U.K. forces. This indicated both the strength and width of the "wear down" consensus and the increasing pressure for change.

The Administrative Officers forced the issue of priorities with a plea for clear long term guidelines. On 10 November, they warned the COS that the directive of September had been superseded by TORCH and the BOLERO cuts. Logistics were in disarray and resources were being wasted on forces which might never appear. The COS agreed that more regular administrative consultations were necessary, which reflected the transition to a more offensive posture. They also agreed the BOLERO schedule was now totally unrealistic, especially as Marshall intended to withhold further American forces until the CCS approved an operation "which did not depend on a crack in German morale." Faced with this ultimatum, the COS laid down a new administrative directive on 20 November. Preparations were to focus on being ready for either an "opportunity" or a deliberate assault, with a 10 division force, to be fully prepared by April. A long term BOLERO commitment would be sought after a grand strategic consensus was secured.[110] This decision was taken in the shadow of the controversies over BOLERO and landing craft. On 26 October, the COS were forced to accept that the British would be unable to organize more than one amphibious assault force alone. On 19 November, they received clarification of the new BOLERO schedule - a total of 427,000 personnel. The COS were in a dilemma. They felt that if Marshall insisted on withholding forces until a plan was approved instead of building them up on the "wear down" basis, the Allies could not launch a "Second Front," which they deemed essential to win the war. The obvious solution was an early firm consensus on 1943 grand strategy.[111] Churchill took the matter up personally on 24 November, complaining to Roosevelt that a truncated BOLERO would ruin Allied plans. Churchill again urged Roosevelt to see BOLERO as the indispensable link between the concepts of concentrated force and the ability to

** See below, Chapter 11*

achieve prerequisites for assault.[112] His plea cleared up confusion in plans by exposing confusion in dispositions.

BOLERO had, in fact, succumbed to a material problem - operations had outpaced production, especially of ships, and led to a drift of resources, accelerated by disputes and reversals of policy. Against its will, the War Department had been forced to make BOLERO a residuary legatee. Roosevelt explained this to Churchill on 25 November. The 427,000 figure was only the current phase target. Once the surprisingly high TORCH and Pacific drains eased off, BOLERO would be revived; ROUNDUP should proceed apace.[113] Whitehall welcomed the reassurance but fully realized the danger of the new divergence. The allocation of amphibious resources, whose very program was still in doubt, would determine 1943 grand strategy. A settlement of competing priorities was now essential.

This settlement would be anything but easy in an atmosphere which brought out the intrinsic Anglo-American differences over basic approach and perceived prospects. Both sides wanted to imprint their own policy on Allied grand strategy. The American suspicion that TORCH reflected ulterior British motives forced the COS to confront the spectre of a revision of "Europe first." Their effort was marred by that persistent aversion to the guise of supplicant. On 8 September, the COS tartly told Dill they would not even consider revising the basic decision because "we should frankly regard any such proposal as madness." The JSM replied that the Americans were serious and it would be dangerous to let "objective facts" reaffirm "Europe first." This was good advice. The "objective facts" - shipping, logistics, alliance compulsions - were still favourable but would ever more become a wasting asset. The more powerful the American war machine grew, the less patience Marshall would have with the limits set by "objective facts." The British could no longer afford reluctant American co-operation. They needed to convince the JCS that their vision was militarily the best course in order to secure really ardent American effort. The difference of opinion about confronting the German Army was the big obstacle. The JSM warned London they must confront the American belief that building up forces in order to await a "crack" was "too shadowy a basis on which to build."[114]

The American reversal on BOLERO sparked more intense COS study of prospects for 1943 offensives. But the Americans themselves were far from fully united. The War Department still hoped to preserve the concept of an early concentration in the U.K., to be resumed after north Africa was cleared. King disagreed and his views were reinforced by the crisis at Guadalcanal. On 23 October, the JSM urged the COS to hasten their proposal on 1943 grand strategy and treat expanded operations against the Japanese sympathetically.[115] The role and activities of 8th Air Force also continued to cause concern. Churchill and Portal wanted 8th Air Force expanded but, based on RAF experience, felt the daylight strategy to be an unwarranted gamble. This was not a minor point. If the Americans could not carry their weight in the offensive, the whole 4,000 plane concept would collapse. Sinclair was able to convince Portal that the need to support Arnold's effort to build up the force and the probable strategic gain outweighed any possible tactical setback. Churchill was less convinced.[116] Bombing policy, and thus grand strategy overall, remained open.

The COS reached an initial consensus on 30 October. It is important to note the context in which this took place. The COS objective was to affirm "Europe first" on a basis which accommodated the changing yet enduring perception of relative weakness. Their conclusions were drawn before the victories of November. The result was a patchwork of ARCADIA positions and subsequent directions marked by a cautious tone. The discussion of campaigns against the Japanese was distinctly slanted to explain why operations should be limited to securing essential positions and maintaining pressure. This left the focus on the European theatre. The basic theme was a revised sequence - combined bombing offensive and peripheral operations to pave the way for a grand strategic offensive, launched when conditions were ripe. The essential compromise was that the main grinding agent, a bombing offensive multiplied twelve fold by April, 1944, would be complemented by "amphibious operations to take advantage of success in the Mediterranean." Specific ideas were now at last placed in overall context. The clearance of north Africa would allow the Allies to threaten the whole Mediterranean, especially Italy. This would force the Germans to assume heavier burdens. This would assist the Soviets, who were the decisive factor in "sapping German strength." Indeed,

the need to offer them immediate assistance was the basic justification for "Europe first." Mediterranean operations were preferred because they could be extended, safely, from existing efforts. There was no alternative because:

> "a large scale invasion of Europe against unbroken German forces is not a practical operation of war."

Forces concentrated in the U.K. could not be launched merely when they reached a certain absolute strength. But that concentration must continue, in order to allow the Allies to exploit the openings that would certainly arise. Thus revised, the sequence thesis coupled bombing operations to "crack" Germany's morale and power with Mediterranean operations to "stretch" its forces, leading to a comprehensive grand strategic offensive when ripe. This offensive, clearly meant to be a cross-Channel assault, was clearly not foreseen in 1943 and not ever meant to lead to a prolonged campaign. Soviet resistance was vital and to be "sustained by all means," but in practice this meant by supplies and existing plans. An escalated anti-submarine campaign was necessary, but all air support for other campaigns during the "bombing phase" was to be assessed by comparing its value to the cost of "diversions from the principal objective." The conclusion was precise:

> "Our main strategy should be to break German military power by the destruction of the German war machine before we attempt to re-enter the continent. For this process, apart from the impact of the Russian land forces, the heavy bomber will be the main weapon, backed by the most rigorous blockade and by operations calculated to stretch the enemy to the greatest possible extent...Plans and preparations which do not conflict with [above] should be made for re-entering the continent in the event of a break in German powers of resistance."[117]

This was a serious attempt by the COS to reconcile the perceived limits of power with internal and coalition pressures and conflicting aims. It was neat, taut, even glib - and useless. Such an outline relied on the most convinced and ardent American support. The COS were warned that the Americans would reject caveats on 1943 offensive escalation. The question of the Soviet campaign was a basic indicator. The Red Army was clearly recognized as the main force, whose success would determine Allied latitude. However, instead of having Allied grand strategy conform to its efforts, the COS

proposed to continue to use its struggle to develop methodical escalation. This, to the COS, was an unavoidable legacy of suspicion,poor co-operation, sharp end weakness and belated American intervention. The essence of dispute was still the reaction to TORCH. The Americans felt the TORCH approach meant the British denied that increased power would supersede relative weakness. This COS response argued that it reflected reality - relative weakness would still force the Allies to pursue a methodical yet opportunistic approach.[118]

Any remote chance that Churchill and the JCS might have accepted this outline was swept away by early success in Africa. On 11 November, Roosevelt wired Churchill a proposal which demonstrated how wide open Allied strategic thinking was and how quickly success could generate its own momentum; assuming rapid victory in Africa, both Staffs should:

> "make a survey of the possibilities including forward movements directed versus Sardinia, Sicily, Italy, Greece and other Balkan areas and including the possibility of obtaining Turkish support for an attack through the Black Sea..."

Churchill eagerly agreed.[119] The fragile COS consensus thus faced wider pressures even before it could be digested in a rapidly changing scene. Portal added to them by trying to ensure the compromise did not block plans for the combined bombing offensive. On 3 November, he offered the fourth plan for victory through bombing drafted since July, 1940. A 4 to 6,000 heavy bomber force by early 1944 would enable 17 "hammer blows" to be delivered. This would overtax German resources because their economy was at peak strain, reducing it by a fatal 33%. All the familiar misconceptions were here but this time there was a twist - the idea was now specifically to clear the way for a conventional cross-Channel invasion in strength. Pound's reply was the strongest on this issue yet drafted by the Admiralty: this new escalation would ripple through the nearly complete British structural program and call for more fuel than Allied tankers could deliver by the contested sea lanes. An objective study of whether the structural and operational cost could be borne was essential. Brooke went after Portal on all points on 18 November, concluding that rather than a systematic campaign this was merely "a number of towns to devastate." Portal insisted this "safe side" estimate would force the

Germans to contract civil production or their war effort to fatal lengths, so long as the offensive could outpace German recuperative power. Portal held out mainly because his fellow COS objected not to the concept per se **but** to the consequences to their own programs. Churchill settled the specific issue that day by giving the 50 squadron plan final clearance and rejecting large airborne forces.[120]

The issues of scale and effects remained open. Portal made his case by citing the newly clarified link to ground campaigns and assuring Pound that the Americans would bear the real brunt of expansion. That was an expression of faith, but Arnold's intentions were now clear - to marshal a force of 2,225 heavy bombers for an all out combined offensive. This was the only direct American support Bomber Command would receive, so plans had to be adjusted accordingly. This was both opportunity and dilemma. On the one hand a campaign Britain had invested in too heavily to turn back might now have a real chance of success. On the other hand, American growth might eclipse British leverage in a campaign central to their war policy and status in the coalition. This only added to Portal's worries about the impact the limits on RAF flexibility might have on the broader Allied grand strategic debate that now developed.[121]

Roosevelt's telegram of 11 November was the spark for one of the most intense months of debate the "rolling seminar" had yet seen. This debate demonstrated clearly a central theme of this study - British grand strategy was defined within a network of thought as the product of many minds, grounded on a set of fundamental assumptions based on perceptions of power. In broad terms, Churchill and the COS offered contending interpretations which affected each other. Excited by improved prospects, Churchill circulated a paper on 14 November calling for efforts to prepare for early escalation in the Mediterranean and reinforcement for the Eastern Fleet. The proposal relied on two assumptions: north Africa cleared by late December and American forces available. The DC(O) considered the COS draft outline and Churchill's paper on 15 November. Churchill "did not dissent from COS views," Brooke "generally agreed" with Churchill's outline. However, Churchill flatly rejected the implication the Allies could not fight the Germans "anywhere across salt water" in 1943. The COS tried to

argue that because their paper had been drafted to restore fundamental consensus on basic principles with the Americans, they had not spelled out 1943 plans. This was a smoke screen. The COS had been mulling over short term plans for weeks and the Brooke concept of compelling Germany to assume Italian burdens had already been absorbed by Eden and Smuts. The DC(O) agreed to have Churchill and the COS review each other's draft.[122]

Churchill's response revealed two main points: only now was he giving serious thought to specific 1943 plans and as usual his vision was more optimistic than that of the COS. Churchill's next paper, on 16 November, reflected greater sensitivity to coalition pressures, frustration at sluggish progress in the field, and fear of losing leverage in Allied counsels. For the first time, Churchill questioned whether the basic "wear down" outline **could** be further extended. The COS reluctance to envisage any clash with a large body of the German Army, perhaps into 1944, was politically and diplomatically unacceptable. The case for a massive bomber offensive was overstated; given the resources it demanded, review was now required. Even if ROUNDUP was off, "it would be most unwise to state this at present." Churchill also wondered about objectives in the Mediterranean: should the Allies attempt to "stretch" the enemy by forcing him to spread out forces, or "compress" him by pushing him out of southern Europe? Churchill brought this paper to the DC(O) that afternoon, warning that COS caution would violate the pledge he had given in Moscow of "substantial relief in 1943." Smuts and Eden agreed that a broader perspective was necessary. Smuts suggested the COS paper did not explain how to defeat Germany, even hinting that the neglect of a large ground campaign was "an oversight." Brooke reaffirmed COS resolve to enter the continent but not to countenance a premature move and reverse which "might easily add a year or two to the war." The COS also had a trump card. Shipping now set a limit to global options. The Americans would find they could not reverse "Europe first" even if they wanted to "now that they were committed to a theatre of operations in north Africa."[123]

Churchill's pressure bore some fruit. For the first time it was agreed that an outline plan with specific proposals for the defeat of Germany by conventional military

means was necessary. The COS also became better aware of the possible consequences at the coalition level of promoting an outline based on enduring weakness. Mediterranean strategy developed quickly under this pressure. This point has been seriously misunderstood. Various charges have been labelled against Churchill and Brooke to the effect that by now they had a well developed "Mediterranean strategy" based on ulterior motives - the defence of Imperial positions with Allied power. Brooke's statement about shipping was supposedly a "smoking gun."[124] These arguments are untenable. Given perceived relative weakness, firm detailed grand strategic plans were not preordained. Attention had been focused on the Mediterranean area because it was an integral part of British power and a place where the Germans could be engaged. But there is a vast difference between this and a calculated master plan. Britain did not have the military power to afford such a plan. Brooke, it should be remembered, would have settled in June for no TORCH and a U.K. buildup. Plans grew out of existing commitments and the fact that in late 1942 this was where Allied power was forging ahead. The real obstacle to different plans was still perceived relative military weakness. Brooke's smugness about TORCH reflected a deeper objective, the integration of the Americans into "wear down" was a whole. Churchill and Roosevelt made the TORCH decision, not Brooke. His idea was to build on it. As a specific operational plan, this was a new idea. Churchill's query about "stretching" was answered by tying 1943 Mediterranean operations into "wear down." This was indeed the embryo of a "Mediterranean strategy" but it had only begun to coalesce and it still eschewed a territorial focus. There were two serious flaws in this concept. Relying on objective facts to engineer this course would only reinforce American suspicions. Nor had anyone yet considered whether the relative logistic balance of a serious Mediterranean escalation would be in the Allies favour. However, this reinforces the case that on the really big issues the COS were ultimately moved largely by operational factors. A relative negative balance in France would lead to disaster, whereas in Italy or the Balkans it would result only in further delay.

Consensus was nearly reached in late November. It was agreed to give careful study to air and sea operations in the eastern and air and amphibious operations in the

central Mediterranean. This speculative posture was floated in Allied circles. Bedell Smith, Eisenhower's chief of staff, readily agreed to consider amphibious assaults on the Italian islands after Africa was cleared. Encouraged by this identity of views, Brooke floated his idea of dividing the area into operational spheres. Brooke hoped the proposal would allow the British to "concentrate our own forces for further enterprises." More importantly, he hoped it would rescue the concept of a CCS in London to exercise closer supervision. The proposal was tangled up in service command questions but proceeded on this basis. The COS knew that Allied ability to sustain intense operations in the Mediterranean depended on American controlled landing craft and air forces. The proposal was a measure of Whitehall's desperation to retain an equal voice as the power balance shifted. If no CCS in London emerged, could Britain spare the forces to keep the eastern area "active?" Did the Allied combat record warrant the gamble?[125]

Consensus also seemed close on overall plans. Churchill accepted COS revisions to his paper which toned down specific plans, especially regarding operations against the Japanese. The COS revised their paper on 25 November to impart a more aggressive cast. The "Europe first" case was more sensitively advanced, based on the argument the Allies were too weak to conduct two strategic offensives in 1943. The need to sustain the Soviets was spelled out as the focus of "wear down." The decisive invasion was still to come after the bombing-Mediterranean combination had succeeded, but there were changes. A ground campaign to overrun Germany was now cited as the only way to ensure final victory. The largest possible operation was to be prepared for 1943 to seize any opportunity.[126] It is easy to suggest cynically that this was SLEDGEHAMMER, not ROUNDUP. But this was pushing "wear down" quite far. A sequence of specific campaigns leading to a specific ultimate campaign, all to assist the Soviets and all on record, was far removed even from the WW1 outline of ARCADIA. These points were less than a change in grand strategy but more than justifications.

The obstacle that could not be avoided by turns of phrases was the decision to rest on "wear down." Nothing could be promised that would commit the Army to invading France before Brooke thought it was ready. This was no longer acceptable to Churchill. The COS knew this and made their revisions with a minute of 18 November from

Churchill fully in mind. Churchill agreed the decision to drop ROUNDUP had been wise, but argued the COS estimates of future power prospects were now as flawed as Marshall's had been earlier. The real problem was political. Because the Allies' first offensive was by 13 and not 48 divisions:

> "We have in fact pulled in our horns to a remarkable extent and I cannot imagine what the Soviets will say or do when they realize it."

Churchill now wanted an August 1943 ROUNDUP and would only give it up if a "massive presentation of facts and figures proves it to be impossible."[127] In fact, Churchill was so nonplussed by a conjunction of pressures - the prevailing prospect of early success in Africa, coalition pressures, and the caution of his bureaucracy - that he, in practice, made an ultimatum: "prove to me that a change of grand strategy in 1943 is impossible."

Churchill wanted the COS to adopt the most expansive course more than he wanted any specific plan. On 29 November, he circulated a paper by Amery which stated the "Balkan case." Amery felt that if the prerequisites for a return to the continent were local air supremacy and the ability to out reinforce the Germans, "the west coast of the Balkans is the ideal spot." Successive landings in Sicily, Italy and then across the Adriatic would allow the Allies to progress from easily held bases and open up a range of options in terrain where German supply lines were arduous. Churchill labelled the paper "not unsound." The same day he made two complaints on the revised COS draft. Eighth Air Force had not proven its strategy; its reinforcements should go to Africa, so the flow of ground forces to the U.K. could rise. Nor would Stalin accept the "practical abandonment" of a grand strategic offensive in Europe in 1943. These two papers reflected the cohesion of basic principles and the juxtaposition of continuity and change in Whitehall thought. Amery's paper reflected both the uncritical logistic assumption and the basic strategic motive - a **militarily safer** road building on existing efforts - of the developing Mediterranean strategy. Churchill's focus was the reverse, with the avowed motive that recent success, especially at Stalingrad, "...may fundamentally change the situation."[128] On 30 November, Churchill insisted "recent events" obliged another look at ROUNDUP. The Prime Minister drafted another ambitious program based on the

assumption that Africa would be cleared by 1943 - open the Mediterranean by April, take the Italian islands by June, launch ROUNDUP in August or September. This in effect was a claim that Allied absolute power would become strong enough in 1943 to allow a shift in fundamental grand strategic approach, a claim Brooke rejected immediately.[129]

Further impetus for consensus came from coalition developments. Dill answered all urgings to press the Americans on specifics with the correct claim that if the Americans were convinced ROUNDUP was a probability consensus could then be restored. However, it was generally realized that the only way to restore basic consensus would be another conference of principals. In what now became a set pattern of Allied grand strategy, basic outlines and frameworks had been eroded in the execution stage by events and divergent priorities. Roosevelt confused the issue by calling for a conference with the Soviets. Churchill carefully disagreed. The Soviets would merely demand a "Second Front"; the Allies must first restore their own consensus, which could only be done at a full scale conference. This was true but Churchill's motives ran deeper. Personal diplomacy would allow him to assert British equality, inject his views into CCS debate, press for study of wider issues thrown up by a fast moving war, and block any American-Soviet decision inimical to British interests.[130] In this context, the COS moved to finalize a British consensus.

In view of the persistent controversy regarding a hidden agenda, it should be noted that there were further advances in December 1942 towards accepting a grand strategic offensive. Paget and Harris objected to the JPS claim that U.K. forces could be reorganized, but their case was based on remote worst case fears. Paget still wanted 28 divisions to defend the U.K.! The COS dismissed this out of hand on 7 December and at last forwarded the definitive advice - 1943 invasion was so unlikely that it was now acceptable to slash defensive forces and reorganize on a completely offensive orientation. Brooke pressed Paget on the change from 10 December. The VCOS agreed to another cut in Anti-Aircraft Command. Portal went as far as to suggest the COS should now review possible reductions in garrison levels overseas. Whitehall was at last looking to seize the initiative, but the transition was cautious. The COS had every intention of

proceeding on an opportunistic basis, working within the basic guiding concept to expand existing efforts. They still assumed the assembled strategic reserve would not be rashly committed and thus leave the citadel naked.[131]

The dialogue in Whitehall in the first half of December again brought out the deepest wellsprings of British grand strategy. A consensus was reached which offered the first even remotely militarily realistic British grand strategic outline proposal of how to defeat Germany. Within the "rolling seminar," the crucial dynamic was a head-on clash between an excited Prime Minister and a hard pressed COS working to control reactions to recent success. The COS first effort, a reply on 30 November to Churchill's complaints about ROUNDUP, focused on exposing holes in Churchill's case. They rightly noted there would be no gain in rearranging the flow of U.S. forces because there was only one shipping pool available. The British controlled share of that pool had suffered a global net loss of nearly 900,000 tons in the second half of 1942. Of the nearly 19 million tons under British control, less than three million were then available for military use. This plus the landing craft pinch ruled out both clearing the Mediterranean and launching ROUNDUP in 1943; it would have to be one or the other. Relative power underscored the main point:

> "It is indeed extremely doubtful whether we could stage an effective ROUNDUP versus an unbroken German Army by July 1943 even if we were to curtail the build up of TORCH and abandon all idea of operations in the Mediterranean itself. But it is certain that we cannot pursue both these objectives simultaneously."

That conclusion was sincere but expressed the essence of the suspicions then prevalent in Washington. With less rectitude the COS claimed that the CCS94 consensus was based on defensive strategy and therefore ruled out ROUNDUP in 1943.[132] Such two faced reasoning provoked a response from Churchill. Given his pledge to Stalin:

> "I feel that our offensive war plans for 1943 are on altogether too small a scale compared with [Allied] resources and power."

Two important developments now suggested complete revision of 1943 plans - Soviet success, maybe even enough to prevent any transfer of forces to the west, and imminent

success in Tunisia. Churchill now called for BRIMSTONE, the invasion of Sardinia, by March, and a 35 division ROUNDUP - 15 British - in August or September.[133]

There was never any chance the COS would accept this program. There were two specific reasons. Shipping capacity had now become far too strained to stage major campaigns in two different theatres in overlapping sequence. Nor were they yet prepared to abandon their cardinal assumption - faced with a "Second Front," the Germans would run incredible risks to crush it.[134] In general, they refused to agree it was time for a more deliberate approach. This dispute was very real. Churchill now sincerely felt the situation would be favourable enough and the Allies strong enough to force the issue in 1943. The COS disagreed and on 3 December Brooke put their final point directly to Churchill: Churchill's pledge to Stalin had not been made in his presence. In other words, the COS would wash their professional hands of it. Brooke promoted the sequence thesis, insisting, "we should ruin everything if we went in prematurely with insufficient strength." Churchill persisted - an invasion would not be "so formidable." The tide ran against him. Leathers agreed with the COS that waste of shipping in the Pacific ruled out an early grand strategic offensive. Attlee supported extending existing success, but Churchill insisted the Staff again review its whole case.[135] The COS realized Churchill was moved by a combination of sincerity and expediency. Perceived success in Africa and Russia whetted his appetite for maximum offensives. Natural suspicion of the Staff's resolution coloured his judgement of their case. His fixed desire that Britain retain an equal voice in grand strategy, strengthened by coalition pressures, reinforced focus on offensive action by British forces. He had, however, not yet made up his mind. The COS had, and Brooke was their spokesman. Brooke made it clear in retrospect that the COS took this Churchillian pressure for a 1943 "Second Front" very seriously.[136] His own feelings were underlined by an exchange with a surprise "Second Front" supporter - Montgomery.

From late November through December, there was an exchange of views on future grand strategy between Montgomery and Brooke noteworthy on two grounds - the close bond and therefore tendency to frank exchange between the two, and the military case Montgomery raised. Montgomery laid out a developing case in several letters, tying

it together on 13 December. Mediterranean operations faced four serious problems - a lengthy supply line, poor logistics infrastructure, lack of well placed air bases, and rugged defensible terrain to assault. Therefore, the relative balance of logistics of a large campaign would be unfavourable, especially to the British. A campaign from the U.K. would reverse all these disadvantages. Soviet efforts, heavy bombing and small Mediterranean assaults would create the conditions for a move in mid-1943. Montgomery was the first really senior officer to question the logistics of a Mediterranean campaign; but the seminal points he raised related to combat power and national power. Allied combat power could match the Germans only in the most concentrated form. Yet British national power seemed too shallow to sustain more than one such serious effort. Brooke returned friendly but absolutely unyielding replies stressing Montgomery's ignorance of the strategic feasibility of an early invasion of France. Montgomery took the hint and adjusted his thesis to the need to ensure the Army was powerfully concentrated in the right place given the prevailing situation, which now became "...North Africa, from where we can invade Europe via Italy."[137] Montgomery's careerism should not obscure recognition that his Mediterranean caveats demonstrated how embryonic the whole vision still remained. But the key point was that Brooke's definition of what was feasible would be the basis for a reconciliation of military and political perspectives.

On 8 December, the COS directed the JPS to consider whether in 1943 a Mediterranean or U.K. based campaign would offer the greatest early relief to the Soviets. Their minute was meant to channel a conclusion - study either a total focus on ROUNDUP or the course "proceed actively to seize and follow up openings which may be presented to us in the Mediterranean." The COS would make their stand on fundamentals - either predetermined concentrated assault or reactive opportunism. The JPS did their duty. Churchill's timetable for 1943 was "long odds." There was no alternative to extended "wear down."[138] Before the COS paper, ready on 15 December, was discussed, Churchill had Clark Kerr meet that day with the COS to ensure they were fully aware of the latest Soviet views. Clark Kerr was categorical - the Soviets expected 1 million Allied soldiers to invade France in 1943 and would not

accept anything else as evidence of sincere desire for strategic co-operation. He also warned that, if pressed, Stalin might consider a separate peace. The COS rejected this last point but only from intuition and hope. The blunt truth was that they felt the Allies would be unable to land on the continent unless the Soviets had already gained the upper hand.[139]

These exchanges of perspectives led to a breakthrough on 16 December. Brooke and Pound laid out the strategic case in detail. The Germans could use a "magnificent lateral railway system" to out-reinforce the Allies in France, who would be limited by inadequate shipping and landing craft. However, there were only two vulnerable rail lines to Italy and one to Greece. If the Allies could pin 40 German divisions in France by deception threats, knock Italy out of the war and "perhaps enter the Balkans," they could offer constant and increasing assistance to the Soviets. An Italian collapse would force dispersal of German forces, whereas a focus on ROUNDUP would relax the pressure and end only in a gamble. Churchill was at last convinced. His reply should not be ignored by his critics. He accepted the COS conclusions with the proviso:

> "...that ROUNDUP was still the better strategy if only adequate forces for a successful re-entry on the Continent could be assembled in this country. The object of his note had been to ensure that both lines of strategy were fully explored."

On the basis of expanded Mediterranean operations, Whitehall consensus was restored.[140]

A similar motion and crystallization of thought emerged in Washington, in reaction to similar pressures. The JCS strove to reach their own consensus. Roosevelt still strongly desired to meet Stalin and discuss a broad spectrum of issues without being committed in advance to any Allied policy. He feared this would upset Stalin and impede co-operation. Churchill strove to secure his own cardinal objective - strong consensus with the Americans defined on equal terms. At first his inclination to ROUNDUP suggested common ground. On 11 December, Dill reported that the JCS were now considering limiting Mediterranean operations after Africa was cleared, in order to escalate strategic bombing and prepare an assault to seize a bridgehead. Churchill was, by now, wavering; Brooke had never budged. He would not agree to

close down certain progress along "wear down" lines for an uncertain departure from the whole policy.[141] The outlines of a clash were becoming apparent.

Proposals now moved along three lines towards Roosevelt - a war conference, overall air strategy and ROUNDUP. Churchill resisted further White House suggestions to discuss plans with Stalin **before** an Allied consensus. In fact, this idea drove him close to desperation. The basis of Churchill's personal policy was the "special relationship" with the U.S. which alone seemed likely to allow Britain to retain a place in the front rank. Soviet interference would be an absolute disaster, on both strategic issues and newly arisen questions - policy in liberated areas, relations with smaller allies, post-war issues. The obvious need to settle plans for 1943 and Stalin's reluctance to travel forced a partial concession from Roosevelt on 14 December. A full scale summit and CCS conference could be held from 15 January; but it would focus only on strategic plans and avoid broader issues. This was less than Churchill hoped but as much as he needed to proceed.[142] From this point that conference became the focus of plans and dialogue.

Churchill accelerated that process in the area of air strategy. On 16 December, he offered a directive on "Air Policy," which made three explicit points. In order to keep pressure on Germany, Britain was committed to escalated strategic bombing, a fact to which structural policy must conform. This must become an all out Allied effort; the Americans should be pressed to conform to British strategy before their own failed. Finally, even though a more powerful anti-submarine effort was necessary, the burden of relief must be borne by the Americans.[143] This paper made certain that air policy would be a focal point of the next conference. It also acknowledged that the decisions of 1941 and failures of 1942 left few options. The heavy investment in strategic bombing at the expense of maritime needs could not be reversed even though both were heavily dependent on American power. Just as in 1941, the British must press on everywhere.

The JCS intense search for pre-conference consensus neared its own peak concurrently. Marshall's staff dropped their "either-or" view and recast campaigns on a more integrated basis. Marshall wanted to clear north Africa but then return to the

"concentration" policy. He had to balance King's pressure for Pacific escalation with British opposition to that policy. Dill was used as a conduit to keep the COS informed of the state of debate. On 23 December, he sent London the gist of the imminent JCS consensus. It laid open Allied contentions on both fundamental and specific levels. "Europe first" was valid, but Pacific grand strategy had to be clarified; unspecified offensives were necessary to secure positions and lines of supply. China needed greater assistance. The Soviet war effort, an indispensable bulwark of Allied strategy, must shape that strategy. The shipping crisis should now be solved by routing the U-Boats. The active program for 1943 should be a combined strategic bombing offensive, the clearance of Africa and heavy air pressure on Italy. But the main effort would be a revised concentration in the U.K. for a strategic offensive in Europe in 1944.[144]

These emerging ideas were now affected by the stall in Tunisia, which raised the prospect of an unexpectedly long land campaign. Worse, the first outline plans for BRIMSTONE and HUSKY made all too familiar claims for forces on a scale so large as to affect all other plans.[145] Inexorably, Whitehall attention shifted to the Mediterranean in an effort to maintain the momentum.[146] The prospect of a tough fight for Tunisia affected preparations for the conference. The JPS were directed to prepare two papers to express the British consensus, one to discuss 1943 grand strategy in Europe, the other to place it in overall context.[147] Dill's reports sparked a Churchill enquiry on the current comparative views of the JCS and COS. The COS replied that the main difference was over the exploitation of TORCH. In light of the collapse of the optimistic assumptions on Tunisia and the inflation of subsequent plans, Churchill composed a draft to outline his new ideas. The paper was Churchill the strategist at his most honest. The prime objective was maximum possible offensives, in order to be seen to be at least equalling the Soviet effort. TORCH put the Allies in a good position which must be exploited. Because the bulk of Allied power, forces in the U.K., would only be active in the air, only HUSKY, the largest Mediterranean stroke, was acceptable. In other words "wear down" had to be stretched to the limit to maintain sharp end pressure, preserve British influence and satisfy public opinion. Churchill was now arguing for revisions within a consensus, not over fundamentals; he refused to abandon PQ convoys

or HUSKY. Nevertheless the two final COS papers were approved by the DC(O) on 29 December.[148]

As these two papers expressed the final consensus arrived at after a thorough overhaul of grand strategic thinking, it is necessary to take a brief aside to put them in a more complete context. By this time, the course of the war had wrought great changes in the original policy vision of 1940; but important threads of continuity remained. Economic warfare, the original guiding concept, had been relegated to a peripheral aspect of the more conventional application of military force.[149] The same fate had befallen the idea of "setting Europe ablaze" by "igniter" invasions. SOE was unable to organize militarily significant resistance, in the face of tight German control, political friction, and a determined effort by the COS to restrict its resources, especially aircraft. The COS never had any time for the idea of defeating Germany by a "people's war," and had only accepted the concept by default in 1940. They were also able to exploit an inherent paradox in SOE's mandate. The "igniter" concept was meant to offset conventional weakness by leaning on resistance forces; but these forces could only rally if Allied forces invaded, which the COS would not allow unless they felt those forces were strong enough to survive a conventional challenge. The crystallization of ROUNDUP allowed the COS to sweep aside the old vision. SOE's efforts became tied to assisting Allied conventional plans,[150] apart from the continuing effort to set off turmoil in the Balkans.[151]

From November, the COS stepped up their efforts to harness the irregular campaigns. Pound claimed that the amphibious fleet now needed for Allied plans was beyond Combined Operations mandate, so the Admiralty should assume that responsibility. After consultations, the issue was settled on 31 December. Combined Operations was to control the organization and training of amphibious forces, but the Admiralty would now supervise policy and operations.[152] In fact, the shift in the Allied position had allowed the COS to reshape the grand strategic outline, and push the irregular aspects out to the periphery while replacing them at the centre by a more conventional application of regular military force. This was underlined by a reorganization of propaganda policy and the PWE, which resulted in the complete defeat

of Dalton's hope to launch an ideological crusade. The COS made clear in March that propaganda was also to assist conventional efforts, not stand as a campaign in itself.[153]

Interestingly, all this raised the basic question of national war policy once again. The balance and pattern of grand strategy had changed; but the approach had **not**. The idea was still to destroy German military power without challenging it head on, by **imploding** German national power. This again made it important to clarify British views on how to treat Germany itself; if the plan was to disrupt the control and cohesion of the German government, how would the Allies pick up the pieces and establish order? The extreme view that Germans were inherently evil and Germany must submit to the will of the victor clearly reduced the chance of an anti-Nazi rebellion, an objective surely intrinsic to the "wear down" concept. But the countervailing concept in national war policy was that there was no possibility that a German regime willing to accept Allied terms for a settlement would emerge. The British were clearly in a dilemma. Churchill firmly believed that there was not and would not be any authority in Germany from whom the Allies could receive acceptable terms.[154] This implied that overwhelming military force would have to be applied to crush German military power definitively. Yet although the British now agreed that the emphasis should be on conventional military means, they insisted that relative weakness would restrict the Allies to campaigns aimed to set off an internal upheaval in Germany. This was dangerously close to an unhinging of aims and means; this situation very shortly blew up in Churchill's face, at Casablanca, and will thus be further discussed below. For now, it underpinned the new consensus with which the "rolling seminar" proposed to approach the imminent conference.

To return to the new position, in their final form the two documents approved by the DC(O) were phrased to appeal to American ears as a basis for discussion at the imminent conference. The paper on "future strategy" addressed the relative advantages of an all out exploitation of TORCH and a focus on an all out BOLERO. Under the latter, 25 divisions could be ready in the U.K. for a ground campaign by August. The perceived consequences were serious - no 8th Air Force expansion; no prospect of Turkish intervention; no major offensive in Burma; above all, a period of no relief for the Soviets in which the Germans could recuperate. These, on the other hand, were the

suggested benefits of vigorous exploitation of TORCH - a possible Italian collapse; air attrition which would force costly German transfers; possible Turkish entry; possible Aegean-Balkan activity with or without Turkey; a "possible" ANAKIM in August; the ability to prepare 21 divisions in the U.K. for any "opportunity," although the decision to move had to be made by May. The pressure on Germany could not be relaxed or it might recover. Knocking out Italy was the best move the Allies could manage. It would force the Germans to take up burdens that would leave them 54 divisions and 2,200 aircraft short of the strength needed to hold the current line in Russia.[155]

The tone in the paper on "American-British Strategy in 1943" was bold and forward looking:

> "...the days of plugging holes are over. We must now agree on a plan that will lead to victory, quickly and decisively."

However, the Allies could not yet sustain grand strategic offensives against both Germany and Japan. Since British power was near its peak and pinned by Germany, the issue was where to deploy American power. The "Europe first" decision must stand, for familiar reasons. The new interdependent mixture of bombing/Mediterranean operations/buildup for eventual grand strategic offensive was the best course. Strategic bombing was now seen as an essential phase, no more but no less, which would "progressively destroy and dislocate the German war economy and undermine German morale." The prime objective of Mediterranean escalation was to "knock out" Italy; this was to be done by combining amphibious conquest - the Staff favoured Sardinia - aerial pressure, raids, sabotage and propaganda. If terms were requested, bases for further operations against Germany would be demanded. No obligation to occupy Italy and risk a major campaign was to be accepted. Turkish entry, but not a major Turkish campaign, was desired. If Italy collapsed, the next move "will largely depend on whether Germany abandons Italy or relaxes her grip in the Balkans." Whichever way the Germans went the Allies should go the opposite, careful not to set off a major ground campaign. As for a "Second Front" - "we intend to return to the Continent when the time is ripe." Subject to the claims of above campaigns, forces should be prepared for either an "opportunity" move on three months notice after "a pronounced deterioration in the

fighting power of the German armed forces generally," or a possible autumn bridgehead attempt.

Together these papers laid down a charter for the first full Allied offensive campaign. Their omissions and confessions are remarkable. For the first time, it was explicitly advised that "the defeat of the U-Boat remain [sic] a first charge on our resources." Yet almost no concrete measures were proposed. The target for the combined heavy bomber force was reduced to 3,000; but the British would persevere as they now had no real alternative. The "Second Front," the supposed apex, was the vaguest plan of all. The difference of only four divisions between U.K. forces with or without Mediterranean escalation indicated the COS fundamental conviction - in the face of an unweakened German Army, it did not matter how much absolute strength the Allies could marshal. There were clearly no fixed ideas of a long term Mediterranean campaign. The knock-out of Italy - vaguely described as compelling its government to sue for peace or face rebellion - was as far as could be foreseen. The COS hoped not to have to occupy Italy. In fact the whole idea was clearly to extend "wear down" by expanding existing lines of attack and proceeding opportunistically. It is impossible to see a geographic master plan in this framework based on perceived enduring relative weakness. The COS view was that the Allies were now strong enough to attack but could not yet attempt to impose order on events. The three months notice requested for an opportunity attack, based on the need to transfer landing craft, indicated that time and space were not yet considered irrelevant.[156]

The restoration of consensus in Whitehall regarding current and overall grand strategy was, of course, no longer enough. To begin with, this consensus had to be "sold" to the Americans. On 30 December, the JSM offered advice on how this might be done. They identified two levels of debate. One, on a fundamental level, pitted "wear down" reactive opportunism against deliberate concentration towards a specific fixed program. The other, on the level of execution, was how to balance Allied effort between Europe and the Pacific and BOLERO and the Mediterranean. The COS were warned to make a convincing case in order to head off further escalation in the Pacific,

which had already absorbed half of American shipping capacity. In fact, the JSM emphasized most strongly the need to make a new effort to reconcile grand strategy with structural policy.[157] Whitehall needed to understand that a clash of views existed on different planes. The Allies now had to ensure that their ever more ample power produced the right types of forces and equipment at the right time, and that they were sent to the right place, in order to prevent the abortion of plans by clashes over scarce items.

The JSM reference to a comprehensive outline underlined the fact that the concurrent discussion on structural policy had, over the course of the autumn, again made the balance and direction of Allied structural policy an integral element in questions of grand strategy. This was now a crucial issue for the British, whose objective, never achieved, remained to secure a consensus on overall policy and methods to enable the CPRB to establish a "common pool" favourable to British interests. Two central facts shaped the revision of British structural policy in late 1942: acknowledgement that an all out national effort would have to be maintained longer than expected; the eventual realization that a "common pool" on British terms was unlikely to develop. The consequences can be traced towards the emergence of a comprehensive adjustment of policy. First, the fate of the attempt to pursue the "common pool" must be analyzed. Then, its impact on British attitudes, and British attempts to reorganize structural power, must be assessed. This must be placed in a broader context by examining major questions regarding British control of Imperial policy, and the future British role in the international system, that arose from the strain of this now total war. Finally, Whitehall's deliberate attempt to knit together structural policy and grand strategy into one coherent national agenda will be examined. It will be argued that the further the issues strayed from fundamentals, the less effective British policy formulation became.

By autumn 1942, the need to adjust structural policy was clear. In September, Production circulated a report on "Munitions Production" from January to June. It reported a large degree of success in organizing and increasing production. Overall, the index of Supply production, 100 in September 1939, 286 in December 1941, was up to

384 by June 1942. However, there were various setbacks and arrears - aircraft, tanks, escort vessels. The conclusion seemed to be:

> "these setbacks probably represent the difficulties of greater effort as we approach our maximum. The limits of our expansion of manpower in the munitions industries are now in sight."[158]

The LPC seconded this from a wider perspective in October in its "Quarterly Survey of the General Economic Position." Shipping and manpower remained the limiting factors of the British war effort. Shipping was an immediate concern; demand far exceeded supply. Manpower was a more fundamental limit. The intensity of the war effort already threatened long term economic stability. Disinvestment and export contraction were near the physical limits. However, still greater effort seemed required for 1943. If a margin of further resources was found, it should be tapped. Assuming a "common pool" emerged, any subsequent need to contract the effort should be offset by expanded American mobilization. The risk was obvious. If the attempt to increase military power left the U.K. dependent on an abortive "common pool," its long term economic stability might be threatened. The report duly advised more intense effort but a focus on attempting "decisive blows" as early as possible.[159]

This amounted to a confession that the failure to reverse the tide of war put the U.K. in dire economic straits. Two attempts to harness the problem proved obsolete. In late October, Churchill again attempted, with Cherwell's help, to lay down new guidelines for structural policy and programs. The only result was to highlight the perilous manpower and shipping situations. The latter seemed particularly grave; Cherwell warned that by the end of the year, if the Mediterranean were not open, either supplies to India would have to be cut by one third or a guarantee of extra assistance would have to be received from the U.S.[160] From late October to mid-November, Production officials tried to reorganize the central machinery in order to bring about that close supervision of the execution of programs which had so far eluded Lyttelton. They argued this would close the "gap" in the co-ordination of structural policy, whereby departmental autonomy in the execution of programs left the central forum with little ability to ensure that consensus arrangements actually came into practice. They proposed

to establish a Joint Production Committee and a Joint Industrial Staff, innocuously described as more efficient contact forums. In fact, this would have enhanced the authority of the central body. The top officials of the supply departments personally scuttled the plan, ending all idea of a "super-Ministry." Structural policy would continue to be co-ordinated rather than controlled.[161]

Given the practice of British administration, it was unlikely that the theoretically attractive method of unified control could have been established at this late date. But the attempt brought out a very useful consensus, expressed by the drafters of the proposal in justification. It was clearly demonstrated that the simple focus on overall mobilization was now obsolete. The war economy was nearly mature. The whole war machine would have to become more flexible, able to shift resources to adjust to changing needs. An increase in efficiency was essential. The smoothly integrated committee network spread these perceptions through Whitehall. By November, the dimensions of the problem were apparent. A greater effort was required and significant progress within a year was urgent. The margin of effort required again exceeded capacity.[162] The solution, again, had to be an arrangement with the U.S.

The ideal for Whitehall was a strong CPRB in firm control of the balance of American production and allocations. This failed largely for a simple reason: because the British had everything to gain by such an arrangement. The central fact was a steady erosion of the whole "common pool" concept, aggravated by continued ambivalence in London. The British had clear incentive to try to harness the American service programs: whereas British capacity was near its peak, it was now being surpassed by an American capacity set to more than double its current effort.[163] There would soon be equipment in plenty, but the British did not want to be looking for leftovers. The JCS were equally determined to prevent civilian boards and/or the British from gaining leverage over their programs and further interfering with their buildup. Whitehall finally forwarded very detailed tentative Orders of Battle for April 1943 and April 1944, by late August. Broken down by theatres, the centrepiece was an Allied concentration in the U.K. It was too late. The reaction to TORCH and the perception of different situations were too strong. On 4 September, Marshall ruled out an American Order of Battle

estimate by theatres for 1944. Marshall feared that because the British mobilization was still so far ahead, "strategic needs" would be cited again and again to interfere with his buildup, as after the fall of Tobruk. Instead, the U.S. would only offer a global estimate in two parts - the level of forces possible to maintain overseas and the remainder. This arbitrary decision was a grave blow to the British. If a forecast Order of Battle by theatre for 1944 were not secured:

> "...it is difficult to see how a statement of needs can be evolved which is not merely a statement of containing the full equipment needed for the U.S. forces, wherever they may be situated. These total needs will probably be so enormous that they will swamp the machine."[164]

The British had reason to fear the effect of confusion in American policy on their programs. Departmental friction in Washington was much greater. Departments operated only on the vague basis of the targets laid down by Roosevelt on an incentive basis. Programs were only slowly being weaned off the obsolete assumptions of 1941. The Army Supply Program (ASP) epitomized the whole. The target for combat divisions actually rose to the absurd number of 334 before it became clear that this many could never be shipped overseas; nor were they necessary if the Soviets held out. Constant revisions increased the ratio of air and logistics units. British claims were increasingly set aside. The British thus faced the prospect of failure on the case-by-case basis as well as the over all approach. Worse, Roosevelt now considered setting 1943 production targets still higher but still only on an incentive basis unrelated to consensus grand strategy.[165] Whitehall focused on the overall problem. Its satellite in Washington favoured the case basis and deplored London's tendency to see American production as a bottomless well to be tapped at will. Layton and Weeks belatedly accepted the need to make convincing cases for all requests. The outlines of a deal were struck with the War Department regarding the establishment of a pool of resources to cover spot requests. Nelson was recognized as a valuable friend; belatedly, more reliance was placed on him and more support accorded the CPRB. But London still resisted treating the JSM as a full partner and still displayed marked reluctance to plead a case in order to influence American deliberations.[166] In other words, London remained averse to acting as an overall supplicant.

The second report of the CPRB on 22 September rebuked the American service departments for withholding information needed for its prime task - a balanced integrated Allied structural policy related to agreed strategic needs. This was so completely a "British" paper that it further reduced the CPRB's stature in JCS eyes. Whitehall seemed oblivious to this fact, despite Harriman's urging that it adopt a more genuine spirit of partnership.[167] Lyttelton, Cherwell, Portal and Layton expressed the broad consensus in early October. American production was booming but the British were being crowded out by the untrammelled growth of the ASP. The Combined Boards had failed because, apart from the CRMB, the British had been too clearly the junior partners and lacked material leverage.

The CCS rejection of an Order of Battle meant a blank cheque for the American buildup. Cherwell warned that to meet increased needs a guarantee of American supply at specific levels and greater home efficiency were both necessary. There was no margin for error because there would not be enough manpower to meet all claims in full. Layton advised the COS of the specific consequences of a bloated ASP, raised targets, and no Order of Battle. Despite a capacity of 28 million tons, Roosevelt proposed a ship building target of only 24 million tons. The margin was to be used up by a gross excess output of tanks - 86,000 in the U.S. alone, enough to equip 200 armoured divisions, with reserves. The failure to corral the ASP meant a needlessly large U.S. Army was squeezing out British orders. Layton felt that this would have to be stopped by providing CPRB with the agreed estimates, to enable it to make the case for organizing programs according to agreed strategic needs. This mixture of sincerity and expediency would favour British forces and rein in American production from arbitrary revision without really affecting already committed British capacity. Lyttelton called for an appeal directly to Roosevelt to entrench the CPRB. This would, in effect, "solicit a recognition that there is a combined responsibility for the maintenance of the British war effort."[168]

Churchill appealed to Roosevelt on 4 October. Citing Layton's figures, he suggested that targets unrelated to strategic needs or the best use of resources would lead to serious waste of effort. This was carefully phrased to downplay British dependence and emphasize interdependence. The COS renewed their own efforts to tailor structural

policy to a new grand strategic consensus.[169] Dill was advised that information would be forthcoming and requested to advise how best to proceed. Dill replied that Washington thinking was now very fluid. Roosevelt continued to feel the galvanizing effect of dramatic targets outweighed the confusion they caused in co-ordination. In October Roosevelt acted, setting off an intense debate within the JCS by calling for a stupendous increase in war production in 1943 - up to the value of $92 billion, including 100,000 combat aircraft. Dill urged the COS to seize the chance to revive the "common pool" by forwarding a proposed grand strategy outline and by sending Lyttelton to Washington to present the British structural case. However, it was already too late to achieve the optimum goal, although this did not stop Churchill from wasting several days on a futile plea for Hopkins to take up the issue in London.[170] The JCS had already decided to scuttle the idea of combined long term strategy-structure outlines for good.

Roosevelt signed the 12 October reply to Churchill, but the message was Somervell's. It was agreed some programs should be cut and a better balance struck. Constant study of combined needs should be handled on a case basis by the MAB and the COS. The CPRB should be restricted to advising the CCS if "realities of production compelled any revision in programs laid down by the departments." On 16 October, Leahy advised the CCS that the American decision to offer only a global mobilization estimate that equated home and overseas requirements was final. Together these replies indeed "spelled the end of any long range production planning based upon long term U.K.-U.S. strategy." The American service departments settled at last the issue of "aid versus buildup." From here the existing pattern - bilateral agreements in specific areas, overseen but not controlled by the central machinery - would only be enhanced.[171] The British swam from the start against the tide in this area and worsened matters by their own ambivalence beyond fundamentals.

It should be considered tragic that from this point, Whitehall and its Washington satellite moved quickly and strongly but with very poor co-ordination between themselves. The results were not fully apparent until 1943. It was agreed to send Lyttelton to Washington. The sense of time pressing was clear, underlined by JSM advice to accept American rejection of an Order of Battle for 1944, in order to keep

plans on track, and by Roosevelt's formal announcement of 1943 targets. Under pressure from the JCS, Roosevelt had agreed to some reductions. This included a new level of only 82,000 combat aircraft, but also inadequate increases in escort vessels and shipping. The JCS were locked in what was now an effort to sort out whether aircraft production should receive priority or whether a more balanced program was required. Roosevelt invited Lyttelton to consult him on the new program. Whitehall saw this as a chance to outflank the American bureaucracy. Lyttelton consulted the COS, the JWPS and Cherwell. Between himself and the latter the prevailing consensus was summarized in paraphrased capsule form as: "unco-ordinated and rapidly changing American plans are playing havoc with our own; as we now have to reallocate our last reserves of manpower certainty is imperative; if we do not receive it, we might be forced to choose between expansion in the air or on the ground." Cabinet had only to seal consensus with a directive on 29 October. Lyttelton was to seek supplies guaranteed at certain levels in order to enable the British to revise their own policy and an explicit recognition that interdependence obliged the Americans to sustain the full British war effort in consultation with those who knew it best. The whole process of Lend-Lease claims would be tightened to strict essentials, but these must come forth. It was, as always, a question of margins, but indispensable ones - only 10% of the whole U.S. program, but 100% of the rubber required in British operational spheres, nearly 100% of transport aircraft, 88% of landing craft, 77% of escort vessels, 60% of tanks.[172]

While London looked to capture the high ground, the BWSC took a different track. They had a better grasp of the disarray Roosevelt's proposals were likely to cause. While a strong CPRB might be the ideal, it now seemed more realistic to work on a specific problem basis. Nelson himself suggested on 30 October that the CPRB might have to focus on specific cases rather than overall balance. That same day, an important success was achieved when the agreement to establish a pool of resources to cover spot requests was finalized. This meant working through the War Department bureaucracy but at least there was growing acceptance of mutual obligation. However, as Lyttelton departed on 1 November, the JSM and BWSC were still awaiting the COS

grand strategy outline and unaware of London's plans.[173] This laid the basis for serious confusion.

Lyttelton carried with him a letter from Churchill to Roosevelt which put the British case in frank detail. In terms of the global physical situation confronting the British, the paper was unanswerable, a point not diminished by its belated recognition of several avoidable problems. The need to make final manpower allocations and master the shipping deficit was forcefully explained. Churchill waxed eloquent on the latter point and the U-Boat threat, described as "caging U.S. strength." Specific guarantees of supplies of all major items at fixed levels were requested, including the outright transfer of 2½ million tons of shipping - from an output the British wanted raised from 18 to 22 million tons - to maintain imports at the current level, plus 1 million tons of tankers. Imperial military power was clearly demonstrated to be indispensable for the strategic offensive. If American supply did not become a certainty the consequence was clear:

> "Rather than cut any further on the food of the people, I should be forced to reduce our contribution to the war effort."[174]

This was the point that had to be put across once and for all - if the Americans did not accept the obligation to help sustain an intense British war effort, that effort would have to contract. Lyttelton also brought with him the paper on the "non-military" sector of the economy, long in gestation and meant to attest to the intensity of the British effort. The achievement and the clarity with which it was perceived speak for themselves:

> "55 out of every 100 occupied men and women in Great Britain are in the fighting services, civil defence, national or local government, or are working in factories or public utilities to provide goods or services for the government. The civil life of the country has been kept going, with the aid of Lend-Lease and other external help, by the other 45..."

The price had been high - a virtual halt to maintenance of capital goods, high taxation, an export trade down to 38% of the 1938 level. The stabilization policy was working, but just barely. Only a real "common pool," including minimum exports, would allow an even greater effort without irreparable long term damage.[175]

Lyttelton arrived in Washington well armed with objective facts, but the friction he encountered within American circles offset many of them. The U.S. was indeed not nearly as intensely mobilized as the U.K. Until greater political will to enforce co-ordination of programs and cuts in civilian standards appeared, it would stay that way. On 16 November, Lyttelton reported to the CPRB. The U.K. faced the need to allocate manpower margins to concentrate growth in either the services or war production, at the other's expense. To do this, American assistance at guaranteed levels was necessary. Lyttelton also outlined how the system of Production - JWPS-DC(S) - departments reconciled policy, as a broad hint. It was to no avail.[176] The habit of co-ordination and the compulsion of scarcity were weaker in Washington. Without them, strong Presidential intervention was necessary. Lyttelton secured it, but success proved a dangerous illusion.

Lyttelton returned to London early in December bearing a reply from Roosevelt. Roosevelt offered assurances, to be regarded as the necessary guarantee for the reorganization of British policy. There were two critical points: "every effort" would be made to meet the needs of Supply programs; an import level for the U.K. of 27 million tons in 1943 would be maintained as a strategic necessity. There were also caveats - "unforeseen circumstances" in general, a floating shipping pledge based on the margin above British capacity, subject to change, in particular. The specific American targets had now been changed, to include at least 18.8 and possibly 20 million tons of shipping, and fewer tanks, but these were global ceilings. Allocation, the other critical issue, was to be settled in the ongoing departmental talks, in which Roosevelt made clear his support for his own departments' plans.[177] This raised the question "just what had Lyttelton achieved?" On 9 December, Lyttelton circulated a detailed defence. Even though Roosevelt rejected a pledge to replace shipping losses, he had accepted the import level and explicitly pledged to settle any changes in shipping transfers personally. The pledges of specific equipment output were satisfactory. Overall, Lyttelton rightly felt that victory at Alamein and TORCH induced euphoria had raised British prestige and won him a better hearing. Lyttelton felt he had exploited this to achieve real success, cemented by a crucial gain which had been lacking in all previous arrangements:

> "these allocations have the good will and carry the undertaking of the U.S. Services, and should be regarded as a firm basis for allocating our manpower and planning our production."[178]

Lyttelton, in effect, argued that the Roosevelt pledges should be accepted in lieu of what had now become the chimera of an overall outline consensus. Several changes were made to put this into practice, including the long overdue establishment of a Minister Resident in Washington. However, department contacts were not to be diluted. The CPRB itself suggested on 30 November that it focus increasingly on specific bottlenecks.[179] Had Lyttelton correctly gauged the mood of the American services, all would have been well. That the perceived need to win them over was now known showed the effect of JSM and BWSC efforts. However, Lyttelton's unfamiliarity with American practice led to a rupture in British co-ordination.

For weeks, Dill urged the COS to keep him up to date so he could influence the JCS debate on grand strategy. On Lyttelton's arrival he became insistent, correctly sensing a TORCH induced focus on Europe in the JCS. What happened next was an extreme example of the effects of different perspectives. Dill had thoroughly ingested the "wear down" consensus and well understood pressures for the contrasting approach in Washington. But Dill was not aware of the depth of difference then existing between Churchill and the COS. London bid Dill keep the COS draft of 30 October under wraps until consensus was achieved. Unfortunately, Lyttelton proposed to take up the issue of grand strategy himself, to help forge a consensus and thus aid his lobby for the CPRB. This was a rash suggestion far beyond his mandate. Dill well knew how King, especially, would react to such a ploy by a civilian. To head off trouble, he gave the JCS a lengthy abstract of the COS paper. The idea of the cautious and defensive COS paper being circulated in Washington angered Churchill. All the old suspicions of Dill came flooding back. Dill received a severe reprimand and further information was embargoed until the DC(O) had reached a new consensus. This episode and the arbitrary reaction fostered American suspicion of London's agenda and made Whitehall suspicious of its agents "localitis."[180]

Lyttelton then made two critical errors. First, he failed to understand that instead of erecting a new overall framework, the Roosevelt pledges, in fact, legitimized the method of bilateral adjustments by cases and made even this entirely dependent on consistent Presidential follow-up. Second, he never ensured Roosevelt pass the letter to Churchill onto the JCS. Thus they were unaware of the pledge - certainly in spirit - to respect interdependence as a governing Allied policy. Much of Lyttelton's time was spent winning over officials. Nevertheless, despite JSM warnings, London clearly, in the end, relied on Roosevelt to ensure full execution.[181] This was no longer enough, as now the question was one of balance rather than basic mobilization. Dill and MacReady tried to resurrect the Order of Battle approach in December, to no avail. The CCS agreed only to review the policy after grand strategy was settled at the imminent conference. No matter how logical the British strategic arguments were, the JCS refused to agree to place their entire structural policy - and thus American power - under arrangements which they felt would simply tie it to British strategy.[182]

The failure to realize that the Washington bureaucracy had agreed only to accept an integrated war effort on its own terms was the ultimate result of that fatal ambivalence evident from 1940. Once again, London relied on Roosevelt and objective facts to compel support, rather than win it wholeheartedly at the risk of becoming the supplicant. It is impossible to say whether consistent support for the views of Dill and his colleagues would have produced better results. It would at least have reduced American suspicion. Lyttelton's mission marked the failure of the CPRB as a body of overall control. Indeed, he nearly ignored it altogether in Washington. Reviving the "common pool" idea, talking of a CCS in London, relying on Roosevelt - these were all symptoms of British reluctance to react to the shift of power within the coalition.[183] This was a luxury Whitehall could no longer afford.

This failure was one of degree, albeit an important one. The boom in American production did help the British arrange new supply accords on specific items, and thus, at least, maintain the status quo. Aircraft were the critical item, given the disproportionate effort invested in them from the start. The need now was to bring in new types without interrupting output. This would not be easy, because the overall

efficiency of the industry was not up to desired standard. The absolute rise in output by structure weight was impressive, but consistent failure to meet targets offset it. Production concluded, in September, that the industry was much less efficient than the U.S. industry. Whereas MAP was only able to deploy 33% of its labour on main assembly lines, the U.S. ratio was 50%. It took 670,000 U.K. workers to make 2,000 aircraft a month; the U.S. figure was 600,000 for 4,000. Even given all variables, the gap was too wide. With planned expansion it could only widen, meaning more of total Allied output would come from the U.S.[184] Onto this depressing base had to be grafted the need for new types, especially bombers. By now, Lancasters had proven to be far and away the most efficient type, delivering four times the bomb weight and suffering much smaller losses than the nearest competitor, the Halifax. Engines were a serious bottleneck. Only the Rolls-Royce Merlin was really first class and it was desired for many types. These factors practically channelled the DC(S) decision on 14 December - proceed with development of the new design and consult the Americans on their new six engined type but increase Lancaster output. Given that by 1944 the bomber program was expected to absorb 30% of **national** resources, the desire to retain options was understandable.[185] But pressing operational needs and production limits drove the Lancaster inexorably forward, at the expense of many other types less favoured with resources.

Fighter and Co-Operation Commands squabbled over new types all relying on Merlin engines. There were simply no resources for transport development other than the York improvisation. The maritime types were mainly failures, because, among other reasons, MAP had not been able to devote first class attention to them. The U.K. aircraft industry had been focused on perceived essentials in 1940, and these were now all it could really deliver. Portal realized that new arrangements to retain adequate American supply were essential if the RAF were to make any impact in the offensive phase. Under the auspices of Lyttelton's trip, the Air Staff reached a third supply agreement with Arnold. Based on 80% completion of targets, British supply in 1943 was to be 4,174 all types; B24's were slated specifically for Coastal Command and the Dominions received specific allocations. Portal accepted this on several conditions,

including recognition this was the bare minimum and provision for a review in May for a possible increase.[186] Cripps' takeover at MAP sparked steps to bring targets more in line with proven capability. By the end of 1942, Whitehall had thus made three major steps - clear perception of the industry's weaknesses; steps to focus on the best types; a new American pledge for reduced but firm supply. The aircraft program at last seemed to be coming together. Whether it could pace new needs remained to be seen.

The Army program, with its great mass of simple items and a fairly strong existing industry, was in better overall shape. It was generally agreed that given all variables the Imperial Armies were now from 75 to 90% equipped to war establishment. Statistical Branch and Production agreed that capital equipment might be near completion by the end of the year. Cherwell argued in November that WO claims for higher targets were pointless. Existing allocations could meet both the existing program and any new needs. Production went even further. If wastage and operations estimates for 1943 were firm, changed needs could be met and a 25% cut in the program accomplished. The momentum of existing programs would suffice. If the distribution of effort were settled as 50% U.K. output, 25% Canadian, 20% American, 5% Eastern Group, these reductions would allow transfers to other programs.[187] This happy situation was one tangible benefit of not having had to maintain large ground forces in prolonged intense combat.

While the overall picture seemed better - if estimates were reliable - tanks were, as usual, another matter. The concept of a multi-role main battle tank of medium size was at last taking hold. Montgomery reported that the need now seemed to be a good dual purpose gun with good armour piercing and high explosive performance. This raised a familiar dilemma, because Montgomery considered the six pounder inadequate for the task. The WO expected to be able to deploy the superior long barrelled high velocity six pounder and 75mm's in the first half of 1943 and 17 pounders in 1944. They felt that improvisations, more Shermans, and better tactical handling could offset the perennial quality gap until Cromwells arrived in numbers. This was a latent debate exposed by recent events, but reorganized machinery now seemed to have a good grip. The 17 pounder anti-tank guns had already been sent to Africa.[188] However, this

perception rested on improved tactical handling and the early and successful introduction of Shermans and Cromwells. This made the fulfilment of the spring Allied accords a matter of urgency.

Unfortunately these had never been met, upset by output fluctuation, the Tobruk crisis and War Department confusion over targets. This matter was also resolved under the auspices of the Lyttelton visit, by Somervell and Weeks. Overall, British ground equipment claims for 1943 were cut by 25% but guaranteed at the new level. Tank policy would focus on the Sherman as the main battle tank. The British would receive 12,000 of all available types in 1943.[189] This, at last and at least, guaranteed sufficient numbers of an adequate type; but it only increased dependence on the U.S. and did not resolve the dual purpose gun issue. Hard experience still made the British reluctant to rely only on foreigners for a major military item. In November, Churchill was forced to ask why the target of 1,000 all types a month had not been achieved and where the Cromwells were. Cherwell and Duncan gave him roughly the same answer. Original estimates had been exposed as overoptimistic by the August reorganization. Overall output had improved; 869 of all types were produced in October. But Cromwell development, the vital effort, remained a problem. Not only were there teething troubles but it turned out that the Merlin engine so prized by MAP was also, in a modified version, the best power plant for Cromwells. The whole type still seemed months away from steady output of a fixed design. This made it easier to opt for more Shermans, but it also again raised the question of how seriously British influence on Allied policy would be affected if the British could not supply an adequate tank of their own to meet their forces' new doctrine. Half of all output in 1943 was scheduled to be Cromwells. In December, out of a weekly output of 140 types, 1 Centaur - a variant with an inferior engine - was recorded. This was the aircraft story in reverse - good overall, but trouble at the key point.[190]

The most serious problem was undoubtedly shipping, in all its aspects. For the British, the essence of the problem was simple. While the American fleet was increasing as American output began to outpace losses, the British controlled fleet was declining. Current needs could not be met, let alone escalation in 1943. The key to American

success was a powerful industry with immense resources practising modern large scale mass production pre-fabrication methods. The British industry, dogged by poor labour relations, obsolete methods, small scale yards and great repair burdens, could not emulate it.[191] The decision to rely heavily on American supply was irreversible. The solution seemed clear - make the Americans understand that Allied grand strategy relied primarily on the ability to ship forces overseas; in Britain's case, this also meant imports to sustain the economy. Shipping capacity should determine the balance and sequence of grand strategy.[192]

Cherwell rang the tocsin in October. The Americans had to accept the need to guarantee a fixed level of U.K. imports. Also, overseas supply claims had to be reduced or "plans for an offensive nearer home" could be threatened. This forced the Shipping Committee to submit a revised report in late October. It now agreed that from January 1942 to June 1943 there would be an estimated import shortage of 1.75 million tons, even after dangerous destocking. There was no margin. If imports did not increase in the first half of 1943, there would be three options: siege rations, reduced war production, or reduced active operations.[193] The COS refused to reduce operational claims in favour of imports. The JCS attitude was even worse, as Salter reported on 7 November. The American service departments had a stranglehold on shipping and resisted all efforts to gauge the efficiency of its use in the Pacific; the approach to Roosevelt was the last resort.[194] This was true enough; the mistake was in not ensuring Roosevelt followed up his promise to enforce his policy.

The stall in Tunisia and the need to build up forces for a long campaign threw calculations into disarray. The JCS attitude prevented the collation of enough information to form an accurate picture. Somervell's own plans for orderly central controlled logistics were ruined; this forced the BOLERO revision which caused such panic in London. Drastic steps, beyond the Roosevelt pledge, were necessary. In November and December they emerged. The LPC set a figure of 4 million tons destocking from January 1942 to June 1943 as a maximum. Troopship capacity was found to be adequate. Tanker capacity and oil stocks were another story, because of unilateral American transfers. Another direct appeal to Roosevelt had to be made on 17

December for several steps, including more tankers allocated to the U.K., to restore the situation.[195] The import situation was reviewed in late December. The Administrative Officers warned that although targets to June were feasible if losses were cut, deliveries on schedule and the Mediterranean opened, anything beyond could only be met with U.S. aid. Either more ships had to be secured or overseas traffic cut. Clearly, absolute and relative structural weakness set a limit to strategic options and fostered growing dependence on coalition resources. The one bright spot was that the War Department at last agreed that shipping limits ruled out a huge army. A fundamental revision of policy, which could greatly assist overall planning, was imminent.[196]

Three strong currents underpinned this broad revision of strategy and structure in late 1942. Their interaction is important in assessing the question of power as a factor in British grand strategy and the motives of those who made it. The strain of the war effort plus the string of defeats increased doubts about Britain's long term ability to maintain itself as a World Power. The shift in relative power within the coalition became more pronounced, accelerating the decline in Britain's share of coalition power. Finally, the strain of the war effort, offset only by very belated success, cast serious doubt on whether further escalation of effort was possible. The dominant feelings were persisting uncertainty, a sense of time lost and a fear of creeping eclipse.

The question of the role of minor allies in grand strategy was not a serious problem. Whitehall and Washington agreed on the need to keep central machinery manageable and restricted to those powers with large scale resources and interests - themselves. The minor allies, a useful addition to Allied strength and an important political factor, swam with the Anglo-American grand strategic tide. The Dominions posed a more complex problem. Each developed a different attitude towards its role and assumed varying importance in aspects of coalition power. It is risky to generalize but it can be said that from Whitehall's perspective South Africa remained the most influential, New Zealand the most congenial, Australia the most difficult and Canada the most important. The evolution of relations with the Dominions reflected the evolution of Whitehall thought regarding the Empire as a military power and political entity. Whitehall tried to retain unchallenged sole control of Imperial war policy in the face of

the Dominions' immense exertions and new concerns. Smuts retained the most influence on grand strategy, because of his personal stature and connections, despite South Africa's decision to restrict operations to Africa. The Australians fell completely into the American military orbit, to the extent that Whitehall and Washington consistently took a common stand against Australian pressure because of the personal alliance Curtin had forged with MacArthur. Whitehall's concern over encroaching American influence in the Antipodes grew parallel to its inability to offset it.[197] London often acted as agent in pressing Dominion claims, but this was at least partly to head off pressure for a voice in central Allied or Imperial machinery. In general, the Americans and the British only dealt directly with a Dominion when its stake in an issue was large enough to leave them no choice.

In 1942, Canada became the most important Dominion and perhaps the leading minor ally. Canada became an important factor in Allied structural power, especially as a source of foodstuffs and raw materials and a vital source of equipment on generous terms for the British. Canada was involved closely in atomic research. Canada's military contribution had become important, especially in the Atlantic. All this made British policy towards Canada a valuable indicator of Whitehall's view of itself as "senior partner." The record reflects both attention to Canadian concerns and irritation that these should interfere with British plans. Production and supply were Canada's most important contributions. From July, the JWPS closely studied how to continue to make full use of the now booming Canadian capacity, especially as so much of it was surplus to Canada's needs. In August, it was decided to expand orders. Consultation had been close and continuous. But when it came to a **decision** on how to use **Canadian** capacity:

> "A report had been drafted by the Working Group and submitted to the Committee. The Group had met once and it had not been considered necessary to invite a Canadian representative."

Canadian production became important enough to compel the British and Americans to allow Canada greater representation at the centre. But in practice this amounted to joining the CFB and the CRPB, at the exact time when the latter had become a pale reflection of what it was meant to be.[198]

MacKenzie King must share the blame for this for he remained reluctant to press for a larger voice in Allied decisions. But the treatment of the Canadian services reflected a deeper trend in Whitehall. Brooke actively conspired for a long period to subvert the position of the commander of 1st Canadian Army, by now 25% of the strategic reserve.[199] When in August Ottawa decided to form its own group within Bomber Command, Harris protested long and violently. Harris actually resented the Canadian CAS' "impertinence" in speaking to him as an equal; Portal, it must be noted, was not nearly so arrogant.[200] The worst problem was the trouble over naval equipment and VLR bombers, because the RCN's operations were by far the most important Canadian operational effort. In all three elements Canadian combat power was suspect; but this was at least partially due to the fact the Canadians had also had to expand from scratch, and the fact they were last in line to receive new equipment. Very real shortages obviously influenced British attitudes, yet the "common pool" and "strategic needs" concepts were a valid case for Ottawa to put to London. A chain is only as strong as its weakest link; a ship lost off Newfoundland was as much a loss as one sunk off Liverpool.[201] This reflected more than a touch of expediency and patronising.

In fact, by autumn 1942, the British were very uncomfortable with the extent of their dependence on the Dominions and pressure for a share of decisions. None of these developments stemmed from lack of attention. In 1942, Whitehall paid closer attention to the Dominions than it probably ever had before. The Dominions were the pride of Empire, living proof it was both a progressive force and a power in the world. Many informed Britons now wondered whether the U.K.would need Dominion assistance to retain its status as a World Power after the war, just as it needed them to help fight it. Britain was still by far the most powerful partner, in nearly complete control of the information and expertise necessary to formulate grand strategy; but it could not do without Dominion power. Nor did Whitehall wish to make real sacrifices to retain the perceived right to speak for the Empire on large issues. After a visit to Ottawa, Attlee warned his colleagues in October that the ground was shifting under their feet. Ottawa was annoyed because it felt its influence had declined since the emergence of the "Big

Three." This was a relative shift. In 1940, Canada had been Britain's largest ally; now it was a medium sized fish in a much bigger pond, with obvious consequences. Attlee warned his colleagues not to minimize Canada, urging them to make the Canadians feel they were full partners rather than bit players. This was laudable and, given the financial relationship, realistic. Attlee's specific advice was neither and a perfect reflection of Whitehall's attitude towards running Imperial policy:

> "Ministers should...keep our relations with Canada prominently in mind and should seek by prior consultation to associate the Canadian government with us in all decisions affecting Canadian interests."[202]

The Dominions were to be consulted and, if possible, their views taken into account. They were to be urged to support decisions; but they were not to sit at the table and make them. The very fact that Cabinet had to be reminded to consult Canada regarding its own interests is revealing. Britain would continue to make the big decisions. This had some merit on grand strategy but little on more narrowly political issues. The fact the U.K.'s own right to sit at the table relied on increasing measure on the assumption its weight included the Dominions troubled Whitehall.

The dependent Empire was by now a less important concern regarding control of war policy but a very important factor for the future of the Empire and relations with the U.S. Since the proclamation of the Atlantic Charter, there had been a steady evolution of ideas regarding a post-war international order. The fate of Allied dependencies was the cause of serious friction. There were substantial internal debates on both sides, but by late 1942 a visible Anglo-American rift was at hand. American opinion was strongly determined to prevent a wholesale restoration of the status quo. Roosevelt shared the feeling of many in his administration that the perceived British desire to retain control of a global Empire was a major obstacle to American designs for reshaping the international order. Whitehall suspected an American attempt to enhance future U.S. power at British, French and Dutch expense. Trouble in India directly sparked a confrontation of lasting effect. In October mutual suspicion reached dangerous levels.[203] This exploded into very public tension when, on 12 October, the influential Life magazine published "An Open Letter to the People of England." The letter summed

up the convinced belief in moral superiority over the Old World that ran so deep in the American people:

> "One thing we are sure we are not fighting for is to hold the British Empire together... If your strategists are planning a war to hold the British Empire together they will sooner or later find themselves all alone."

These comments were amplified by Wendell Wilkie, defeated Republican presidential candidate in 1940. In the midst of a world tour, Wilkie warned on 26 October that dependent peoples would no longer accept foreign rule. Roosevelt, urged to comment at a press conference, suggested the Atlantic Charter was meant to be applied on a global basis. This implied the end of direct imperial political control in Allied as well as enemy territory.[204]

Churchill could not and did not let this go unchallenged. His speech at the Mansion House on 10 November, a call to arms after Alamein, contained perhaps the most notorious statement the Prime Minister made in public during the entire war:

> "Let me, however, make this clear, in case there should be any mistake about it in any quarter. I have not become the King's First Minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire."

Nothing could have been more deliberately calculated to foster suspicion that British grand strategy was tailored to preserving British power through other's efforts. This very public exchange accelerated consideration of post-war political issues. Cabinet agreed to consider a public declaration to defend the Empire's record in political tutelage. Friction and suspicion over long term political aims increased as the Allies penetrated French north Africa.[205] As 1942 came to an end, the future of the British Empire was an open dispute on several levels. Churchill's view was the hard line but it was based on a strong consensus, shared by the Ministers most directly involved, that the U.K. alone would decide the future of its colonies. Whitehall at large resented what it considered American hypocrisy and naivete. Post-war policy review was in an early stage, but it was now part of the context of the direction of the war.

Whitehall also now experienced its first serious exchange of views on the post-war international order and the British role in the new atmosphere created by recent victories. Broadly speaking, there was one basic consensus - the U.K. must remain more than a

regional power - and three contending views. The Foreign Office pressed a clear theme: the U.K. must have a stable Europe not dominated by Germany and must intervene to assure this; Europe could not be reorganized without the Soviets; a hard line towards Germany was the key to Soviet co-operation; yet the U.K. could not afford to become only a European Power. The British had to balance European and World Power, by retaining the Empire-Commonwealth and shaping an effective concert of the "Big Three" to lead the future world organization it was hoped to produce. Churchill's policies of delaying post-war reviews and leaning on the "special relationship" were criticized.[206] Amery put a contending view. A "Big Three" concert was unworkable. In its place a more federal Europe should be organized. The U.K. should stand aside and concentrate on remaining a World Power. This implied that the U.K. must and could generate the power to stand on its own on the global plane without the integration desired by the Foreign Office, seen here as a mortal threat to the Empire.[207] Cripps offered a synthesis: a concert was essential, but care must be taken to prevent Soviet or American dominance. This was embryonic thought but it indicated an important point. As Whitehall began to look forward, it did so, agreed that the U.K. must remain a World Power but with no consensus on whether this could be done without Soviet and American acquiescence. The classic British dilemma - Europe or Empire - was becoming acute. All this reinforced both Churchill's and Roosevelt's desire to continue to delay long term discussion. The desire to focus on the war was sensible, but the issues generated could no longer be easily contained.[208] The Foreign Office view summed up the Whitehall mainstream. In order to ward off American isolationism, Soviet unilateralism, European chaos and British decline, the British had to find a way to meet greater burdens with probably weaker power.

By late 1942, the majority in Whitehall felt there was little chance the Empire could stand alone as a third force, however desirable that might be, unless the Americans wanted it to do so. This was clearly underlined in the constant dialogue on war finance and post-war economic objectives, linked by the American insistence on a "Consideration" for Lend-Lease. The debate centred on the controversial clause of the Master Lend-Lease Agreement known as Article VII. Cabinet feared that any pledge to

lower barriers such as Imperial Preferences could leave the Empire at the mercy of American economic penetration. The real issue was a lack of trust. On the British side, the American call for commitment to a multilateral trading order was generally seen as a predatory measure. Tensions ran high, but interdependence forced a solution. Roosevelt decided to settle for a firm commitment to wide ranging talks on a multilateral order, with no advance pledge to jettison Imperial Preferences. Cabinet swallowed the clear implication that they would be the target of such talks, which duly proceeded.[209] This was only the beginning of greater friction. Both sides continued to press their own agenda and suspect the other of selfish motives. British exports and reserves reached such low levels that the prospect of post-war policy by American dictation became increasingly real. The U.S. were pressed to accept the need to allow reasonable levels of both, to help the war effort and ensure post-war stability. The Americans resisted this and insisted the White Paper on exports be observed to the letter. Washington hoped to extract long term concessions for its current generosity; but political factors were also a serious obstacle to a "common pool" in an area so full of post-war ramifications. The Americans sought to appease domestic opinion by demanding what amounted to a direct veto on major British economic policy decisions.[210] With little leverage to offset their need for Lend-Lease, Whitehall came to fear dependence might be substituted for interdependence.

Overall, the British failure to secure a favourable "common pool" in 1942 strengthened the friction which would, in any case, have arisen between two powers with a long history of "competitive co-operation." Emotions in British political circles ran quite a gamut, but two feelings were widespread: irritation that British power was being eclipsed; dread at the prospect of acting as junior partner to a power regarded as inexperienced and predatory. Reactions also ran a gamut. Amery and Beaverbrook pressed the emotional thesis that the Empire could generate enough power to avoid being forced to accept unpalatable economic change. Cherwell rather overstated American benevolence in attitude and action. One was a denial of reality, the other an exaggeration.[211] It can be said that by late 1942 two views of how to deal with the Americans were in contention - accept the limits to interdependence, take steps to

maintain co-operation but safeguard British freedom of decision; or, accept the imperative of interdependence and strive to increase co-operation, even at some sacrifice.

Views on this question crossed geographical lines, but a generally more realistic view of the Anglo-American situation emerged in the satellite Whitehall in Washington. Cunningham's transfer to Eisenhower's command was used to circulate a paper over his signature on 17 October which expressed the JSM-civilian consensus. London's irritation with American actions would have to be tempered by "certain realities," mainly the one way dependence on material aid and the growing boom in American power. A rigid British stand on "operational spheres" might result in an American decision to force the British to supply these spheres in full, which would be impossible. London must change its attitude and realize the Combined Boards and CCS were "our greatest national triumph," because they gave the British the right to discuss policy as equals. The conclusion was categorical:

> "As the war proceeds it will become more and more possible for the [JCS] unilaterally to make decisions which will have a vital effect on our operations. There is nothing we can do to prevent this. We can't force the JCS in any way. We can only bend them to our will by persuasion."[212]

This was in part special pleading by the JSM on it own behalf, but also an astute warning that "objective facts" could no longer take the place of determined advocacy accompanied by sacrifice.

The contrasting perceptions were best expressed in a WO paper circulated by Grigg on 9 November. Grigg felt the problem of integrating structural effort had worsened in 1942 because of the power and attitudes of the American services, especially the arbitrary focus on a huge Army. Beside plausible strategic motives, two political factors stood out:

> "Mistrust of London and its policy as to the conduct of war, which the Americans regard as being based on serving British interests... The need for the U.S. to be militarily strong in order to dominate the policy of the U.N., both during the war and the making of the subsequent peace."

As a result, structural policy had been put on "a business rather than a combined operational footing," shortages would continue, and plans should be made accordingly. This paper epitomized Whitehall's acute perception of fundamentals but blinkered

perception of interactive motives. The strictures on the American service departments were justified. The problem was what to do about it all. The JSM called for a bargain to preserve future British influence - conform to the role of junior partner as long as the Americans worked through the Combined machinery. This might retain the British a voice which, in say 12 months time, their share of power could not have sustained. Griggs' paper reflected London's reluctance to risk this course. Instead, it had wishfully hoped the Americans would uncritically accept British interests as Allied interests and relied on circumstances and Roosevelt to preserve its policy. Griggs' asinine conclusion summed up the mental gyrations in Whitehall sparked by this prospect of eclipse - the Americans were ruthless businessmen, "players," taking advantage of the British "gentlemen" who played by the rules.[213]

Clearly, the course of the war had made long term issues an active factor in British grand strategic thinking. Immediate operational and structural concerns, however, continued to dominate Whitehall's decisions. A grand strategy based on preparing in 1943 for a possible drive for victory in Europe in 1944 was taking shape. It was imperative to shape structural power in harmony with this new vision. There was only one lever which Whitehall could possibly use to attempt this task - the distribution of manpower. In the balance of factors which were constantly weighed to define grand strategy, the evolution of manpower policy indicated the ultimate balance.

Central control of national manpower came of age in 1942, only just in time. Free from really poisonous Cabinet rivalry and benefitting from experience, a sensitive, flexible, well balanced machinery emerged to make strong consensus decisions. With the changes in powers in January, the legislative framework was complete. After Beaverbrook's resignation, Bevin could concentrate on his two goals - parcelling out manpower between the services and industry most efficiently; improving the standards and thus hopefully the efficiency of the workplace. By June, Bevin's officials were well pleased with the overall improvement in the welfare area. It was not before time. Both Bevin and the JWPS warned that greater efficiency was now required from both management and labour to have any hope of intensifying the war effort. In June the

issue was clarified by calls for a still larger bomber program and higher service intake. Cherwell warned Churchill that manpower would set an absolute limit.[214] A gap had, in fact, arisen between the manpower "budget" of December 1941 and its actual execution.

There were a variety of causes - vague definitions of industrial categories, safety margin claims, industries' inability to absorb the intake at the estimated pace. There were also a wide variety of problems in different cases - program changes, poor management, inaccurate statistics, arrears in training and dilution, no facilities for mobile workers. As a result, the decentralized effort to place the right type and number of workers where and when they were needed was an uneven success. The service intake was fairly good. MAP's intake was consistently bad. Bevin remained convinced that the use, rather than the gross supply, of labour was the key to success. This required much deeper knowledge of manpower in all its aspects - geographic, social, political, technical - and better departmental co-ordination. The intake of individual insurance booklets in July allowed Ministry of Labour to begin to collate the necessary information. This accelerated the review of policy all around.[215] Three important events in October cleared the way for dialogue in November which led to decisions of great consequence in December.

On 6 October, Bevin at last gained the upper hand in the debate over how to address MAP's problems. Cabinet accepted his advice to focus on specific manpower bottlenecks rather than aggregate supply. Lyttelton and Anderson agreed that all departments should review their methods of estimating requirements, which cleared the way for critical examination of the administration of the aircraft program. Attlee's "teeth to tail" committee report*, circulated on 30 October, had a similar effect on service establishments. The committee found that service "tails" were excessive, up to 35% of Home Army strength. In order to check further inflation, Cabinet would have to lay down overall service ceilings. The same day, Churchill approved a new directive on Army scales based on an amalgam of schemes by Cherwell and the WO. The plan called for a global Imperial strength of 100 division equivalents, with fighting power to be

* *See above, p. 291*

increased by adjustments within that pool. These included - the use of 4 divisions as a training and reinforcement pool; a reduction in independent sub-units; a cut in Anti-Aircraft Command. These measures, already underway, were to result in a more powerful Army of the same size, both criteria "necessary to our effective conduct of the war."[216]

Thus the table was set for a fundamental revision of policy when, in November, Bevin released the survey of national manpower. Bevin's report defined general options and much more. For the first time, a really penetrating analysis of how to handle manpower from the macroeconomic level was offered. Basic definitions were finally offered. Industry was divided into three sections. Group I was munitions production. Group II was "other essential industries" - agriculture, coal, transport, etc. Group III was "less essential industries" - building, textiles, furniture, etc. This acknowledged the blurred line of distinction in total war between direct and indirect war production. A plethora of detailed statistics, based on better empirical evidence, was offered to substantiate three vital conclusions. Existing demands might have been met, but the increases in service claims meant a definite clash. These new claims could not be met while also meeting full claims for production and maintaining civil standards. Given the existing contraction of Group III, a macroeconomic choice was unavoidable. This report brought together in authoritative form perceptions now current throughout Whitehall.[217]

Co-operation over manpower policy was now far removed from the dark days of the Production Executive. Lytellton accepted the need to leave detailed execution and advice to Bevin. Bevin's policy of respecting the limits of social acceptance was entrenched, if still a source of irritation regarding dilution and double shifts. This was basically because Bevin had delivered enough of the right bodies all around to allow everyone to continue, even if not completely satisfied. The decisive link was Bevin and Anderson. Bevin made the basic survey which formed the basis of policy, in addition to directing its execution. Anderson focused Bevin's proposals into the specific choices Cabinet was called upon to make. Their long co-operation bore fruit in November. Anderson lent his great weight and experience to Bevin's conclusions. Accepting all variables, the intake of new manpower required by the services, Group I and Group II

was 2.539 million, including 1.1 million women. The maximum supply with further Group III cuts was 1.6 million. The deficit, two thirds of its service claims, could not be met merely by transfers. The full national program could not be met because American supply had not been enough to allow relaxation of the war effort. Anderson recommended cuts in the growth of the services to meet the deficit.[218]

The impending manpower peak was, of course, the main reason Lyttelton went to Washington. The sequence is instructive. Whitehall was very efficiently preparing to retool the national plant for a new phase of war. Physical control of a physical asset would be the main method. But it could not be done until the exact margin of American aid was known. And it had come about partly because the expectation of American aid which had grounded previous decisions had not been met. Cherwell advised Cabinet to establish basic policy first then consider detailed execution.[219] From 26 November to 11 December, Cabinet did just that, with three major discussions and several papers. The result was Whitehall at war at its best - a consensus decision recognizing all perspectives but weighted to force departments to respect a coherent policy, supported after full examination by all involved in its execution. Anderson laid out his report on 26 November, amplifying it by two suggestions. Cabinet should make revisions tailored to grand strategic appreciations. From now on departments should state their requirements but then adjust them according to supply. This was an important turning point. The necessary escalation of the war would outstretch manpower supply. It must now become an integral factor in grand strategy. The "do everything" policy was over. Cabinet accepted Anderson's numbers but a long debate reached no conclusions. Churchill drafted proposals, leaning on Cherwell's advice and his own inclination, which moved the issue close to resolution. Manpower policy was placed squarely in strategic context. MAP must focus even more on essentials. Civil and air defence would have to yield personnel. Given no intense operations before June and a thorough comb out of its "tail," the Army should meet its needs. Anti-submarine warfare was now priority, so the Admiralty would have to delay long term projects and consider laying up R class battleships. The aim was to cut service growth without reducing fighting power. Bevin agreed to the scale but felt the emphasis of cuts should be shifted. He continued to argue

that the proposed intakes were well beyond the absorbing capacity of the shipping and aircraft industries. The COS decided to support Churchill's proposals.

The contending points were brought before Cabinet, where, for once, the system worked perfectly. The central objective - cuts in service growth from manpower transfers, in order to extend intense war production - was kept to the fore in full and wide ranging discussions. Conclusions emerged on 11 December. Churchill's scales, modified by Bevin's advice, formed the basis. The total claim for 1943 intake into the services and Group I was cut from 2.676 to 1.576 million. Civil defence was cut by a net 75,000. The Admiralty secured a net gain of 434,000 for the service and industry. The new Army scales were modified and growth cut from 809,000 to 429,000. The WO was to consider breaking up four divisions. Supply was to lose a net 78,000. The RAF's growth was cut from 472,000 to 247,000. This meant 57 fewer new squadrons, including 14 of heavy bombers. However, MAP only lost 100,000 of its claim of 603,000. This was the result of a pledge by Cripps to reorganize targeting on a new "realistic" basis, grounded on past results with resources at hand rather than rosy projections. These were the most important structural decisions Whitehall had made since December 1941. By balancing the transfer of labour between sectors as to time and scale, especially by contracting Supply, it was hoped two goals could be achieved: the "gap" between definition and execution closed; the balance of the entire national effort brought under firm but flexible control by this one means. Nobody lost or won outright, all problems were on record, and the compromise had not subsumed the objective.[220]

This was a far cry from the intuitive speculation of 1940. Whitehall had found a means within its control to relate strategy and structure on a basic level. This expressed a national war policy decision of cardinal importance - the focus would be on continued maximum production in 1943, to lay the base for a push for victory in 1944. This was made clear in the estimated WO intake, itself based on the assumption Home Forces would **not** be engaged in 1943. The decision to cannibalize divisions was confirmed, starting with 8th Armoured and 44th Divisions - recently sent to Egypt at such strain! Brooke was surprised at how calmly Cabinet took the news, but he need not have been. The review of manpower policy had resulted in the recognition of the

ultimate limit of manpower throughout British officialdom. Montgomery recognized it as the Army's basic weakness. Portal pressed his commanders to keep establishments as low as possible. Indeed, his push for the 50 squadron plan must be seen in the context of a finite manpower pool. Brooke so saw it and warned in December that the newly clarified manpower situation obliged the British to relate strategic bombing firmly to overall policy.[221] The COS realized full well that their own conviction that "wear down" must be extended ruled out a deliberate push for victory in 1943. Combined with the unexpected need to maintain intense production, the result was a structural lever influenced by and meant to influence grand strategic perceptions and prospects.

The new awareness of the pervasive urgency of the manpower problem was what had made policy definition so effective. Faced with definitive evidence, parochialism took second place. This helped Production overcome resistance to its co-ordinating role. Production now saw " a new chapter in British production," with manpower the ultimate limit and most effective lever. Clear headed this time, they determined to work in tandem with Bevin's department. The nature of the problem had changed from a straightforward transfer of people from one occupation to another to a sophisticated balancing act of adjusting a complex flow between and within sectors. The complexity of the issue and the need for consensus was better understood. It was agreed to squeeze what could still be squeezed out of Group III. It was agreed to rely on departments working in tandem with Ministry of Labour to execute transfers, with information collated by the JWPS. Most importantly, the new manpower budget and Order of Battle would together form the framework of a flexible long term structural outline.[222] Whitehall confidently expected not to be outpaced again by events and the sheer complexity of massive social engineering, as it had been in 1942. It also regarded the new manpower policy - build for 1943, strike in 1944 - as the essential corollary of the redefinition of "wear down" as a sequence approach to the ultimate offensive campaign.

For the U.K., 1942 was a year of absolute success but relative failure. Politically, Churchill survived trial by fire to earn an almost unassailable mandate to pursue victory. Domestic politics almost ceased to be a direct factor in grand strategy.

The price was high - expectations for the future became firmly entrenched as the basic national issue besides the war and a powerful indirect factor in its direction. Structurally, Bevin's social policies were largely vindicated, especially by the absorption of women en masse into direct war work. However, Whitehall took too long to learn how to manipulate structure with precision and to practice genuine co-operation. Deficiencies in industry had gone too long unchecked. Militarily, the juxtaposition of absolute success and relative failure was severe. The bulk of Imperial power still rested immobile in the U.K.* The most serious problem was at the coalition level, the context for which national war policy had been tailored. 1942 was the decisive year of the war for the U.N. coalition born on its first day. For Britain, the crucial fact was that the coalition shared far more of its absolute success than its relative failure. The reckless sacrificial intentions of 1940 gave way to more realistic goals. Total victory remained the essential foundation for a better world. Now, however, Whitehall had no desire to ruin Britain and Empire in the process if it could be avoided. Here British leaders faced two seriously conflicting goals. It was important to win the war as quickly as possible, through the maximum possible British role, in order to allow national power to recuperate, contain the stresses on the Empire, and preserve British influence - in that order. But the quickest way to win the war was also seen as the most militarily dangerous - the short term must be survived to have a long term - and the course most likely to foster American influence - in that order. The fundamental motives of British grand strategy can be found not in contrasting factors as "either or" but in understanding which of them tilted the balance of decision.

Militarily, the critical factor was that it was not Allied but Soviet military power that halted the German grand strategic offensive. Until very late in 1942, the Allies were unable to force the Germans to transfer significant forces from the Eastern Front. Certainly, the Allied war effort kept sizeable German forces tied down from Norway to Libya, but they were also forced to muster far greater relative and absolute power than the enemy in stalled efforts to secure the Atlantic, uncertain efforts to devastate Germany, and only belatedly successful efforts to advance in Africa. The Allies were

* *See Appendix C*

reluctantly compelled to adjust their plans to consider the Eastern Front situation, haunted as they were by the spectre of 1917 and a separate peace. Soviet and Allied offensive success coincided only in time. Stalingrad was a turning point in the entire Second World War. Alamein was the "Hinge of Fate" only for the British, not for the coalition as a whole and certainly not for the Germans. In 1942 the Soviets consistently engaged nearly 200 German divisions; at the end of the year, the Allied forces were in contact with six. Only after TORCH did the Germans divert forces of any size, a testament to its value. American power halted the Japanese strategic offensive. What little British power could be spared to face the Japanese was incapable of serious offensive action. For the British, the problems of balance, time, margins, and relative combat power were now acute on a global basis.

The formulation of grand strategy now depended heavily on relations with the U.S. In this sphere, two factors dominated in 1942 - the extent of success in integrating war efforts and trouble at the sharp end. The Anglo-American alliance was by the end of 1942 the closest military alliance ever forged, far better organized to fight in unison than its enemies. Yet it had not evolved along the lines or reached the standard of integration the British had relied upon in shaping national war policy. The margin of success was critically short. Sound working arrangements in most spheres were at hand. But full integration, a real "common pool" with emotion and politics filtered out, had proven impossible. The British, as the potentially weaker power, suffered most. The level of national power on which their calculations had been based was overturned. Instead of a peak in mid-1942 carrying into the offensive, greater effort would be required for a longer time. The constant need for greater power at the sharp end created a vicious circle. On the American side, the TORCH decision tipped the balance. Deep suspicions of British political ambitions resurfaced in strategic dialogue. The Americans erred by failing to appreciate the extent of their own role in Allied problems. The TORCH decision emerged because the JCS tried to dictate coalition policy before they had the power in hand to do so. If anyone pressed a militarily impossible "ulterior" strategy, it was the JCS. Belated American entry into the war and initial confusion and sluggishness in mobilization were in one sense a root cause of all Allied problems. But

the real error was the wholesale tendency to blame the British for American shortcomings, which had grave effects in 1943.

This transfer of guilt was returned in full measure by the British. Ambivalence about this relationship remained one of the two really disastrous flaws in Whitehall perceptions. To take a severe case, the tendency to blame shortfalls in American supply for failed service programs was not offset by any critical examination of the blithe assumption that a self evident British case would win American support. London simply refused to acknowledge the need to institutionalize the status of equal but junior partner. Churchill had only begun to realize how determined Roosevelt was to make American policy coalition policy, both to fight the war and then pick up the pieces. The British both welcomed and suspected American military and structural power. London feared structural power would give Washington leverage to dictate a grand strategy which Allied military power had not yet proven able to prosecute. This ambivalence led directly to the essence of British grand strategy.

The decisions of 1941 and defeats of the first half of 1942 restricted the parameters within which Whitehall could define grand strategy. Strategic bombing could not be abandoned. The Army would move to the fore but could only do so in the most favourably contrived circumstances. The full scope of maritime needs only became generally apparent long after Britain alone could not find the power to meet them. This was the gravest mistake the "rolling seminar" made during the war. Roskill's thesis should be reversed.[223] It was rather because first things were not put first, and a maritime strategy adopted, that so much Allied power was lost or pinned in 1942, with serious consequences to come. The mistake was a product of British circumstances, personal proclivities and inadequate combat power. Scarcity was indeed the root of all COS friction over the allocation and use of forces and equipment. The decision to rely on American aid to fill out large airpower requirements for all three services proved a costly gamble. But the root of British problems was the Army's weakness, compounded by overstretched shipping.

The defeats of the first half of 1942 convinced the "rolling seminar" that the Army simply could not meet the political and strategic need to carry the war to the

Germans on a massive scale. This was a decisive factor, and it added to the uncertainty which, rather than calculation, was the dominant force in Whitehall thinking. There was no better evidence of this than Churchill's repeated changes of mind regarding the grand strategic role of Bomber Command and the RAF; but, like a compass needle, the Prime Minister's focus kept drifting back to its anchor. This tipped the balance to Bomber Command, given Churchill's instinctive preference for the "offensive."[224] It also set the basis for the autumn revision of grand strategy. Strategic bombing would be escalated. Current ground campaigns would be extended. Together, this would pave the way for a more concrete, comprehensive and concentrated grand strategic offensive. On this forward basis, Churchill and the COS regained strong common ground. They meant to use it to make another attempt to integrate American power into British grand strategy.[225] This attempt faced the physical and psychological legacy of the Allied experience of 1942 - forced to swallow defeats and respond to enemy moves, able to launch only limited offensives. Allied power had in fact been unbalanced by events: too much was still concentrated where it could not engage the enemy. Allied forces were concentrated only in the Mediterranean; the bulk of British and American forces were still at home.* These dispositions would, if Churchill and the COS had their way, shape grand strategy for 1943 and beyond.

Critics of British grand strategy in 1942 have drawn a wide variety of specific conclusions, but the literature revolves around a common theme: Whitehall launched a well considered Machiavellian gambit to draw Allied power into a well laid out Mediterranean campaign, in order to secure British interests while the Soviets bore the brunt of the war. Three assumptions most commonly emerged: the British had specific fully developed plans for future offensives; the British were consistently united on specifics; an alterative grand strategy was possible. All this vastly overrated British power, foresight and deviousness and seriously underrated the constant uncertainty that dogged the "rolling seminar." This theme will be continued later, but a brief discussion is pertinent now. Trumbull Higgins argued that the forcible JCS reaction to the TORCH decision was a deliberate ploy to smoke out the "hidden British agenda." The JCS would

* *See Appendices C and E*

certainly have agreed, but this is not evidence of the true thrust of **British** motives. This mistake became frighteningly commonplace. The suspicions of Stimson, Wedemeyer, Embick, Welles, King, and even Marshall and Roosevelt do much to explain American behaviour; they are not a definitive indication of British thinking. Another common error was to read specific certainty into British statements grounded in uncertainty. J.S.D. Eisenhower saw Churchill's "preserve the Empire" speech as defining the specific policy that was to "guide his whole conduct of the war." In the broad sense of keeping the Empire in the front rank of the coalition, this is fair. In the sense Eisenhower meant, deciding between HUSKY and ROUNDUP, it is nonsense.[226]

This raises the important question of the British attitude towards the Mediterranean and the "Second Front." HUSKY was supposedly a preconceived stepping stone to a Balkan ground campaign which, according to Mark Stoler, was already an element of deliberate Whitehall plans to forestall Soviet influence. Walter Dunn blamed both Allies for moving into the Mediterranean with the same cynical eye on Moscow. These claims do not withstand close scrutiny. A critical issue is Churchill's determined pressure for a 1943 "Second Front." Higgins, untroubled by closed archives, wrote this off as self-deception or a guilty conscience. Stoler saw it as an attempt to forestall King's Pacific plans. Dunn considered it "after thoughts and justifications."[227] In every case, an element of truth has been overburdened. There is one breathless assumption: Whitehall was so certain that Germany was now finished that it felt able to look beyond the Germans and base a permanent and definitive grand strategic decision on recently emerged and still inchoate political concerns.

Dunn in particular made one very weak argument: the Allies could physically have concentrated strong enough forces in the U.K. to launch a successful cross-Channel assault by the end of 1942. Dunn merely dismissed concerns about shipping losses and the relative weakness of ground forces. This is untenable on two levels. Firstly, it assumes that because the Germans did not shift their forces, if Allied action had been different they would not have acted differently or been able to react. Secondly, it dismisses the very sincere belief in Whitehall that British forces, who would have led any thrust, were simply not up to the challenge. This belief was heavily reinforced by

structural problems. American mobilization finally made a major contribution to British expansion; but no firm basis for guaranteed support emerged. On such uncertain terms, the British realized that any failed campaign would generate huge losses which they had no guarantee could be borne or would be replaced. This more profound dimension has had an effect on later analysis. Tuvia Ben-Moshe argued that in late 1942 Whitehall made a deliberate and lasting decision to shift the hub of future Allied offensives to the Mediterranean, but agreed that the nature of the ultimate offensive, at least in Churchill's eyes, remained an open issue.[228] This goes beyond the old argument that because the actual impact of TORCH made ROUNDUP improbable, the British had never intended to proceed with the latter in any circumstance. Hence, understanding the prevailing "wear down" framework can help in analyzing how exactly the "rolling seminar" had come to feel about a "Second Front."

The final balance of decision in British grand strategy was tipped by consistent perception of relative weakness. It was underlined by a guiding concept specific only in broader outline. Whitehall's problem in December 1942 was formidable - how to win the war speedily and safely by grand strategy favourable to British power and interests, without having the power to compel allies to accept its wisdom or the results in the field to prove it. Military power proven inadequate to achieve intermediate goals was now to pursue bolder ones. This required greater effort from a structure near its peak. If either failed, the risk of being eclipsed in coalition policy and forced into a dangerous grand strategy would increase. To succeed the British required early and steady military success, the trust of a surly Soviet ally, and the benevolence of deeply suspicious Americans. It is difficult but important to follow the decisive thread through the cacophony.

The British took care to impress upon the Americans the limits set to their war effort by finite shipping and manpower resources. The Americans had to be convinced a British war machine of full strength was a grand strategic imperative, because only the Americans could provide the financial and maritime margins needed to allow the British to maintain full intensity. The time gained in 1941 had been unevenly exploited in 1942.

This was the last overall escalation Britain would be able to consider, a point Churchill made to clear to Roosevelt on 30 December:

> "let me emphasize the fact that our whole manpower lay out is based upon striking the strongest blows we can in 1943. We will run the utmost risk for this; but, unless our shipping resources are, in fact, repaired as you so kindly propose, I shall be forced immediately to reduce the British war effort in overseas theatres even though this involves prolongation of the war and leaves you a greater portion of the burden we are eager to share."[229]

Churchill was not being disingenuous. The "strongest blows we **can**" meant just that - no victory in 1943 but maximum possible progress. As for manpower, the next cuts would be bone. From June 1940 to June 1942, the total working population had increased from 19.75 to 22 million; the numbers in the armed forces rose from 480,000 to 4.2 million.[230] Any more contraction, disinvestment and deterioration of plant would gravely risk long term economic stability.

With such a prospect looming, a consciously "ulterior" grand strategy - which meant wasting time - would have been criminally irresponsible. It is easy to find evidence that all kinds of different plans were mulled over in the perennial "rolling seminar." Regarding striving to obtain broader benefits from strategic decisions, this was a commonplace of all powers' grand strategy. As for fitting American power into British plans, this was an openly avowed objective from 1940 on. The issue is the accepted plans and the motives of those who made them. The above factors are a far cry from ignoring military and structural imperatives to pursue inferior "politically" motivated strategy. Whitehall could not have afforded nor did it pursue that path in 1942. Michael Howard convincingly demonstrated how British grand strategy evolved from events in increments, based on opportunism and a lack of realistic alternatives. The British opted to fight back first in the Mediterranean and in the air over Germany - and only now all out in the Atlantic - because the defeats of the first half of 1942 confirmed previous decisions: these were the only places they **could** fight. Howard also magisterially described the blend of COS realism and Churchillian vigour which resulted in the first militarily realistic proposal for the defeat of Germany; Japan was now the "Distant Future," Italy a satellite.[231] But his interpretation needs to be placed in the

context of the existence of a prevailing "wear down" consensus for the complete problem to be fully understood.

There was no preordained geographic focus to British grand strategy. The idea was to push where it was possible and work from there. Soviet success did not transform this idea; rather, it was absorbed by it. Two specific ideas grew out of events in 1942 - turn up the pressure in the Mediterranean and organize national power for an ultimate campaign in 1944. When it is understood how strong the guiding concept based on relative weakness was in framing grand strategy, both stand out as new concepts. "Wear down" provided a familiar framework of basic consensus which could be revised to connect new facts to an enduring basis. It also offered a course to reconcile the structural need for early victory with both the political need for a large role and the military need to ward off dangerous strategy. The continuity of "wear down" assumptions and consensus, extended through new phases of war, underlined the dominant influences on British grand strategy - uncertainty and perceived relative weakness. "Wear down" failed in 1942, but the British merely revised it. This was not sparked by political calculations. Arguably, that factor should have fostered the reverse decision - the longer the war lasted the more British economic stability would be eroded and British influence eclipsed. The spark was the belief that the events of 1942 reaffirmed that a direct Allied confrontation with the mass of German power before it was seriously eroded remained an unacceptable risk. Grand strategy may have been debated with the Americans, but it was to be applied to the Axis! Whitehall no longer wondered whether the Allies would win. It did wonder whether this would happen before Britain was spent. In this context, the influence of the "wear down" consensus and its underlying sincerity are both clear.

Endnotes to Chapter 6

1. Howard, M. Grand Strategy, vol.IV, London, 1972, 191.

2. LHCMA, Liddell Hart Papers, 1/302/285, Fuller to Liddell Hart, 20/7/42; 1/302/287, Liddell Hart to Fuller, 15/8/42; Fieldhouse, 307.

3. PRO, PREM3/119/7, Bridges to Churchill, 31/8, Churchill to Cripps, 2/9, 8/9/42.

4. PRO, CAB65/27, War Cabinet minutes, 9/9/42; Nicolson, 9/9/42 diary entry, 241; LSE, Dalton Papers, D27, 8/9/42 diary entry; Harris, 207.

5. CCA, Hankey Papers, 4/34, paper on grand strategy, 3/9/42; Addison, 210; Gorodetsky, 297-300; PRO, CAB65/28, War Cabinet minutes, 19/11/42.

6. Balfour, 294; Calder, 306.

7. PRO, CAB71/10, LP(42)222, 6/10/42; Balfour, 253, noted that Goebbels had by now come to consider British resolve too strong to erode.

8. See PRO, CAB65/27, War Cabinet minutes, 7/9/42, for a good example of the reluctance in Whitehall to expose the inner workings of policy formulation to public and supposedly irresponsible scrutiny. It should be noted that Labour Ministers shared the general reluctance to subject officialdom to wide open criticism. CAB65/28, War Cabinet minutes, 26/11, 28/11/42; Bullock, 227, rightly noted that the Labour Ministers were equally unready for Beveridge's far reaching theme; Addison, 211-213; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F166, Cherwell to Churchill, 25/11/42; Barnett, The Audit of War, 26-37, 49-59; NCA, Cripps Papers, 690, is rife with the theme that the war experience demonstrated the viability of major social reform, to cite one example.

9. NCA, Cherwell Papers, F241, Churchill to Cherwell, Wood, Eden, Dalton, Anderson, 17/12/42; LSE, Dalton Papers, 7/8, Dalton to Churchill, 19/12/42.

10. Fraser, And We Shall Shock Them, 198; Hay, 155-162. Among numerous examples of Imperial friction: LHCMA, Brooke Papers, Auchinleck to Brooke, 6/D/4f/E, 25/7/42; IWM, Montgomery Papers, 20, Brooke to Montgomery, 8/1/42; PT, vol.1 [Australian CGS]-War Office, 2/4/42.

11. Kimball, vol.1, C-123, 27/7/42.

12. PRO, WO216/24, Brooke to Churchill, 6/10/42; NCA, Cherwell Papers, G165, G166, correspondence on anti-tank weapons, 2-12/42; F155, Cherwell to Churchill, 27/3/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/VI, 28/6/42 diary entry; PRO,

CAB120/55, DO(42)48, 2/6/42; CAB65/30, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 25/6/42; Bidwell & Graham, 247; Hinsley, vol.2, Appendix 14, 712-715.

13. PRO, PREM3/426/6, Churchill to Cabinet, WO Comparative Chart, Allied and German AFV's, 24/10/42; WO216/24, Brooke to Churchill, 24/10, 29/10/42; NCA, Cherwell Papers, G367, Harriman to Patterson, 13/7/42; PRO, PREM3/284/9, Jacob to Churchill, Tank Return, 12/9/42.

14. PT, vol.5, Churchill-Alexander, 20/10/42; PRO, CAB65/228, War Cabinet minutes, 14/10/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 6/D/4f/E, Auchinleck to Brooke, 25/7/42; Bidwell & Graham, 253.

15. Postan, M.M., Hay, J.D., Scott, J.D. Design and Development of Weapons, London, 1964, 438, 477-483; Jones, R.V. Most Secret War, London, 1979, 239, 241, 261, credited Churchill with integrating scientists into the policy machinery at high level. Hartcup, G. The Challenge of War, Newton Abbott, 1970, 177-181; Barnett, The Audit of War, 168.

16. Gilbert, M. Road to War, 415-416; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 329-331, was based on a draft by Ismay, LHCMA, Ismay Papers, II/3/200/3a, Ismay to Churchill, 13/3/50.

17. PRO, CAB79/56, COS minutes, 27/3/42; CAB70/5, DC(S) minutes, 17/7/42; CAB86/1, passim; CCCA, Portal Papers, 3/1, Portal to Churchill, 5/7/42; Zuckermann, S. "Judgement and Control in Modern Warfare," FA, vol.40, #2, 1962, 205-207,209.

18. The post-war dispute can be traced in NCA, Cherwell Papers, Supplementary Box #1, and Snow, C.P. Science and Government, Cambridge, Mass., 1962. The Cherwell Papers are well stocked with evidence of both prescience and folly regarding specific projects - for H2S - F153; for WINDOW -F161; for UP - G407; for HABBAKUK - G237. The essential point is to remember that on any specific issue where statistical analysis could be brought to bear, Cherwell would weigh in, usually with an (if relevant) inclination for "offensive" policy. The consequences will be discussed as relevant. F157, Cherwell to Churchill, 8/7/42, offered rather specious reasons for rejection of a "science general staff," a lobby arising from the general frustration with central machinery then prevalent.

19. PRO, CAB80/34, COS(42)94, 6/2/42; CAB79/18, COS minutes, 11/2/42; Masterman, 153-158; Hinsley, vol.4, ch.7-8.

20. PRO, CAB79/18, COS minutes, 28/2/42; 79/21, 20/6/42; CAB80/63, COS(42)180(O), 21/6/42; CAB79/56, COS minutes, 20/6, 27/7/42; 79/22, 22/7/42; Masterman, 158-162, 172, credits Wavell with pushing for an "LCS"; Cave-Brown not only misinterpreted JUBILEE, 85-91, but also the whole role of

the LCS in grand strategy.

21. Hinsley, vol.4, ch.7-8.

22. Hinsley, vol.2, 27-57, 141-148; vol.3, part 2, Appendix 4; Bennett, 104; LHCMA, Davidson Papers, H, notes on JIC and U.S. intelligence.

23. PRO, CAB80/35, COS(42)143, 27/2/42; 80/62, COS(42)102(O), 16/41, COS(42)119(O), 1/5/42; CAB69/4, DC(O) minutes, 26/3/42; CAB66/28, WP(42)396, 5/9/42; CAB79/58, COS minutes, JIC(42)487, 23/12/42; Hinsley, vol.2, 136-138.

24. PRO, CAB71/9, LP(42)116, 15/5/42; Hinsley, vol.2, 129, 157.

25. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/1/12, "A Comparison of German and British Munitions Production," n/d [10/42]; PRO, CAB66/29, WP(42)437, 9/10/42.

26. NCA, Cherwell Papers, H76, Cherwell to Churchill, 29/10, minutes of conference with MEW, 11/12, MEW report 19/12, Selborne to Churchill 16/12, Cherwell to Churchill 30/12/42. MEW realized the U.K. had begun to make much greater relative use of women in the war economy but the flawed starting assumptions coloured everything else.

27. PRO, CAB79/24, COS minutes, JIC(42)462, 5/12, JIC(42)473, 10/12/42; CAB66/28, WP(42)432, 26/9/42; 66/32, WP(42)609, 24/12/42; Hinsley, vol.2, 159.

28. PRO, CAB 65/27, 65/31, War Cabinet minutes and confidential annex, 24/9/42; CCA, Hickleton Papers, A/410/4.15, Halifax to Eden, 14/9, 12/10/42.

29. PRO, CAB79/23, COS minutes, JIC(42)339, 11/9/42.

30. PRO, CAB79/23, COS minutes, 18/9/42, 79/57, 30/9/42; PT, vol.2, Wavell-COS, 15/9, 27/9, 6/10, COS-Wavell, 23/9/42.

31. PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 18/9, 2/10/42; CAB79/23, COS minutes, 23/9, 23/10/42; 79/57, 28/9/42; 79/58, 30/11/42; PT, vol.6, COS(W)279, 10/9, JSM399, 24/9, COS(W)301, 30/9, COS(W)318, 23/10/42; vol.2, COS-Wavell, 23/9, 23/10, 28/10/42, Wavell-COS, 6/10, 17/10, 19/10, 1/11, 14/11/42; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 15/9, 13/10/42.

32. PRO, CAB79/58, COS minutes, 26/11, 30/11/42; 79/24, 8/12/42; CAB80/66, COS(42)409(O), 21/11/42; PT, vol.2, Wavell-COS, 15/11/42; vol.6, COS(W)388, 9/12, JSM561, 12/12,14/12/42; Howard, vol.IV, 91-104; Leighton & Coakley, 537; Matloff & Snell, 373-375, underrated the logistical constraints Wavell faced; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 3/11, 8/12, 15/12/42

Supplementaries; Papers, Pacific, Reel 12, JCS 162, 7/12/42.

33. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 15/9, 6/10/42; Matloff & Snell, 321; Leighton & Coakley, 391; Morison, The Two Ocean War, 159-172; PRO, CAB79/23, COS minutes, 22/10/42; 79/87, Secretary's Standard File, 29/10/42; CCA, Somerville Papers, 8/1, Somerville to Pound, 1/9, 7/11/42; Kimball, vol.1, C-217, 2/12/42; Roskill, vol.2, 229; BL, Cunningham Papers, 52561, Somerville to Cunningham, 9/10/42.

34. PRO, CAB79/57, COS minutes, 30/9/42.

35. CCA, Portal Papers, 12/11, Tedder to Portal, 22/10/42; Hinsley, vol.2, 425-437; Bennett, 133, 166. There is evidence that London believed that the interceptions at sea were decisive, i.e. PRO, CAB79/23, COS minutes, JIC(42)349, 11/9/42, but Van Creveld, M. Supplying War, Cambridge, 1977, 200, was convincing.

36. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/VII, 23/10/42 diary entry and retrospective. This is one of the most resonant entries in the whole diary and understandably so. The entire national war policy followed since May 1940 - "wear down," the African buildup, the organization and equipping of the Imperial Army - was poised on a knife edge of belated vindication or irredeemable failure. Brooke clearly perceived this.

37. PRO, CAB79/87, COS minutes, Secretary's Standard File, 29/10/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VII, diary entries and retrospective, 29/10, 3/11/ 4/11/42; PT, vol.5, Alexander-Brooke, 24/10, 25/10, 27/10/42, Alexander-Churchill, 4/11, 6/11/42.

38. PRO, CAB65/28, War Cabinet minutes, 9/11/42; Brooke noted, LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/VII, 9/11/42 retrospective, that this was the only time Churchill so praised the Army in Cabinet during his tenure as CIGS.

39. PT, vol.5, Alexander-Brooke, 25/10, 27/10, Alexander-Churchill, 9/11/42; IWM, Montgomery Papers, 49, Montgomery to Brooke, 1/11, 10/11/42.

40. PRO, CAB79/57, COS minutes, 29/8/, 31/8, 3/9, 5/9/42; Kimball, vol.1, C-136, 26/8, C-139, 27/8, R-180, 30/8, C-142, 1/9, R-192, 2/9, C-143, 3/9, R-183, R-184, 4/9, C-144, 5/9, R-185, 5/9, C-145, 6/9/42.

41. PRO, CAB80/65, COS(42)342(O), 23/10/42; Eisenhower, D. Crusade in Europe, 89; Howard, vol.IV, 116.

42. Eisenhower, D. Crusade in Europe, 93; PRO, CAB79/57, COS minutes, 29/8, 31/8/42.

43. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 4/8, 25/11/42, underlined the JCS fear - constant through 1942 - of a major Axis move through Spain; PRO, CAB79/57, COS minutes, JIC(42)386(O), 7/10, 15/10/42; Hinsley, vol.2, 465-475.

44. PRO, CAB79/57, COS minutes, 9/9/42; CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 18/9/42; Leighton & Coakley, 424, 454; Roskill, vol.2, 315; Hinsley, vol.2, 477-479; Smyth, D. "Screening TORCH: Allied Counter-Intelligence and the Spanish Threat to the Secrecy of the Allied Invasion of French North Africa," INS, vol.4, #2, 4/1989, 352, for the best brief discussion of the security efforts.

45. PT, vol.7, Eisenhower-CCS, 10/11, Eisenhower-Marshall, 15/11., Anderson-COS, 21/11/42; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 9/11/42; Papers, Europe, Reel 2, G-2 Reports AFHQ-JCS, 11/11-16/11/42.

46. Van Creveld, 200.

47. PRO, CAB80/38, COS(42)452, 11/11/42.

48. PT, vol.5, Alexander-Brooke, 16/11,21/11, 31//12, Alexander-Eisenhower, 10/12/42; IWM, Montgomery Papers, 49, Montgomery to Brooke, 18/12, 28/12/42.

49. IWM, Montgomery Papers, 27, undated review of 8th Army situation, 8-10/42; 28, notes on the Battle of El Alamein, 10-11/42, replete with exaggerated claims and evidence of altered plans, notes on pursuit, 5-23/11/42; 49, Montgomery to Brooke, 10/11/42. Montgomery's obstinate post-facto claim of omniscience is especially bizarre - ability to respond properly to changing circumstances is an attribute, but apparently not one which fitted his image as "Master of the Battlefield." Hinsley, vol.2, 454-461; Bennett, 171-181; Pitt, vol.2, 442, for a typical example of a Montgomery supporter, well stated. Hamilton, N. Monty, vol.2, London, 1987, 37-48 for the "official" and not completely unbalanced verdict.

50. PT, vol.7, Eisenhower-CCS, 25/11, 3/12, Anderson-COS, 28/11, Cunningham-Admiralty, 23/11/42; Hinsley, vol.2, 489-493, 501, 740-741.

51. PRO, CAB79/24, COS minutes, 1/12, 4/12/42; PT, vol.7, Admiralty-Cunningham, 25/11, CCS-Eisenhower, FAN 33, 5/12/42; Eisenhower-CCS, 6/12, NAF41, 12/12, NAF50, 25/12, NAF51, 26/12, NAF61, 29/12, Churchill-Eisenhower, 7/12, 15/12, 28/12/42; BL, Cunningham Papers, 52561, Cunningham-Pound, 5/12/42.

52. PRO, CAB69/4, DC(O) minutes, 28/12, 29/12/42; CAB69/28, War Cabinet minutes, 28/12/42; BL, Cunningham Papers, 52561, Pound to Cunningham, 28/12/42; PT, vol.7, COS(W)412, 29/12, COS(W)419, 31/12/42; Howe, G.F.

Northwest Africa: Seizing the Initiative in the West, Washington, 1957, Tables 10 and 11, noted that over 50,000 German troops were in Tunisia by 1943.

53. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VII, 19/12/42 diary entry and retrospective.

54. PRO, CAB79/87, COS minutes, Secretary's Standard File, 16/5/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/V, 3/2/42 diary entry and retrospective; Stafford, Britain and European Resistance, 92-93; Thomas, 179; Barker, E. Churchill and Eden at War, London, 1978, 58-64; Kersaudy, 182-198.

55. PRO, CAB65/31, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 20/8/42. SOE's "Section F" was kept carefully divorced from contact with the Free French, an extension of the dual track adopted in 1940 on overall French policy. Kimball, vol.2, R-180, 30/8/42; PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 28/9/42; CAB79/57, COS minutes, 31/8/42; CAB79/23, COS minutes, JIC(42)414, 19/10/42; 79/87, Secretary's Standard File, 17/10/42; Thomas, 120-121, 141, 171.

56. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel . minutes, 9/11/42; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 557, on French military tradition; PRO, CAB65/28, War Cabinet minutes, 16/11, 21/11/42; CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 13/11/42; CAB79/24, COS minutes, 10/12/42; PT, vol.7, Eisenhower-CCS, 10/11, 11/11, Smuts-Churchill, 20/11, Cunningham-Pound, 14/111/42. The unanimity of military commanders on the spot and in London of the tactical necessity of assuring local French support was compelling. Hinsley, vol.2, 493, 501, failed to connect the confusion over French reaction with belated response to German reinforcement. Roskill, vol.2, 342, skirted the whole issue. Leighton & Coakley, 512; Kersaudy, 232; Barker, 67.

57. PT, vol.7, Eisenhower-CCS15/11, Eisenhower-Churchill, 5/12, 16/12/42.

58. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 19/11/42, retrospective, was very unfair to Eisenhower regarding the latter's political headaches and very unconvincing regarding the "benefits" of a long slog in Tunisia. Howard, vol.IV, 167-186, gave a convincing interpretation of the spider web of TORCH problems.

59. PRO, CAB66/29, Map Room Weekly Reports, 24/9/42. The JCS now agreed after earlier uncertainty: UW, JCS Papers, Europe, Reel 9, JIC 32/1, 29/7/42; Soviet Union, Reel 2, JIC 25/3, 2/9/42.

60. PRO, CAB79/23, COS minutes, 7/9, 17/9, 24/9/42; PT, vol.6, COS(W)273, 8/9, JSM397, 22/9/42; vol.4, COS(PI)2, 26/9/42; Leighton & Coakley, 578.

61. PRO, CAB65/31, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 28/9/42; 65/32, 5/10/42; CAB79/23, COS minutes, JIC(42)383, 5/10, 7/10/42; CAB80/64, COS(42)285(O), 28/9/42; CAB79/24, COS minutes, JIC(42)443, 17/11, JIC(42)45, 2/12/42; PT, vol.4, Wilson-Brooke, 26/9, 10/10, 14/10, Brooke-

Wilson, 29/9, COS(PI)3, 6/10/42; PT, vol.4, Wilson-Brooke, 17/11, Brooke-Wilson, 27/11/42. See Appendix C.

62. Kimball, vol.1, R-186/2, 24/9, R-189, 5/10, R-191, 6/10, C-159, 7/10, R-202, 27/10/42; vol.2, C-220, 3/12, R-227, 6/12, C-225, 8/12, R-229, 8/12/42; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 13/10, 17/11, 15/12/42; PRO, CAB79/24, COS minutes, 111/11, 20/11/42; 79/58, 18/11, 1/12/42. See also PT, vol.4, for relevant telegrams.

63. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VII, 23/9/42 entry; CCCA, Portal Papers, 3/23, Knatchbull-Hugessen-Foreign Office, 1/10, Portal-Churchill, 5/11/42; PRO, CAB79/24, COS minutes, 4/12/42, PT, vol.4, WO-Wilson, 4/12/42. Two telegrams, C's in C Mediterranean-COS, 23/9, 29/12, are of particular interest regarding perceptions of eastern Mediterranean prospects. Three points of later importance were made: 1) the eastern Mediterranean would be a far more difficult area than the central Mediterranean to mount a major campaign; 2) air bases in Turkey were a prerequisite; 3) plans for all contingencies should be ready, to exploit any Italian collapse. Cairo and London were very aware of the opportunity presented by any Italian collapse given the large Italian garrison commitment in the Aegean and Balkans, but equally aware of the limits to any move. The situation was repeatedly characterized as "nebulous." Speculation revolved from the start around a quick opportunistic improvised stroke to seize any opportunity, not a campaign. See C's in C Cairo-COS, 7/12/42, and below Chapter 10.

64. PRO, CAB79/23, COS minutes, 11/9, 15/9, 16/9, 17/9/42; CAB80/64, COS(42)278(O), 24/9/42; LHCMA Brooke Papers, 3/A/VI, 15/9/42 diary entry and retrospective; PRO, CAB65/31, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 21/9/42; CAB79/87, COS minutes, Secretary's Standard File, 21/9/42; 79/57, 25/9/42; Kimball, vol.1, C-151, 21/9/42, R-187, 27/9, R-189, 5/10, C-159, 7/10/42, R-186/3, but not sent, outlined JCS views. Erickson, 371; Howard, vol. IV, 42.

65. Kimball, vol.1, C-158, 6/10, R-192, 7/10, C-167, 8/10, R-193, 8/10, R-202, 27/10/42; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 504-505; PRO, CAB6/28, WP(42)417, 17/9/42; Leighton & Coakley, 586.

66. PRO, CAB69/4, DC(O) minutes, 23/1//42; CAB79/23, COS minutes, 15/9/42; CAB65/28, War Cabinet minutes, 30/11/42.

67. PRO, CAB65/28, War Cabinet minutes, 30/1//42; NCA, Cripps papers, 290, Clark Kerr to Cripps, 22/10, reply, 2/11/42. For the Soviet attitude regarding the pivotal military and political role of a "Second Front," see below Chapter 8.

68. CCCA, Portal Papers, 9/53, Harris to Portal, 29/8/42; Kimball, vol.1, C-150, 16/9/42; PRO, CAB79/23, COS minutes, 2/9/42.

69. PRO, CAB80/65, COS(42)317(O), 16/10/42; CAB79/23, COS minutes, 16/10, 19/10, 21/10/42.

70. PRO, CAB80/65, COS(42)309(O), 14/10/42; CAB79/23, COS minutes, 22/10/42.

71. CCCA, Portal Papers, 3/20, Churchill to Portal, 28/10, Portal to Churchill, 30/10, 9/11, 27/11/42.

72. CCA, Pound Papers, 2/4, Donald McLachlan interview of Roger Winn, 1/68; Roskill Papers, 5/10, Brind to Pound, 18/10/42.

73. PRO, CAB86/2, Anti U-Boat Warfare (AUB) Committee minutes, 4/11/42.

74. PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 31/12/42; CCCA, Portal Papers, 8/37, Joubert to Portal, 15/11/42; CCA, Hankey Papers, 4/34, letter to Times, 17/11, Hankey to Smuts, 3/12/42; PRO, PREM3/387/3, Escort Returns, Average State of Effectives, 8/11, 6/12/42; CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 25/11, 2/12, 9/12, 16/12/42.

75. Hinsley, vol.2, 547-550; Beesly, 159.

76. PRO, CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 9/12, 23/12/42; 86/3, AUB(42)30, 9/12/42; CCCA, Portal Papers, 3/28, Portal-Churchill-Eden correspondence, 13-19/11/42.

77. CCCA, Portal Papers, 8/37, Joubert to Portal, 15/11, Portal to Pound, 17/11, Portal to Joubert, 17/11/42; Hinsley, vol.2, 270-272.

78. CCCA, Portal Papers, 8/35, Joubert to Portal, 22/10/42; NCA, Cherwell Papers, G114, Butt to Cherwell, 8/12, 9/12, 11/12, 16/12/42; PRO, AUB Committee minutes, 9/12/42.

79. CCA, Pound Papers, 2/2, Donald Mclachlan interview with Slessor, 23/2/68; Roskill, vol..2, 89 correctly said that by now Pound and Portal agreed on the essence of the VLR problem and solution, but did not consider at any length whether this pass need have been reached. NCA, Cherwell Papers, F162 Cherwell to Churchill, 22/9/42; Hinsley, vol.2, 685.

80. PRO, CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 4/11, 8/11, 18/11, 25/11/42; 86/3, AUB(42)38, 16/12/42; CAB79/24, COS minutes, 9/11, 4/12/42; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 20/10, 27/10/42; Kimball, vol.2, C-202, 20/11, in which Churchill confessed reluctance to dip into Bomber Command, arguing that

the only effective type was the Liberator; PT, vol.6, COS(W)366, 26/11/42.

81. PRO, CAB79/58, COS minutes, 14/12, 17/12, 22/12/42; NCA, Cherwell Papers, G82, Bridges to Churchill, 18/4/42; F1666, Cherwell to Churchill, 24/11/42; G114, Butt to Cherwell, 9/12, 30/12/42. Roskill, Churchill and the Admirals, 139, referred to the whole lengthy 1942 debate; but, given the Admiralty's recognition of the need for Liberators and the limits to MAP and RAF aid, the H2S decision, the last possible effective British measure, was its apex; Hastings, 179; Howard, vol.IV, 25; Costello and Hughes, 230.

82. PRO, CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 9/12, 23/12, 30/12/42.

83. PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 31/12/42; NCA, Cherwell Papers, G114, Butt to Cherwell, 30/12/42. By now there were plenty of Liberators available. The problem was equipping enough with 10cm ASV radar and deploying them in the north Atlantic, along with more surface escorts, as London and Washington now realized.

84. PRO, CAB79/57, COS minutes, 30/9/42.

85. PRO, CAB79/57, COS minutes, 10/10, 14/10/42; CAB80/65, COS (42)320(O), 17/10/42; CAB79/58, COS minutes, 23/10/42.

86. PRO, CAB79/58, COS minutes, 9/11, 12/11/42; CAB80/65, COS (42)389(0), 12/11/42.

87. PRO, CAB79/24, COS minutes, 11/11/42; 79/58, 9/11, 12/11, 13/11, 27/11/42; CAB80/66, COS(42)428(O), 5/12, COS(42)447(O), 12/12/42.

88. PRO, CAB79/23, COS minutes, 3/9/42.

89. PRO, PREM3/119/11, Churchill to Trenchard, 4/9, reply 8/9, Churchill to Bruce, 4/9/42; CAB66/28, WP(42)399, 5/9/42; CCCA, Portal Papers, 9/54, Harris to Portal, 3/9/42.

90. PRO, CAB80/64, COS(42)288(O), 30/9/42.

91. PRO, CAB79/57, COS minutes, 5/10/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VII, 5/10/42 diary entry.

92. PRO, CAB79/58, COS minutes, 22/10/42.

93. CCCA, Portal Papers, 9/66, Harris to Portal, 21/10/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/VII, 20/10/42 diary entry and retrospective; CCA, Hankey Papers, 4/34, paper on Future Strategy, 3/9/42; 11/14, Kennedy to Hankey, 6/9, Amery to Hankey, 10/9/42.

94. PRO, CAB80/37, COS(42)398, 11/9/42; 80/38, COS(42)417, 28/9, COS(42)426, 10/10/42; CAB79/23, COS minutes, 15/9, 14/10/42.

95. PRO, CAB66/30, WP(42)483, 24/10/42; Ben-Moshe, 525, for a perceptive comment.

96. PRO, CAB80/64, COS(42)261(O), 4/9, 16th BOLERO report, 9/9/42; CAB79/57, COS minutes, 7/9/42.

97. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 15/9, 29/9, 3/11/42; Leighton & Coakley, 484; PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 18/9, 2/10/42; CAB79/23, COS minutes, 8/9/42.

98. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 6/10, 3/11/42.

99. PRO, CAB79/87, COS minutes, Secretary's Standard File, 21/9/42; Kimball, vol.1, C-151, 22/9/42.

100. PRO, PREM3/333/19, 16-18/9/42, Eden-Churchill correspondence.

101. PRO, CAB80/64, COS(42)266(O), 11/9/42.

102. PRO, CAB79/57, COS minutes, 30/9/42.

103. PRO, CAB79/23, COS minutes, JIC(42)355(O), 17/9/42; JIC(42)392(O), 9/10/42; CAB79/58, COS minutes, 27/10, JIC(42)403(O), 30/10/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VII, 1/10/42 diary entry.

104. PRO, CAB79/24, COS minutes, JP(42) 3, 30/11/42.

105. PRO, CAB80/64, COS(42)290(O), 2/10/42; 80/65, COS(42)402(O), COS(42)403(O), 18/11/42; CAB79/24, COS minutes, 4/12, 7/12/42.

106. PRO, CAB79/23, COS minutes, 13/10/42; 79/24, 6/11, 19/11, 26/11/42; 79/58, 21/10/42.

107. PRO, CAB80/64, COS(42)293(O), 4/10/42.

108. PRO, CAB80/65, COS(42)370(O), 1/11/42; CAB79/58, COS minutes, 5/11/42.

109. CCCA, Portal papers, 7/37, Douglas to Portal, 13/11, reply, 18/11/42.

110. PRO, CAB79/24, COS minutes, 17/11, 20/11/42; 79/58, 20/11/42.

111. PRO, CAB79/23, COS minutes, 26/10/42; CAB80/38, COS (42)465, 21/11/42; CAB69/4, DC(O) minutes, 23/11/42; CAB79/24, COS minutes, 23/11/42.

112. Kimball, vol.2, C-211, 24/11/42; the note on p.38 has only one flaw - Churchill was not being disingenuous in his description of a 1943 or 1944 "Second Front." Seen in the "wear down" context, as Whitehall saw it, this becomes obvious. Given the author's recognition of this on pp.48-49, this inconsistency is puzzling. See also below, Chapter 8.

113. Kimball, vol.2, R-222, 25/11/42; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 3/11/42; Leighton & Coakley, 482; Matloff & Snell, 322.

114. PRO, CAB79/23, COS minutes, 8/9/42; PT, vol.6, COS(W)274, 8/9, JSM383, 10/9, JSM403, 27/9/42.

115. PRO, CAB80/64, COS(42)288(O), 30/9/42; CAB79/57, COS minutes, 5/10, 6/10/42; see also above page. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/VII, 23/10/42 diary entry and retrospective; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 6/10, 3/11/42; Kimball, vol.1, R-186/3, n/d, 9/42, not sent, JCS draft; PT, vol.6, JSM435, 23/10/42; Matloff & Snell, 363.

116. CCCA, Portal Papers, 3/18, Sinclair to Churchill, 23/10, 28/10, Churchill to Sinclair, 26/10/42; Frankland & Webster, vol.1, 357, 362, 366, made the important point that the 8th Air Force issue influenced Portal's grand strategy paper; Richards, 308, underestimated the weight of wider concerns in Portal's view of American desire to operate in daylight.

117. PRO, CAB80/65,COS(42)345(O), 30/10/42.

118. PRO, CAB79/23, COS minutes, 29/10/42;PT, vol.6, COS(W)329, 30/10/42; Howard, vol. IV, 193-195.

119. Kimball, vol.1, R-210, 11/11, C-189, 13/11, R-211, 14/11/42; 673; vol.2, C-191, 15/11/42.

120. PRO, CAB80/65, COS(42)379(O), 3/11/42; COS(42)393(O), 15/11, COS(42)398(O), 18/11/42; CAB 79/24, COS minutes, 18/11/42; CAB65/28, War Cabinet minutes, 18/11/42.

121. PRO, CAB79/58, COS minutes, 16/11/42; CAB80/65, COS(42)398(O), 18/11/42; CAB69/4, DC(O) minutes, 23/11/42; CCCA, Portal Papers, 9/73, Harris to Portal, 13/11/42; Matloff & Snell, 365.

122. PRO, CAB80/65, COS(42)392(O), 14/11/42; CAB79/58, COS minutes, 15/11/42.

123. PRO, PREM3/499/6, Churchill to Smuts, 16/11/42; CAB69/4, DC(O) minutes, 16/11/42.

124. Morison, S.E. Strategy and Compromise, Boston, 1958, 40; Dunn, 23.

125. PRO, CAB79/24, COS minutes, 18/11/42; 79/58, 18/11/42; CAB80/65, COS(42)397(O), 17/1//42; Kimball, vol.2, C-193, 18/11/42; CAB80/66, COS(42)413(O), 24/11/42; CAB79/58, COS minutes, 25/11/42, 27/11/42. It should be noted that "other enterprises" included only air attrition and escalated SOE operations as yet, and hinged on Turkey. There was no evidence at this stage of a COS desire to land large forces in the Balkans. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VII, 27/11/42 diary entry and retrospective both display fatal confusion of two distinct issues - a tri-service Supreme Commander and two separate area commanders. Really grave consequences emerged in 1943 from this avoidable folly. See Chapters 8 and 9.

126. PRO, CAB80/65, COS(42)399(O), 18/11/42; CAB80/66, COS(42)412(O), 24/11/42; Kimball, vol.2, C-195, 18/11/42. Dunn, 23, badly misunderstood how Whitehall made grand strategy by calling these changes and the COS revisions in return, "after thoughts and justifications." Churchill's "rolling seminar" refined consensus, in which compromise was inevitable. This was an honest reflection of the evolution of thought. Accentuating desired priorities does not constitute deceit, especially when the Japanese questions were removed because they were being handled by the JSM. Dunn also ignored the fact that this was a response to Roosevelt's suggestion that all Mediterranean options be explored.

127. PRO, CAB80/65, COS(42)399(O), 18/11/42; Howard, vol.IV, 207; Higgins, 172-175, offered the superficial argument that Churchill was spurred by a "sense of guilt" alone.

128. PRO, CAB80/66, COS(42)420(O), 29/11, COS(42)421(O), 29/11/42.

129. PRO, CAB79/58, COS minutes, 30/11/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VII, diary entry, 30/11/42.

130. PRO, CAB79/24, COS minutes, 27/11/42; PT, vol.6, COS(W)371, 30/11, COS(W)380, 4/12, Dill- Eden, 7/12/42; Kimball, vol.2, C-214, 26/11, R-222, 25/11/42.

131. PRO, CAB80/68, COS(42)433(O), 3/12/42; CAB79/24, COS minutes, 7/12, 14/12/42; 79/58, 21/12/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VII, 10/12/42 diary entry; Collier, 299.

132. PRO, CAB80/66, COS(42)423(O), 30/11/42.

133. PRO, CAB80/66, COS(42)429(O), 3/12/42. Churchill envisaged 35 U.S. divisions, (20 in the U.K.), and an air margin of two to one.

134. PRO, PREM3/499/7, Jacob to Churchill, 2/12/42; CAB79/24, COS minutes, JIC(42)462, 5/12/42.

135. PRO, CAB79/58, COS minutes, 3/12/42; Kimball, vol.2, C-219, 3/12/42.

136. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VII, 3/12/42 diary entry and retrospective. Brooke's overstated case for his own consistent prescience must be considered carefully, as there is, indeed, a more profound consistency apparent. Again, now and only now did Staff thought consider specific plans to operate in southern Europe. However, their general attention had always been focused on the area as the scene of existing combat effort and the safest way to increase German burdens. The consistency was "wear down," being cast now in more specific geographical terms in reaction to events.

137. IWM, Montgomery Papers, 49, Montgomery to Brooke, 27/11, 13/12, Brooke to Montgomery, Troopers 85662 11/12, Troopers, 90452, 31/12/42; 27, "Reflections on the future," n/d. There is little doubt that personal ambition on Montgomery's part was also a motive in this exchange. See below, Chapter 11.

138. PRO, CAB79/58, COS minutes, 8/12/42.

139. PRO, CAB79/87, COS minutes, Secretary's Standard File, 15/12/42. There were two interesting pencilled out statements in this entry in the second most secret file held in the Staff secretariat. A disparaging reference to Stalin as an opportunist was crossed out, yet other remarks remained. A response by Brooke regarding the COS estimate of the value of the Eastern Front as "a rough estimate 2 years of war" was replaced by "valued it enormously." This further indicated the pronounced suspicion with which Whitehall regarded the Soviets and the clear but reluctant acknowledgement of their strategic importance.

140. PRO, CAB79/58, COS minutes, 16/12/42. Brooke gave himself credit for convincing Churchill to revert to the Mediterranean strategy - which, it must be remembered, really meant the specific initial offensive revision of "wear down." LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VII, 16/12/42 diary entry and retrospective.

141. PT, vol.6, JSM551, 11/12, Churchill-Dill, 11/12/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/VII, 11/12/42 diary entry; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 3/11, 17/11, 10/12/42.

142. Kimball, vol.2, R-224, 2/12, C-219, 3/12, R-234/1, 14/12; see also C-232, 17/12, C-235, 18/12, C-238, 21/12/42. Roosevelt's refusal to meet in London irked Churchill. The British pressed consistently for a Presidential visit to London, as a highly visible symbol of British importance. Roosevelt just as consistently avoided it.

143. PRO, CAB66/32, WP(42)580, 16/12/42.

144. UW, JCS Meetings, 15/12, 22/12/42, also indicated that Marshall still hoped to salvage the War Department's fundamental policy by curtailing activity in the Mediterranean and reviving the co-ordinated focus on ROUNDUP for 1943, but was prepared to settle for 1944. PT, vol.6, JSM611, 23/12/42; Matloff & Snell, 365-369.

145. PRO, CAB79/58, COS minutes, 14/12; CAB80/68, COS(42)449(O), 12/12; CAB80/66, COS(42)460(O), 20/12/42.

146. PRO, CAB79/24, COS minutes, 14/12, JIC(42)524(O), 31/12/42.

147. PRO, CAB79/58, COS minutes, 17/12/42.

148. PRO, CAB80/66, COS(42)480(O), 27/12; COS(42)481(O), 27/12, COS(42)485(O), 29/12; COS(42)486(O)29/12/42; CAB79/58, COS minutes, 28/12/42; CAB69/4, DC(O) minutes, 29/12/42.

149. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/1/12, MEW Report, 20/9/42; NCA, Cherwell papers, F168, Cherwell to Churchill, 3/12/42; Medlicott, vol.2, 173-291.

150. LSE, Dalton Papers, Part II B, 7/3, Dalton to Churchill, 23/2/42; PRO, CAB80/62, COS(42)113(O), 27/4, COS(42)133(O), 12/5, COS(42)145(O), 24/5/42; 80/37, COS(42)327, 30/6/42; 80/64, COS(42)265(O), 10/9/42; 80/38 COS(42)480, 11/12/42; Foot, 195-196; Stafford, "The Detonator Concept," 209.

151. Wheeler, 131-177; Stafford, Britain and European Resistance, 98-100; Sweet-Escott, "SOE in the Balkans," in Auty, P. & Clogg, R. (Editors) British Policy Towards Wartime Resistance in Yugoslavia and Greece. The internal confusion regarding the murky situation in the Balkans remained incredible through 1942. SOE London, SOE Cairo, GHQ Middle East, the COS and the Foreign Office all pursued different priorities. The crux of the matter was whether or not to support Communist resistance forces. But this issue only became acute in 1943, when the realistic possibility of Allied operations arose, and it will be pursued below.

152. PRO, CAB80/66, COS(42)451(O), 13/12/42; 79/58, COS minutes, 25/11; 80/38, COS(42)492, 22/12, COS(42)495, 26/12/42; 79/24, COS minutes, 31/12/42.

153. LSE, Dalton Papers, D25, 20/12/41, 4/1, 4/2/42 diary entries; 18/4, Dalton to Attlee, 26/2/42; Cruickshank, The 4th Arm, 34-37; PT, vol.6, COS(W)119, 14/3/42.

154. As evidenced by the case of a leaflet calling for the Nazi government to "make peace," which the BBC was forced to pull off the air after a Whitehall backlash. Balfour, 267. See also above, Chapter 1.

155. PRO, PREM3/499/7, COS(42)452(O)(Final), 31/12/42.

156. PRO, CAB80/66, COS(42)466(O), 31/12/; CAB69/4 DC(O) minutes, 29/12/42.

157. PT, vol.6, JSM637, 30/12/42.

158. PRO, CAB66/28, WP(42)393, 3/9/42.

159. PRO, CAB71/10, LPC(42)236, 20/10/42.

160. PRO, PREM3/499/10, Churchill to Cherwell, 24/10, reply, 30/10/42.

161. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/1/17, correspondence regarding JPC and JIS, 27/10-21/11/42; Scott & Hughes, 458-462.

162. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/1/16, "Problems facing the Ministry of Production - Draft Paper for NPAC," 11/42.

163. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/2/3, Maxwell to Robinson, 3/9/42.

164. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 1/9/42; Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 1, Memorandum for Information #23, 1/9/42; the JCS candidly acknowledged that the problem was to determine the size and composition of U.S. forces, and offhandedly agreed to "revise" the Victory Program; PRO, CAB84/48, JP(42)777, 28/8/42; CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 4/9/42; CAB80/37, COS(42)397,11/9/42; Leighton & Coakley, 280-281.

165. Matloff & Snell, 352; Leighton & Coakley, 302; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 29/9/42.

166. PRO, CAB92/39, BWSC minutes, JWPS(42)71, 16/9/42; CAB92/39, BWSC minutes, 8/9, JWPS(42)71, 16/9, JWPS(42)74, 23/9; BWSC minutes 29/9, JWPS(42)81, 13/10/42; JWPS minutes, 26/9/42; CAB79/23, COS minutes, 29/9/42; PT, vol.6, JSM402, 28/9/42; Danchev, 85-87.

167. PRO, CAB92/62, LCPRB(42)44, 4/10, LCPRB(42)36, 23/9/42.

168. PRO, CAB66/29, COS(42)434, 29/9/42; CAB80/38, COS(42)420, 3/10/42; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F162, Cherwell to Churchill, 30/9/42; CCCA, Portal Papers, 3/5, Portal to Churchill, 1/10/42.

169. Kimball, vol.1, C-156, 4/10/42; PRO, CAB65/28, War Cabinet minutes, 5/10/42; CAB79/23, COS minutes, 8/10/42; CAB92/39, JWPS(42)80, 12/10/42; PT, vol.6, COS(W)307, 9/10/42.

170. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 20/10/42, and below page ; PT, vol.6, JSM416, 9/10/42. The spectacle of asking an American to come to London to discuss American programs speaks for itself.

171. Kimball, vol.1, R-195, 12/10/42, 631; PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 16/10/42.

172. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 20/10/42; PRO, CAB65/28, War Cabinet minutes, 13/10/42; CAB79/23, COS minutes, 14/10/42; CAB80/65, COS(42)318(O), 17/10/42; PT, vol.6, JSM430, 17/10/42; PRO, PREM3/481/2, Lytellton to Churchill, 15/10/42; 453/3 Cherwell to Churchill, 30/10/42; CAB92/39, JWPS minutes, 26/10/42; CAB65/28, War Cabinet minutes, 29/10/42; CAB66/29, WP(42)486, 29/10/42; Kimball, vol.1, R-198, 24/10/42.

173. PRO, CAB92/39, BWSC minutes, 13/10, JWPS(42)83, 26/10, BWSC minutes, 20/10, JWPS(42)85, 3/11/42; 92/62, LCPRB(42)54, 23/10, CPRB minutes, 30/10, LCPRB(42)60, 11/11/42; CAB92/39, BWSC minutes, 27/10, JWPS(42)86, 10/11/42; PT, vol.6, COS(W)329, 30/10/42.

174. NCA, Cherwell Papers, F164, Cherwell to Churchill, 29/10/42; Kimball, vol.1, C-180, 31/10/42.

175. CCA, Robinson Papers, 1/8/4, "Report on the Non-Military Sector of the British Economy," 10/42.

176. PRO, CAB92/62, CPRB minutes 16/11, LPCRB(42)66, 16/11/42.

177. Kimball, vol.2, R-222/1, 30/11/42.

178. PRO, CAB65/28, War Cabinet minutes, 7/12/42; CAB66/31, WP(42)568, 9/12/42.

179. PRO, CAB65/28, War Cabinet minutes, 15/12/42; CAB92/62, LCPRB(42)68, 11/12/42.

180. PT, vol.6, JSM461, 5/11, JSM467, 7/11/42; Danchev, 23, 88-95; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes,9/11, 25/11/42.

181. Kimball, vol.2, 43-44; CCCA, Portal Papers, 3/6, Portal to Churchill, 3/10/42; PRO, PREM3/453/2, Churchill to COS, 4/10/42, for an example of the inclination to rely on Hopkins and Roosevelt.

182. PRO, CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 11/12, 18/12/42. Given Lytellton's acceptance of the new need and latitude to castrate the CPRB, this must have been done without his support. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 1/12, 15/12/42.

183. Rosen, 136, 145-158, gave a balanced account; Scott & Hughes, 472-477, were less self critical on the British side; Leighton & Coakley, 257, were more even handed; Hall, 385-393, was unsatisfactory; Howard, vol. IV, 9, skipped over the problem of Lytellton's actions and Dill's position.

184. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/1/4, Robinson to Self, 18/9/42; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F162, Cherwell to Churchill, 24/9/42.

185. PRO, CAB65/28, War Cabinet minutes, 6/10/42; CCA, Portal Papers, 9/70, Harris to Portal, 30/10, reply, 1/11/42; 9/73, Harris to Portal, 12/11/42; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F163, Cherwell to Churchill, 6/10/42; G63, Day to Cherwell, 30/11, 12/12, 14/12/42; PRO, CAB70/5, DC(S) minutes, 14/12/42.

186. CCCA, Portal Papers, 11/19, Portal-Barratt correspondence, 15/12/42-2/1/43; PRO, CAB80/38, COS(42)451, 8/11/42; CAB79/24, COS minutes, 19/11/42; PREM3/453/4, Arnold-Evill Agreement, 15/12/42.

187. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/1/15, "The State of Equipment of the British Army," 11/42; NCA, Cherwell Papers, G506, Cherwell to Churchill, 27/11/42.

188. PRO, CAB80/66, WP(42)471(O), 24/12/42; WO216/24, Production to Supply, 9/11, reply, 8/12/42; IWM, Montgomery Papers, 49, Montgomery to Brooke, 28/12/42; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F168, Cherwell to Churchill, 2/12/42; Postan, Hay, Scott, 344. The question of whether the Sherman was a match for the PZKWIV, let alone the PZKWV "Panther" and PZKWVI "Tiger"- both of which outmatched it, and whose development the Allies were aware - is open. The point is that at this time the Allies were fairly optimistic.

189. Leighton & Coakley, 283, 289-290; Postan, Hay, Scott, 324, 329; LHCMA, Stern Papers, 023/67, Lytellton to Stern, 11/9/42.

190. PRO, PREM3/426/15, Churchill to Duncan, 5/11, reply, 10/11, Cherwell to Churchill, 17/11/42; 3/425, Tank Report, 9/12/42; Postan, Hay, Scott, 341-344, made the critical point that at least and last quality was a prime objective. LHCMA, Stern Papers, 023/75, D'Eyncourt to Stern, 7/11, for discussion of the dangers of relying on U.S. supply.

191. Behrens, 306; Costello & Hughes, 215-216.

192. PRO, CAB92/39, JWPS(42)65, 3/9, JWPS minutes, 5/9/42; 92/62 CPRB minutes, 16/10, LCPRB(42)55, 27/10/42.

193. NCA, Cherwell Papers, F163, Cherwell to Churchill, 1/10/42; PRO, PREM3/383/15, Cherwell to Churchill, 7/10, 16/10, 3/11, Churchill to Cripps, 7/10, 18/10, Cripps to Churchill, 27/1/42; CAB66/30, WP(42)497, 31/10/42. The Committee at first approved increased overseas claims.

194. PRO, CAB66/30, WP(42)513, 7/11/42; CAB80/65, COS(42)372(O), 1/11/42; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 24/11, 22/12, 28/12/42.

195. PRO, CAB71/7, LPC minutes, 13/4/42; CAB80/68, COS(42)438(O), 7/12/42; Behrens, 308-319, justifiably considered TORCH, from the carrying capacity perspective, "a leap in the dark"; Payton-Smith, 284-315; Leighton & Coakley, 373-375, 402-403, 457; Kimball, vol.2, C-233, C-234, 17/12, R-239, 18/12/42.

196. PRO, CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 30/12/42; CAB92/62, CPRB to CCS, 20/11, LCPRB(42)69, 21/12/42; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 29/9, 20/10, 10/11, 24/11, 25/11, 1/12, 8/12/42 and Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 1, JCS 146, 5/11, JCS 146/1, 17/11, JCS 134/2, 23/11, JCS 134/3, 26/11, JCS 146/5, 26/11, JCS 146/6, 5/12/42, traced the JCS efforts to reorganize the American program. After Roosevelt was persuaded that his demands were beyond national capacity, the program was reduced to $80 billion. Unable to agree on priorities, the JCS settled for a vast "Number 1 Group" which encompassed major items for all three elements. The ASP, the key component, started out at a troop scale of over 10 million, but by early December Marshall agreed the whole program - based on the obsolete concept of huge ground forces - would have to be revised. The full range of reasons, and the final outcome, are traced in Chapter 10.

197. Kimball, vol.1, R-203, 28/10, C-176, 29/10/42; vol.2, R-220, R-221, 19/11/42; CAB88/1, CCS minutes, 20/11, 4/12/42.

198. PRO, CAB92/39, JWPS(42)23, 15/7, JWPS minutes, 22/7, 25/8/42; CCCA, Portal Papers, 3/11, Portal to Churchill, 7/10/42; CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/1/15, minutes of WO-Canadian Ministry of Munitions meeting, 23/9/42; 2/1/18, JWPS Working Committee on "Use of Canadian Capacity," minutes 24/8/42; PRO, CAB92/62, CPRB minutes, 16/11, LCPRB(42066), 16/11/42. Canada's structural organization was actually far superior to Whitehall's. C.D. Howe, Minister of Munitions, had powers over his national structural policy equal to those of the Ministry of Production, Supply, Aircraft Production and the 1st Sea Lord combined. This had great impact on the development of Canadian production and relations with the British. See below Chapter 10. Whitehall had also already been forced to recognize how closely integrated Canadian war production had become with American, after the Hyde Park Agreement of April, 1941, and agree to Ottawa's handling problems direct in Washington, bypassing the Commonwealth Supply Council; e.g. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/2/3, notes on Anglo-U.S. Boards, 10/9/42. This was further devolution inimical to Whitehall's taste, as necessary as it had become for war purposes.

199. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/V, 7/1/42, 3/A/VII, 1/9, 15/10/42, 3/A/VIII, 10/2, 6/3, 23/4, 18/6, 5/7/42, 3/A/IX, 21/7, 27/7, 3/8/43, surely leave far too deep and clear a trail to gloss over, as Fraser did in Alanbrooke, 188.

MacKenzie King, Ralston and Crerar also deserve criticism. Brooke certainly had a duty to assess MacNaughton's fitness for command and report this to the Canadian government, but he had no business subverting McNaughton with Crerar, a subordinate and probable successor.

200. CCCA, Portal Papers, Box C/II/3, Harris to Portal, 12/8/42; 9/58, Harris to Portal, 24/9, reply, 26/9/42; 9/70, Harris to Portal, 11/11, reply, 18/11/42.

201. Milner, M. North Atlantic Run: The Royal Canadian Navy and the Battle for the Convoys, Toronto, 1985, 185-212.

202. PRO, CAB66/29, WP(42)451, 8/10/42. The irony of this point must be fully understood. The sincerity of Whitehall's desire to consult closely and continuously, and the frequency with which Dominion concerns affected decisions, were matched only by its determination to continue to speak for the Empire. Naturally the Dominions Office was a strong advocate of the Dominions - its existence depended on them!

203. PRO, CAB65/28, War Cabinet minutes, 19/10/42; CCA, Hickleton Papers, A/410/4.15, Halifax to Eden, 12/10, reply, 15/10/42; Louis, W.R. Imperialism at Bay, New York, 1978, 132-197.

204. Louis, 198-200; Eisenhower, J.S.D. Allies: Pearl Harbour to D-Day, 195-196.

205. Louis, 200-210; PRO, CAB65/28, War Cabinet minutes, 18/11, 23/12/42; CAB66/32, WP(42)600, 22/12/42.

206. PRO, CAB66/30, WP(42)516, 8/11/42; Ross, 31.

207. PRO, CAB66/31, WP(42)524, 12/11/42.

208. PRO, CAB66/31, WP(42)532, 19/11/42; CCA, Hickleton Papers, A/4/410/4.15, Halifax to Eden, 25/10, 29/10, 14/12/42.

209. PRO, CAB65/25, War Cabinet minutes, 2/2, 6/2, 12/2/42; Kimball(vol.1) 344, R-80x, 4/2, R-105, 11/2/42; Sayers, 412; Dobson, 114-120; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F152, Cherwell to Churchill, 23/1/42.

210. Kimball, vol.1, C-165x, 5/2/42, revealingly not sent; Dobson, 133, 137-139; Sayers, 375, 411, 417-419, 427-430; NCA, Cherwell Papers, H166, Proctor to Cherwell, 23/7/42. The growth in U.K. dollar reserves, largely from American personnel in the U.K., was the direct catalyst.

211. PRO, CAB65/25, War Cabinet minutes, 9/2/42; LSE, Dalton Papers, D26, 30/5, 8/7/42 diary entries; Louis, 32-33; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F153, Cherwell to Churchill, 5/2/42.

212. PRO, CAB80/65, COS(42)319(O), 17/10/42.

213. PRO, CAB66/30, WP(42)515, 9/11/42. This last statement is on the record as quoted.

214. CCA, Bevin Papers, 2/3, notes on service manpower needs, 5/5, Garrett to Bevin, 6/42; Parker, 166, 170-171; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F156, Cherwell to Churchill, 22/5, 16/6/42; H73, Day to Cherwell, 24/6, 30/6, notes on DC(S)(42)(48), n/d, 6/42.

215. PRO, CAB92/39, JWPS minutes, 25/8/42; NCA, Cherwell Papers F241, Churchill to Cherwell, 30/8/42; Parker, 172-173, 181-194.

216. PRO, CAB65/28, War Cabinet minutes, 6/10/42; CAB66/30, WP(42)496, 30/10/42; PREM3/481/5, "Army Strengths," 30/10/42. This paper envisaged 33 U.K. Field divisions overall, 16 of which were currently in contact. India's increased share of the total was underlined. NCA, Cherwell Papers, F163, Cherwell to Churchill, 25/10/42.

217. PRO, CAB66/31, WP(42)534, 21/11/42; CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/5/6, minutes of Anderson-Bevin-Duncan-Alexander meeting, 19/11, "Preliminary Comments on the Man-Power Situation," 30/10/42; Parker, 175.

218. PRO, CAB66/31, WP(42)539, 21/11/42; Parker, 176-179.

219. NCA, Cherwell Papers, F166, Cherwell to Churchill, 25/11/42.

220. PRO, CAB65/28, War Cabinet minutes, 26/11/42; CAB66/31, WP(42)556, 28/11/, WP(42)561, 1/12/42; CAB79/24, COS minutes, 1/12/42; CAB65/28, 1/12, 11/12/42; CAB66/31, WP(42)567, 7/12, WP(42)570, 9/12/42.

221. NCA, Cherwell Papers, F164, Cherwell to Churchill, 30/10/42; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/VII, 11/12/42 diary entry; IWM, Montgomery Papers, 27, "Reflections on the future," n/d, 12/42; CCCA, Portal Papers, 11/11, Portal to Commanders in Chief, 3/10/42; PRO,CAB80/66, COS(42)478(O), 26/12/42; CAB65/28, War Cabinet minutes, 17/12/42.

222. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/5/6, Programs Division Report, 1/12/42; PRO, CAB66/32, WP(42)572, 10/12/42; CAB92/39, JWPS minutes, 18/12/42; CAB71/7, LPC minutes, 11/12/42; Postan, 454; Scott & Hughes, 480-481.

223. Roskill, The War at Sea, vols. 1 and 2, passim, and Churchill and the Admirals, which developed the interesting thesis that Churchill's imbibed suspicion of admirals and generals influenced his decisions.

224. Howard, vol.IV, 24; Strange, passim; IWM, Montgomery Papers, 49, Montgomery to Brooke, 27/11/42; LHCMA, Liddell Hart Papers, 11/1942/106, "Arms for the Attack," Daily Mail column, 31/12/42, a perceptive critique.

225. Terraine, 504-510, overstated the strength of the Harris case; Richards, 199-201, 253-256, underrated Portal's calculation in strategic debate.

226. Higgins, 146; Eisenhower, J.S.D. Allies: Pearl Harbour to D-Day, 196.

227. Stoler, 68; Higgins, 146; Dunn, 18-23; Churchill defended himself in The Hinge of Fate, 566.

228. Dunn, 18-20, also set the reader up for the claim that 1942 decisions ruled out an otherwise feasible ROUNDUP. See below Chapter 8; Lee, 83; Rosen, 21-24; Hall, H.D., Wrigley G.C. Studies of Overseas Supply, London, 1956, 31-32; Ben-Moshe, 506, 515-517.

229. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/6/3, Programs Division Report, 12/42; Kimball, vol.2, C-247, 30/12/42. This letter was actually prompted by an emerging problem in the matter of the pledge of shipping assistance which erupted at the Casablanca conference. See below, Chapter 7.

230. Kimball, vol.2, C-180X, 30/10/42; Parker, Statistical Appendix, Table I; CCA, Bevin papers, 3/3, Bevin to Winant, 19/5/42.

231. Howard, vol.IV, 210-220; Mediterranean Strategy, 35-36.

Part 3

Decline

Chapter 7

SYMBOL of Paradox

"It should be decided whether a planned step-by-step policy was to be pursued or whether we should rely on seizing opportunities."

- King, 16/1/43

For the Allies, 1943 was truly "conference year." The Allies were at last able to apply military power on a scale large enough to carry the war to the enemy. Yet that enemy remained formidable. Different vested interests remained operative. The two senior partners operated in very different perceived power margins. The Allies faced awkward shortages of several vital items. These factors virtually dictated that at each crossroad of events a conference of principals would be called, in an attempt to restore consensus and reorient grand strategy to new conditions. The first of these, the aptly named SYMBOL conference - held in a suburban hotel outside of Casablanca in newly overrun Morocco from 13 to 24 January - set the stage. For ten days, Churchill, Roosevelt, the CCS and a battery of staff officers and aides worked in secret to map out a new consensus grand strategy for a sustained and escalating Allied global offensive. Yet historians have often assumed that the outcome of the conference was a straightforward stage in the evolution of Allied plans. Even a recent careful analysis argued that the momentum of current campaigns made Churchill's task "easy," and for the British "the Casablanca conference was a great success."[1]

When the conference is looked at from a fresh perspective, these conclusions can only partly be accepted. The argument at Casablanca encompassed not only the question of balancing current and future campaigns against the Axis Powers, but also a more fundamental point: what was to be the basic grand strategic approach towards a global offensive? This dynamic can be brought out by pursuing a thematic approach. First, the context of the conference, and the assumptions and objectives brought by the principals, will be examined. Then the conference debates and decisions will be traced and analyzed. This will be put in perspective by a look at the fundamental issues of policy raised by the decisions and then the immediate impact those decisions had on Allied actions. Finally, a survey of previous interpretations will help fill out some basic

conclusions. The central theme will be that the exchange of views at this pivotal juncture brought out several paradoxes in policy for the central direction of the war that had been generated by the uneven evolution of coalition war policy and attitudes. British military diplomacy scored a tangible but incomplete and costly success. The decisions of the conference, and the American reaction to them, actually began a countdown on a British designed grand strategy yet to prove its future validity.

The first symbol of the conference was its location - territory overrun at Churchill's and Roosevelt's insistence. The speed and extent of Allied success in completing the campaign to clear Africa would greatly affect future grand strategy. By the eve of the conference, appreciations were pessimistic. Eisenhower noted that the Germans had managed to concentrate strong air and ground forces in Tunisia, including 250 tanks. German supplies were increasing despite Allied interdiction. His own buildup was hindered by atrocious weather, and the polyglot Allied forces sorely needed reorganization. The JIC confirmed the presence of nine Axis divisions, four German, and the German intent to hold tenaciously in Tunisia. Montgomery's Eighth Army was still building up strength for a drive on Tripoli, well to the east. The COS feelers indicated that Eisenhower's desire to launch early probing attacks might risk defeat in detail. The COS agreed to raise the issue at the conference and to promote a longer buildup and concentration for a decisive push.[2]

Conferences tended to attract all outstanding issues to their agenda for resolution. SYMBOL proved no exception. Whitehall placed other problems generated by the uneven success of late 1942 on the list. Policies towards the French and Turks were important political questions heavily coloured by strategic factors. The Allies hoped to orchestrate a merger between de Gaulle and Giraud which might lead to a strong united French authority the Allies could support wholeheartedly, which support could then be returned. This was also militarily important. Eisenhower badly needed his French forces in Tunisia strengthened, French support could speed the release of three of his six U.S. divisions stuck in Morocco and Algeria guarding supply lines and watching the Spanish, and the Americans hoped to build up the French Army as a long term asset.

The conference seemed a good opportunity to tackle these issues. The same prospects seemed open in the case of Turkey. Various plans were under review, all grounded on the use of Turkish air bases and open Turkish support for Allied initiatives in the eastern Mediterranean. On the eve of the conference, Alexander and Wilson warned that operations in the area on any scale were more or less dependent on at least Turkish bases. The Turks had already agreed to reopen staff talks at a medium level. A policy was to be sought at the conference.[3]

These more or less immediate issues all related to the emerging focus on the Mediterranean, which the conference would be well placed to address. There were also issues of wider consequence which beat a similar path to the agenda. Anti-submarine warfare was perhaps foremost. The current situation was mixed. Despite recent evidence in support of convoy escort, opinion was still divided over whether to concentrate aircraft on it or "offensive patrols." U-Boats were again concentrated in the north Atlantic, seeking out the "air gap" in mid-ocean to attack convoys. The shortage of escort vessels and VLR bombers was critical, but the COS were still uneasy about the effect of accelerated production on other programs. Cabinet supported the renewal of area bombing on towns with U-Boat bases, but a triangular clash had emerged over anti-submarine forces - between Coastal and Bomber Commands over the allocation and use of aircraft, and between convoy duty and projected Mediterranean amphibious assaults over aircraft and escort vessels. The COS decided to bring a consensus report on urgent Atlantic requirements to the conference; but they only succeeded by confining it to a statement of needs from American resources. These amounted to 65 more escort vessels, 30 auxiliary aircraft carriers, accelerated supply of VLR bombers and more support for air operations from Newfoundland.[4]

This issue was intimately related to what was now the Allies' gravest concern, their overtaxed shipping capacity. This problem was literally life or death for the British war effort. Developments on the eve of the conference underlined two factors which would dominate proceedings - time and trust. It was widely agreed in Whitehall that the expected great increase in Allied shipping capacity in the second half of 1943 might come too late to alleviate an imminent crisis propelled by three factors - high losses, large

overseas claims and a resulting serious decline in imports. Grave steps were considered necessary to ward off an irrecoverable import decline in the next six months, even if the pledge given by Roosevelt was fulfilled to the letter. American assistance was seen as the crucial margin but also, with reason, regarded as uncertain.

Cherwell expressed Whitehall's perception most clearly. Roosevelt's promise to guarantee imports of 27 million tons in 1943 meant, in practice, a loan of 300,000 tons of shipping a month all through the year. This was a bare minimum. Even if it were achieved, imports would sink too low in the next few months to make up the target. If Roosevelt could not increase American assistance and the Mediterranean was not opened within weeks, there was only one option - restore imports to priority, at the expense of overseas supplies.[5] Churchill accepted this advice. On 5 January, he called for drastic steps, in order to avoid reducing U.K. war production to a hand to mouth state or falling into utter dependence on the U.S. Sailings to the Middle East and India, already cut from 120 to 90 ships a month, would have to be cut to 40 ships a month, at least for the next six months. Churchill felt recent improvements in the global position made the risk acceptable. The COS were forced to agree to the cut for January, but wished the position to be reviewed after that. There were concerns about balancing the flow of supplies with available escorts, and there was a great deal of squabbling over who should make what sacrifices.[6] American capability, let alone goodwill, seemed too uncertain to be completely reliable.

This same factor was evident regarding the proposed escalation of the strategic bombing offensive against Germany. Whitehall was more anxious than ever to press this offensive. Three old factors in new form had an influence - the prospect of new bases and forces from and with which to attack oil targets in Romania; the prospect of better results with new technical aids; and the belief that the Germans would at last suffer from interruption of oil supplies, having failed to secure the Caucasus. However, the whole offensive depended on the effective application of American airpower in force - eventually to carry at least half the burden. The Americans were determined to conduct a strategy of daylight operations which Churchill regarded with deep suspicion, stemming

from the disastrous RAF experience and hitherto poor American performance.[7] American intentions and position had to be clarified once and for all.

The question of clarification was the issue of the conference writ large. Both sides were determined to clarify their own views on grand strategy and those of their counterparts, in every aspect - basic posture, global balance, basic priorities, immediate steps, a general framework for 1943 and a long term outline. Suspicion was a dominant theme. Unfortunately for the Americans it extended to their own ranks. The JCS were unable to forge a firm consensus amongst themselves. All agreed that shipping shortages would limit global options. They also all feared that British proposals to expand operations in the Mediterranean would drain forces into a subsidiary theatre and preclude the posture they all desired - Allied power concentrated in the U.K. for a grand strategic offensive, with American forces predominant. In fact, many in the War Department viewed the British outline proposal they received in early January as a deliberate attempt to conserve British power and foster British influence at the expense of a more rapid drive for victory. The JCS were able to agree to press for a renewed concentration in the U.K., a curtailment of future Mediterranean efforts, an escalation of strategic bombing against Germany and early operations in Burma to assist China. They also agreed a more aggressive drive to prevent Japanese consolidation was necessary. But Marshall was doubtful of King's claim that a set percentage of Allied forces, up to 30%, had to be committed against Japan in order to avoid a repeat of the near disaster of the Guadalcanal campaign.[8]

Marshall felt enough forces were already slated and feared the effect of a specific commitment on his attempt to revive the flow to the U.K. As a result the JCS reached only a very shaky consensus - shut down further amphibious assaults in the Mediterranean in order to protect their priorities, an unspecified boost in the Pacific and a resurrected BOLERO. The JCS discussed the whole issue with Roosevelt only once, on 7 January, and received little satisfaction. Marshall tried to pin Roosevelt to support the JCS outline by insisting that further Mediterranean operations or a "Second Front" from August or later were - due to ship and landing craft limits - "either or" propositions. However, Roosevelt did not want to be committed in advance to any

course that might leave Allied forces under employed or even idle for several months while public opinion and the Soviets grew restive. Therefore he refused to give firm support to any course and made it clear that political dimensions would have to be dealt with in reaching grand strategic consensus.[9] The Americans left for the conference without their own house in order.

The reverse was true of the British. Habit and incentive both played a part - the habit of forging effective compromise consensus between all parties, the incentive of needing American support in order to proceed. American support was required on two levels. The most favourable possible commitment to supply British programs and forces was required in order to maintain an intense total war effort. The COS hoped the conference would produce an agreement that might revive the idea of linking production programs to agreed strategic needs.[10] American support for the basic British grand strategic principles - "Europe first" and the "wear down" approach - was also required in all aspects. The COS were warned of King's ideas, which they considered a threat to the "Europe first" principle. They were also aware of American and Chinese frustration that more expansive action was not planned for Burma. In return, the Americans were informed that the British intended to demonstrate the grand strategic folly of an early escalation against the Japanese in general and from Burma in particular. The British were sure of their case. The JIC now felt that rising shipping losses, especially due to USN submarine action, would leave the Japanese unable to mount more than one intense campaign in 1943.[11] However, the British realized that without full American participation their options were limited.

In order to press offensive action, the Allies would have to be able to marshal adequate amphibious forces. The COS accepted the argument that British resources would only suffice for one large operation at a time. They also discovered further limits - not enough landing craft for HUSKY, the major Mediterranean plan; not enough for any cross-Channel scenario; not enough crews for projected full strength Allied amphibious forces; a lengthy time delay in transfers between theatres. Portal also noted that an escalated strategic bombing offensive could only succeed if 8th Air Force became much stronger. Finally, there was also a more basic limit - regardless of what grand

strategy was settled, American reinforcements would be needed to bolster the U.K. and any move by U.K. based forces. The COS oversaw the preparation of a 22 page report detailing requirements for Allied forces for their proposed 1943 grand strategy; it was dominated by the issue of the use of U.S. forces.[12]

The one crucial British advantage was that they had agreed amongst themselves what their objectives were. The only issue the COS failed to resolve was whether to invade Sardinia or Sicily.[13] More importantly, their political overlord was in line on fundamentals. Churchill was becoming preoccupied by the need to foster a more visible combat role by U.K. forces; he also continued to complain the Allies were not carrying a burden equal to their power and resisted calls for review of long term issues.[14] For these reasons he intended to continue to insist on maximum possible continuous offensive action. However, Churchill shared with Whitehall at large the belief that to assault anywhere an unbroken German Army could concentrate really strong forces would lead to disaster. Churchill fully accepted the revised "wear down" consensus as long as it was applied as aggressively as possible. He outlined it to Smuts in this form on the eve of the conference. Despite the unfortunate stall in Africa, the Allies might still win the war that year. However, the Germans had proven how far they were from finished. The Allied task was to prevent them from recovering enough strength to try again for an Eastern Front knockout. The best course would be to press central Mediterranean operations to knock out Italy and force increased burdens on the Germans "in an unfavourable environment with long lines of communication," incite Balkan rebellion, lobby the Turks, stiffen the blockade and invade the continent only when "by a full use of our air superiority the enemy's strength has been materially reduced." The U-Boat threat would have to be destroyed. An effective bombing strategy would have to be settled.[15] This was a complete package which went far beyond the balance between theatres, with the war against Japan at the bottom of the list. The British took a well prepared and united team to Africa, with a clear objective and reams of staff expertise to help secure it. The objective was to ensure that the Allies laid down the basic pattern for grand strategic offensive along lines best suited to the capabilities of British power and to British interests, in that order.

SYMBOL was the first full scale war conference since ARCADIA, although Roosevelt refused to include diplomats to discuss emerging political issues.[16] Eisenhower and Alexander also reported, an important point. The British came with a virtual mobile Whitehall at their disposal. A headquarters ship complete with Map Room and all the staff and intelligence support necessary to reinforce the prepared case were at hand.[17] Churchill and the COS met frequently, remained basically united and followed a specific approach. The plan was judicious concessions coupled with patient exposition of the British case, "like water dripping on a stone." This was in stark contrast to American divisions and surprising lack of preparedness and support. The latter flowed from the former and definitely affected the final outcome. If there was a man of the hour, it was Dill. Dill alone saw clearly from the start that the basic problem was mutual mistrust of each other's motives and a fear of being exploited. Dill worked ceaselessly to overcome friction and pressed the COS to be seen to respond to American concerns.[18] The measure of success that met his efforts was the measure of the success of the conference.

The texture of the conference was set by the meetings of the CCS, sometimes twice daily, between 14 and 23 January, which settled the main business. Two important plenary sessions and a very important press conference took place. Several key problems were settled in frequent less formal discussion. Issues moved in and out of the main flow of discussion in neat symmetry. Resolutions on one point materially affected progress on others. The final result was a multi-tiered compromise fashioned by the Staffs within parameters set by fixed positions and objective facts. However, a serious imbalance was fostered by political pressures injected by Churchill and Roosevelt and needless confusion regarding logistic prospects. A thematic approach will be pursued for clarity; through it all, a distinctly dual level of exchange emerged.

Eisenhower's and Alexander's presence "symbolized" what became a central grand strategic fact in 1943 - Allied dialogue, especially at the great conferences, focused on the progress of the Allied armies. The current problems in north Africa were raised at a CCS meeting and in plenary session on 15 January. Citing the imminence of Montgomery's attack on Tripoli, the British were able to persuade Eisenhower to hold

off early limited attacks. On 16 January, Brooke, Marshall, Eisenhower and Alexander found a solution. Eisenhower's forces would build up strength and a full scale Allied pincer offensive would be launched in the spring when Eighth Army reached Tunisia.[19] The strategic issue had to be settled at this level because the conjunction of two converging theatres fostered confusion regarding command machinery. The whole machinery issue would become more important as the Allies moved on to the offensive. The British were prepared to address it as an integral part of grand strategy, particularly by their concept of Mediterranean operational spheres.

The first five days of the conference were the hardest. With difficulty a breakthrough was achieved, but only after an extended exchange of views which fostered deeper suspicion and revealed fundamental differences in grand strategic approach. Well briefed by Dill, the British tried to fit concerns about operations against the Japanese into the context of the "Europe first" policy. Each side had two specific fears. The British were afraid that the Americans would escalate Pacific offensives enough to impede action in Europe. They also feared the Americans might use their control of the necessary amphibious margins to shut down further Mediterranean operations and force the attempt of a premature "Second Front" from the U.K. The Americans feared the British would block any further transfer of resources for action against Japan in order to expand Mediterranean operations. The result of this, they felt, would be further dispersion of forces at the expense of strategic concentration, thus prolonging the war. The underlying British concern was that the Americans would seize control of grand strategy and force rash action. The underlying American anxiety was that the British would block a real concentration of American forces, with adverse effect on American leverage and the war itself. The questions of the balance of effort between the U.K., the Mediterranean, Burma and the Pacific were the specific issues. The basic underpinning issue was the question of whether the Allies should attempt to impose control on events through focus on a deliberate grand strategic offensive.

The Americans laid down the basis for discussion regarding operations against the Japanese. The British did the same regarding operations in Europe. The issue became to what extent qualifications would adjust these positions. This rested on the question

of overall approach, which emerged through the various issues. King tried to force the issue with a call for a set level of Allied forces - now 25% - to be devoted to operations against the Japanese.[20] However, the crisis came over the issue of the effects of future Mediterranean operations. On 16 January, Marshall made the position clear. The British proposal to carry the war to the Germans by combining strategic bombing and Mediterranean pressure, starting with an invasion of Sicily or Sardinia, raised a vital question:

> "Was an operation against Sicily merely a means to an end or an end in itself? Is it to be part of an integrated plan to win the war or simply taking advantage of an opportunity?"

King supported his colleague strongly.* The JCS clearly understood the fundamental British argument, that relative military weakness limited Allied options in Europe.[21] Nevertheless they made it clear that they saw the new British definition of "wear down" as an approach which planned to use the Eastern Front as the "grinding agent" and support it only by diversionary operations which would not apply the great strength the Allies expected to deploy. King took a strong lead in this pivotal debate. He argued Allied grand strategy should conform to the fact that Soviet and Chinese manpower were absorbing the bulk of the military power of the enemy and strike hard. King also heavily criticized the cardinal assumption of "wear down":

> "...he felt that [Germany's] defeat could only be effected by direct military action, rather than by a failure in her morale. Was it necessary, however, to accept that we could do nothing in France before 1944?"

Portal made the definitive reply:

> "This depended entirely on Germany's power of resistance. If we concentrated everything we could on Germany this year it was possible that we might cause her to crumble and thus be able to move into Germany with comparatively small forces. Until this condition had been produced, however, some 20 divisions would get us nowhere on the Continent... it was essential to have a plan and some resources ready in the U.K. to take advantage of a crack. In order to produce the crack, however, we must keep up the maximum pressure on Germany by land operations; air bombardment alone was not sufficient."[22]

** See Chapter heading*

Discussions on the balance between campaigns brought out the serious difference on basic approach. Crisis and resolution occurred on the same day, 18 January. The question of a "Second Front" was relegated behind two other issues. Could the British demonstrate that Mediterranean operations would advance Allied interests without precluding concentration of force? Could the Americans demonstrate that escalated action against the Japanese would not threaten "Europe first?" King forced the Mediterranean issue by offering to find the necessary forces only for HUSKY. The JCS tried two approaches on the latter question. King wanted a charter for operations to breach the second line of the Japanese perimeter in the central Pacific, to secure the initiative and maintain pressure. The Americans all wanted the Chinese relieved. The British wanted to restrict operations in the southwest Pacific to widening the breach in the Japanese outer perimeter with forces at hand. They felt an all out conquest of Burma could not be pledged far in advance because of the forces it would require, but cited only a shortage of landing craft and escort vessels as insoluble obstacles. On 17 January, Marshall warned that unless ANAKIM, the reconquest of Burma, was laid on for 1943:

> "a situation might arise in the Pacific at any time that would necessitate the U.S. regretfully withdrawing from commitments in the ETO."[23]

On 18 January, King offered to find the needed resources, even to curtail Pacific operations, in order to bring ANAKIM about. The COS were forced to respond. ANAKIM could now be placed under consideration, "definitely on the books." Pacific campaigns were another matter. A move into the central Pacific would hurt European efforts. The real danger of prolonging the war lay in giving Germany a respite from continuous escalated pressure. Suspicion marked the normally neutered minutes. Marshall opposed tying up forces in the U.K., waiting on events, that could be used actively elsewhere. Forces should be concentrated but for a set purpose. Brooke opposed any dilution of the "Europe first" policy. King insisted he would not countenance another near disaster because of the application of insufficient force in the Pacific. Impasse seemed at hand,[24] but there were other forces at work.

The one thing the CCS never disputed was the need to preclude another Churchill-Roosevelt override, as had happened in July 1942. The thought of a decision based more on "political" imperatives than strategic priorities and logistic facts was a Staff nightmare. The COS consensus with Churchill was still threatened by his belief that Staff plans did not intend to employ Allied power to the fullest extent. The Americans did not trust Brooke's motives or his staccato delivery. The British were sceptical of King's commitment to "Europe first." But the outlines proffered by each were based on existing campaigns and momentum which could not be easily abandoned. Either adjustments would have to be made or an override might come into play. Dill, Portal and Slessor found a way out of the impasse.

Dill played on Brooke's and Marshall's reluctance to face their bosses without consensus. Brooke offered to accept expanded operations in the southwest Pacific and a pledge to prepare ANAKIM subject to a later decision on whether to proceed. Marshall suggested an elastic clause - allow whatever escalation in the Pacific that would not impede the flow of "necessary" forces to Europe. Slessor and Portal put together a draft with clauses so tortuous and elastic that everyone could claim some satisfaction.[25] It was ready just in time for the CCS to report a deal in embryo to Churchill and Roosevelt on the afternoon of 18 January. The essence of the compromise was simple. To maintain constant pressure on the Germans and thus assist the Soviets, escalated strategic bombing and extended Mediterranean operations would be pursued. Forces would be built up in the U.K. in order to be ready to seize any "opportunity" and to prepare an eventual "Second Front." Formal approval would be accorded operations to overrun New Guinea and the Solomon Islands; more expansive efforts could be considered later. Limited offensives in Burma would continue. ANAKIM was to be prepared for a December start date. The response stiffened CCS determination to settle the issue themselves. Both leaders pressed for maximum possible offensive action in 1943, particularly a cross-Channel assault if events allowed. The discussion of a possible commander elicited two statements from Churchill. In principle, the Supreme Commander of a campaign should be provided by the nation contributing the bulk of the forces. Also, a chief of staff specially charged with cross-Channel plans should now be

named. These were questions of great importance for the future direction of grand strategy. This active interest from the two leaders sealed the basic compromise, for the CCS dared not risk reopening fundamental issues. King settled the issue: he would have preferred a "victory blueprint," but this new working basis was acceptable.[26]

Breakthrough eased somewhat the tension built up by high stakes and close quarters. Specific agreements emerged in a more accommodating atmosphere. On 21 January the scale of and contributions to ANAKIM were settled in principle. It was agreed to decide in July whether to proceed. On 22 January, the CCS "noted" the American outline for Pacific operations. "Europe first" was reaffirmed, but forces "of an adequate level" to retain the initiative would be deployed. The question of assistance to the Soviets was settled on 20 January. Churchill and Roosevelt insisted all committed supplies be delivered. However, the CCS agreed to specify that if losses became too severe, or operations absorbed escorts, adjustments would be made. The British stressed the latter point.[27] American preference for HUSKY settled a British debate on the next step. The JPS preferred BRIMSTONE, a smaller operation which could be done earlier. Churchill and Brooke disagreed. They preferred HUSKY, larger and costlier but more likely to open the Mediterranean, put severe pressure on Italy and really widen Allied options. The Americans opted to resolve the dilemma of balancing time, resources and objectives by backing the more ambitious stroke. The issue was sealed on 22 January by the appointment of Eisenhower as Supreme Commander, with Alexander, Tedder and Cunningham as Deputies. They were directed to report all problems by March and prepare HUSKY for July or August.[28]

This decision grew out of a resolution of machinery settled on 20 January. The CCS readily approved the British proposal to create Mediterranean operational spheres, at least in two elements. Tedder was to become Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Mediterranean. Cunningham was to take over the central Mediterranean; a new Levant Command would assume naval control east of Bardia. Land arrangements were the most important. Upon reaching Tunisia, Eighth Army would pass under Eisenhower's Supreme Command, along with First Army, U.S. Fifth Army and French forces. Alexander would take over 18th Army Group and conduct the conquest of Tunisia.

Middle East Command would be reorganized under a new commander and focus on supplying Eighth Army and preparing operations in the eastern Mediterranean.[29]

Important progress was made regarding a "Second Front." The CCS had lengthy discussions on 21 January on all aspects of the problem, from build-up through exploitation. For the first time, the British Chiefs displayed visible determination to come to grips with concrete problems. Several important agreements ensued. There was no chance the Allies would be able to muster the strength to attempt a deliberate assault against an unbroken enemy in 1943; but a determined build-up was to be resumed. Plans would proceed along three British proposed lines: raids; HADRIAN, an autumn attempt to seize a bridgehead in Normandy if the Germans had weakened, now seen as a "good prospect"; and an "opportunity" assault if the Germans cracked. The limiting factors - landing craft and training time - were noted. Two important decisions were made - to appoint a Chief of Staff to the Supreme Commander (COSSAC) charged to prepare all "Second Front" plans and build up a staff for the Supreme Commander, who would be named "When operations were reasonably imminent"; to plan a full scale deliberate assault in 1944. These decisions were fleshed out by new agreed schedules for shipping and landing craft allocations and a new BOLERO target of 15 divisions in the U.K. by December.[30]

Future policy for two other vital campaigns was also settled fairly rapidly after the breakthrough. However, in both cases the real consensus was forged outside CCS sessions. Anti-submarine warfare finally elicited adequate formal CCS concern. On 15 January, the CCS agreed to determine how many forces would be required to defeat the U-Boats outright. King and Pound subsequently found consensus based on the British report - each side would devote maximum effort to deploying air and surface forces adequate to cover all convoy commitments and still sweep for U-Boats. The objective was to win a clear victory in 1943. Detailed definitions and scales were agreed for all forces. Each side was to provide half the 65 additional escorts required in the Atlantic. It was also agreed 80 more VLR Liberators were required in the area, 60 of them in the U.K.[31] The combined strategic bombing offensive from the U.K. also turned an important corner. Eaker and Marshall at last persuaded Churchill to drop his opposition

to daylight attack, which had encouraged American critics of an 8th Air Force buildup. The CCS found consensus in the thesis that escalated strategic bombing could not win the war but could reduce German power, directly assisting the Soviets and making a "Second Front" possible. Agreement was reached on 21 January on the basis of a British draft. Portal would oversee a combined campaign, as agent for the CCS; but each force would decide how to execute the directive:

> "Your primary object will be the progressive destruction of the German military, industrial and economic system, and the undermining of the morale of the German people to a point where their armed resistance is fatally weakened."[32]

The military pieces of the puzzle were all in place.

The CCS had an uncomfortable time pressing the final accord on Churchill and Roosevelt on 23 January. Both looked askance at the prospect of a long delay between victory in Africa and execution of HUSKY. The need to complete exhaustive preparations and marshal resources did not prevent a demand the operation be launched before July. Roosevelt also feared that without a Supreme Commander "Second Front" preparations would be shuffled aside. CCS unity withstood these probes and an agreed draft was approved. But Churchill and Roosevelt wanted above all to ensure the plan could be portrayed to Stalin, and to Allied public opinion, as one that made maximum possible use of Allied power. Therefore, they insisted that the objective of victory in Europe in 1943 specifically crown an outline tailored to attempt that objective only in 1944.[33] This was the **first** paradox and it imparted an ambitious tone to what was only the shakiest of compromises.

Two political issues crowned the new consensus. Roosevelt expressly agreed the British should lead the campaign to pressure the Turks to activate their alliance and line up with the Allies. The CCS declared that Turkish co-operation was needed for future attempts to pressure German power and vital resources in the Balkans. Churchill cited this to cajole the Cabinet to agree to his going to Turkey to try and crown this success by securing that elusive commitment.[34] Roosevelt and Churchill also attempted to orchestrate political fusion between de Gaulle and Giraud. They hoped that personal diplomacy would at last wreak order out of French internal chaos. This failed to account

for de Gaulle's stubborn refusal to countenance Allied patronage on French soil, especially when aimed at his claimed authority. The British had to threaten to abandon de Gaulle, to satisfy U.S. pressure, even to force him to come to the conference. Finally, Churchill and Roosevelt resorted to petty subterfuge. At the press conference called to reveal the talks and issue a communique, de Gaulle and Giraud were brought out and forced into a stiff public handshake.[35] It was a poor result for personal diplomacy and it settled nothing.

The SYMBOL decisions reflect, when taken together, a striking fact - neither side really trusted the other's basic grand strategic approach, so both decided to pursue their own interpretation of an umbrella formula. SYMBOL was usually portrayed as either a victory/defeat or a trade-off. It was really an addition to the succession of grand strategic outlines since ARCADIA shaped by current objective facts but couched in terms loose enough to give each party some room to attempt to shift events in a desired direction.[36] British willingness to make exertions for ANAKIM had been important, but they had not committed to anything final. The same spirit and resolve regarding cross-Channel operations had had effect; but approval of HUSKY killed any remaining chance of a deliberate assault in 1943 by absorbing the necessary maritime resources. The Pacific clause was extremely elastic. The JCS made it quite clear that they would, if necessary, build up stronger forces not only to meet any crisis but also to head off unwanted Mediterranean ventures. The bombing directive at last laid the groundwork for a seriously escalated combined offensive. But its terms covered every conceivable task, from hitting U-Boat bases to killing German workers. The execution of policy was as firmly in airmen's hands as ever. What direction there was tilted clearly towards direct pressure on Germany, but in accordance with the "wear down" vision.[37]

The enduring importance of this elasticity was the impasse it reflected at the fundamental level - "wear down" versus decisive concentration. The British preserved the essence of their new sequence extension of "wear down." They did this partly by skilful military diplomacy but also by exploitation of existing momentum and facts.

ROUNDUP had already been precluded by the stall in Tunisia and the global disruption and dispersion of Allied resources. It was politically impossible to sit still between victory in Africa and a 1944 "Second Front." Therefore, the Americans reluctantly agreed to exploit TORCH. Because they had a plan in hand, the British were able to put it across. However, this was not the smashing success since often portrayed. Once again, "wear down" won no **convinced** American support for its intrinsic merit. The Americans merely agreed that **circumstances** compelled its extension along these lines; and this time, they extracted terms which set specific notice that "wear down" was on probation.

The open ended Pacific clause was an important lever; it also exacerbated British suspicions. The decision to nominate COSSAC, and from British ranks, ensured a vested interest in pressing the "Second Front" would evolve in London. SYMBOL in fact served notice that "wear down" was now seen by the Americans as an interim policy to be tailored along lines which would develop into the policy of decisive concentration. This meant limited Mediterranean campaigns, and a more limited but now definite role for strategic bombing as a complementary track towards eventual offensive by all three elements. The SYMBOL directive was the most expansive Allied document ever drafted along "wear down" lines; it was also notice of intention to terminate it. That was a **second** paradox.

Roosevelt's controversial declaration of the policy of unconditional surrender at the concluding press conference, exposed the **third** paradox; however, this one applied largely to the British. Several points of this familiar episode need re-emphasis. This was not an extemporary remark. The ground had been prepared long before. The idea had been under study in the State Department for several months. Roosevelt raised it with Churchill in August. The JCS were told in December the policy would be publicly announced. Nor was it a monocausal gesture. It was not meant merely to reassure Stalin, or soothe public opinion shaken by the Darlan affair, or commit Congress irrevocably to total war, or ward off divisive debate on war aims. It was meant to address all these pressures and more. The great strength of the English speaking powers' policy making machinery was that seminal decisions of this kind were never taken on the

arbitrary whim of one individual. The unconditional surrender declaration was a deliberate ploy by Roosevelt to meet all these pressures publicly and to imprint a very American policy on to the essence of coalition war policy and grand strategy. For the concept was a very American concept. It was a logical culmination to the prevailing American vision of total war - a moral crusade meant to lead to permanent solutions by the categorical defeat of irreconcilable evil, thereby relieving Smallville, U.S.A. of the need to ever again expand the local V.F.W. branch. It fitted well with American grand strategy - the routing of enemy military power by a decisive confrontation in the field, leaving no room for ambiguity. This would be further confirmed when the public unconditional surrender of "all our enemies" made sure no secret treaties or commitments could prejudice post-war settlement as in 1918. Finally, categorical and acknowledged defeat would prevent any repetition of German denial of military defeat and give the Allies the chance to end German ability to pose a military threat once and for all.[38]

The crucial question of authority was, in fact, the only uncertain area of the whole scheme in American plans. If German power was to be routed, who would surrender unconditionally? The real problem here, however, was faced by the British. Cabinet's only objection was to Churchill's suggestion that Italy be excluded, in the hopes of inducing a plea for terms. Whitehall was forced to react to an American proposal because it had simply never been able to decide exactly where the specific treatment of a defeated Germany fit into British war policy and grand strategy.[39] The emergence of this dilemma has already been noted, but Roosevelt's move made it an open issue. It is necessary to trace the thread from the beginning, to sort out the full implications.

Right from the end of 1939, the Chamberlain government had declared that British war aims were the clear defeat of Germany followed by concrete steps to ensure that it would no longer threaten the balance of power. But as Chamberlain had been reluctant to fight a total war, these maxims had never been specifically defined in detail. Churchill was more than willing to fight total war and defined these war aims in one word: "victory." However, he was no more able or willing to solve the central dilemma than Chamberlain had been. Germany could not be vaporized. A large German society and potential power would continue to exist. In fact, it was considered so powerful as

it was that, as of course noted, Whitehall settled on a grand strategy based not on decisive military confrontation but on imploding German power. The logical seal to "wear down" would thus have been to aim specifically to foster an anti-Nazi coup, in order to bring about a regime with which the Allies would be willing to discuss terms. Churchill's consolidation of power ruled this out, because from that point on official British policy was that there was no possibility that such an acceptable regime would emerge.[40]

There is no great mystery as to the "why" of this position. Peter Hoffmann and others have demonstrated how German resistance circles were seen in Allied eyes as weak, unreliable, and so tainted with militarism as to be little more palatable than Hitler. It is also clear that by the time of the conference the Allies were convinced that a hard line was in their best interests. Churchill was particularly determined not to risk any crack in the solid vision of a total war crusade by even discussing the principle of offering terms.[41] But he was promoting a grand strategy grounded on the implication that relative military weakness favoured a political solution! There had, as noted, been some evolution of the original "wear down" vision. But the most it now envisaged was the inducement of political chaos by military means, capped by a military coup de grace. The spirit of "wear down" was in line with total war; but the constraints which shaped it suggested that by default the British had drifted into a policy of hoping to induce **anarchy**, because they felt unable to crush the barbarian regime but were unwilling to deal with its opponents.[42]

Here, in fact, was double paradox. Whitehall's opportunistic "hammer away and see what happens" approach had led to a grand strategy that, if it worked **according to plan**, might well bring about a situation the British had rejected out of hand - either if Hitler decided to commit suicide by accepting Allied demands, or his opponents toppled him and offered terms. "Wear down" was tied to an ultimate objective - chaos - that the **American** vision of grand strategy seemed likely to put the Allies in a better position to deal with. Perceived weakness had made the issue so remote, let alone its potential to cause internal friction, that for once the British had no co-ordinated policy to propose. There could have been no more visible evidence of the growing shift in power in the

coalition. The war policies of Roosevelt and Churchill fitted well together and with American grand strategy; British grand strategy, however, was clearly becoming a more uncertain and awkward method to pursue overall war policy.

The SYMBOL participants did not face runaway collapse on their return home, as after ARCADIA. Their problem was of a new variety - how to seize the global initiative while maintaining coalition solidarity. The British and Americans both wanted to play and be seen to play a lead role in the conduct of operations. Command appointments were a highly visible element of that issue. Eisenhower and Alexander readily agreed on the mechanics of the command transition and immediate plans. Their agreement was eased by Eighth Army's occupation of Tripoli, fortunately coinciding with the end of the conference. But Churchill and Roosevelt led an unseemly squabble over the public announcement of the new appointments in early February. The problem was image - neither wanted it to appear the other nation was dominating the campaign. Whitehall's dilemma was sharper - the bulk of the forces involved were British controlled, but American forces and resources were indispensable for future efforts. A compromise was reached, but such dilemmas seemed likely to become a staple element of Allied relations. This was emphasized by COS agreement to an American proposal to submit all detailed forecasts of forces and resources to Eisenhower, for final decision on when to launch HUSKY.[43]

For the foreseeable future, Allied options would be restricted by the need to marshal and prepare amphibious forces over great distances. Theatre staff would play an increasing role in shaping the balance of effort between campaigns. Thus it would matter a great deal who the appointees were. Dill, Arnold and Somervell went from SYMBOL to India and China to press ANAKIM and prior efforts. Churchill left Wavell in no doubt the pledge to work for a serious offensive in 1943 was to be taken seriously. Wavell was able to report general consensus by 10 February on an outline nearly identical to previous plans - Chinese and British overland advances followed by an amphibious assault, starting in November. The prerequisites were also identical - reinforcements, better logistics, naval and air supremacy and mutual trust.[44] Political

solidarity seemed likely to be a decisive factor in an area now used as an American litmus test of British motives.

Political factors appeared likely to at last prove a positive influence on the Atlantic campaign. The recognition gained at SYMBOL was a belated but real breakthrough. It was well timed to focus attention just as operational research began to demonstrate conclusively the value of VLR bomber escort over convoys. Unfortunately, the 10cm ASV radar now necessary for real efficiency had been delayed by problems with parts' development. The AUB Committee, at last in a situation of promise, was unable to foster immediate steps. At least problems were identified. The SYMBOL directive was to be executed by more comprehensive efforts to organize and deploy surface escorts and aircraft in all areas from India to the U.K. Attacks on U-Boat bases were to be resumed. At last, Coastal Command would have first call on Liberators. The limiting factor, pace of installation of ASV radar, was noted. Pound hoped to have adequate forces by June. In the meantime, new equipment would continue to go first to U.K. forces. The most promising development was an early February decision by King to call an urgent Allied conference on the whole campaign for early March. The JSM rightly noted that with King's attention, real results in the areas of command co-ordination and equipment allocation were possible. This was a tangible benefit of the Admiralty report on the urgency of a really comprehensive effort tabled at SYMBOL. Against this, the conference had failed to come to an early decision on how to divide and execute that task. The CCS betrayed real awkwardness in dealing with a campaign still seen too narrowly as "defensive" while thoughts turned to "offensive" visions. Also, Cherwell carried on the fight to divert new radar to Bomber Command and let the Americans equip Coastal Command.[45] Time was a factor, but at last there was momentum in the right quarter.

The same momentum seemed evident regarding maritime allocations, but Whitehall quickly found this to be an illusion. SYMBOL actually worsened the position for one critical reason - there was no comprehensive review of program and logistic forecasts tied to grand strategy as a foundation for the balance between campaigns. Mountbatten delivered a very detailed report on British landing craft prospects and

requirements. Results included progress on agreements regarding new types needed and where to build them, agreed estimates which indicated a critical shortage of LCT and LST, and a pledge to revise allocations in light of HUSKY. However, no agreed overall policy was defined. King declared his intent to raise Pacific allocations. The COS were persuaded that HUSKY might absorb over 80% of British craft, leaving only enough for training in the U.K.[46]

Estimated shipping capacity proved a graver problem. The CCS agreed on an estimated loss rate, based on projected improvements in the Atlantic situation.[47] The problem lay in agreeing on how many ships were committed where. At the last CCS meeting on 23 January, Somervell and Leathers produced an impressive looking report on estimated capacity and allocations. The report was sparked by the revival of BOLERO and meant to be used as a basis for balancing operational commitments. Based on agreed loss rates and equipment scales, American production of 18.5 million tons of shipping and a lift ratio of 1.4 Atlantic to 1 Pacific, it was confidently asserted that all commitments could be met. There was one fatal weakness - Somervell factored in the Roosevelt pledge to support U.K. imports based on incorrect understanding of its scale. Whereas the pledge was meant to meet the margins the British could not fill, by an estimated 300,000 tons of shipping a month, Somervell saw it as a one time allocation to replace British losses. This would leave a gap of over 6 million tons of imports in 1943. Salter pressed this point in the CSAB but, incredibly, his WSA colleagues had neither made Somervell aware of the true position or even gone to the conference! As a result the British commitment to a revived BOLERO, reaffirmed as a grand strategic necessity by the COS, was meaningless. The estimates were shaky to begin with, given the uncertainty of the naval campaign. This needless misunderstanding would certainly ruin them, because Whitehall could not afford to let imports decline. This was to be the last time the CCS made the serious error of defining new plans without a really searching logistic overhaul; but, thanks largely to American disorganization, the damage was done.[48]

The results were apparent almost immediately in Whitehall. The COS again tried to reverse the severe cuts in shipping for overseas supply. Cabinet flatly refused. The

argument reached crisis proportions when the COS termed the effect "a complete reversal of hitherto envisaged strategy" and Wavell warned that the Indian civil economy could not function on such low levels. On the other hand, a revived BOLERO was a counter pressure. Cherwell considered Wavell's fears exaggerated and urged Churchill on 10 February to maintain the cuts.[49] Within two weeks, the expansive new commitments accepted at SYMBOL were exposed as a careless gamble on Allied shipping capacity, given existing fixed commitments.

The COS machinery nevertheless wasted no time in putting the SYMBOL directive in practice in every particular. HUSKY and the Atlantic have been noted. Further claims were made regarding the need to adjust shipping allocations to new plans. Bomber Command awaited the new technical aids H2S and Oboe, seen as the keys to making its efforts in the new combined campaign successful. A sweeping new deception outline to cover 1943 operations - by a combination of threatened assaults staged by various measures - was approved as an integral component of plans for campaigns in Europe.[50] There was no doubt the COS were looking boldly forward. In fact, they were so optimistic that the JSM revived the plea for a combined Order of Battle estimate by theatres for 1943 as a guide for programs and allocations. The CCS agreed to direct the CPS to review the issue, to see whether the SYMBOL accord warranted the drafting of an outline as a basis for planning, "subject to change with the changing strategic situation." The COS considered that "a distinct step forward." They realized their own programs and deployments would have to be revised to take account of the new decisions. But they seemed to accept too easily the view that SYMBOL offset the legacy of suspicion that had blocked this initiative in 1942. Nor did the COS have as firm a grip on logistic capability as they should have, despite the fact the JSM expressly warned the CCS that direct competition for shipping between imports and overseas claims made a combined overall policy urgently necessary. The COS had not been severed from Leathers the way Somervell had been from the WSA, but neither had they included him as an integral partner in the formulation of plans, despite having more to lose.[51] In fact, the British participants left SYMBOL complacently certain they had achieved a major success.

Churchill returned to report to Cabinet on 7 February. The report was optimistic, excessively so regarding the subsequent talks with the Turks. The Turks drove a hard bargain over increased supplies and arrangements for closer co-operation and made no real commitments in return. Nevertheless, Churchill hoped to bring the Turks into the war and open up active prospects in the eastern Mediterranean. However, Wilson, named to replace Alexander in Cairo, was to focus first of all on supplying Eighth Army and aiding HUSKY preparations. This emphasized an emerging divergence between intentions and capabilities. The catalyst was Stalin, who, Churchill warned, was already pressing for news of a "Second Front." Churchill and Roosevelt had already debated how to depict the new outline to Stalin. Ironically, Roosevelt pressed a more cautious tone. The problem was a difference in interpretation over what the SYMBOL decisions were to lead into.[52]

Brooke felt then and later he had successfully entrenched the new sequence thesis of "wear down" at SYMBOL. To an extent this was true. It had, for instance, been agreed in writing that no deliberate assault of northwest Europe would be attempted before 1944. However, this was a stay of execution, not a triumph. Brooke's ebullience was unwarranted. He was particularly delighted at having supposedly made Eisenhower a figurehead while leaving active command in British hands.[53] This betrayed surprising ignorance of the Americans' real perception of the commitment they had made to "wear down." HUSKY was the arch of the consensus. The British meant it to lead to the elimination of Italy as a foe and expanded Mediterranean operations which would load added burdens on the Germans on favourable terms for the Allies. The Americans saw it as a virtual terminus. If HUSKY became a matter of serious dispute or, as was likely, a sponge of resources, Brooke had in fact delivered a hostage to fortune. Eighth Army, the real core of British power in the area, would be both under Eisenhower's command and dependent on American landing craft to meet the full needs of any move north. The motive for leaving the now truncated sphere run by Cairo under British control was "ulterior" but has been misunderstood. The only firm idea was to maintain some visible British controlled active effort. However, Wilson might well be left without the resources to attempt anything serious at all. This made the atmosphere surrounding the

SYMBOL accord a critical factor. The feeling was more relief at a compromise than satisfaction over real understanding. The praise heaped on Dill underlined how high tensions had risen.[54]

Crammed together at close quarters for ten days, the CCS had done little to forge a really fundamental bond. Many Americans left the conference feeling they had been manipulated by the more united and carefully prepared British. These feelings reflected a sense of self-criticism at not having matched British resolve and preparedness, but this only deepened frustration. Washington resolved never again to face the British without a well supported consensus position. Without the general fear of political override, consensus would not have come so quickly. But it also came because the British case regarding European prospects was still more realistic. This was another situation the JCS did not intend to repeat, on a far more fundamental level than merely the date of the invasion of France.[55]

The received version of SYMBOL was a simple trade-off that bought the British time to pursue a Mediterranean campaign in return for more ambitious Pacific action. Usually it was portrayed as a recognition of short term momentum and initiatives which simply postponed a more fundamental revision of grand strategy. This especially American view reflected the influence of the participants on Official Historians - because no "blueprint" was laid down, especially in the Pacific, there was no lasting decision.[56] This is no longer really adequate. It is of interest to note that whereas the British Official Historian saw no change in the COS basic views on grand strategy, his American counterpart detected a pivotal shift in JCS attitudes. From SYMBOL, the War Department realized their original concept of a nearly total concentration on an assault projected from the U.K. was obsolete. The concentration strategy would now have to become simply the culminating track of a steadily escalated multi-faceted strategic offensive. The newly specified role of strategic bombing most directly underlined this change. Whatever new plan evolved for the use of BOLERO forces would take account of the "wear down" campaigns now to be pursued in 1943.[57] "Wear down," instead of

being rejected, would be **absorbed**. This must be seen as a shift on a fundamental level of thought.

There were real possibilities of lasting consensus here. The whole concept of "wear down" had drifted towards this very synthesis for 18 months. But there were three serious obstacles. Militarily, there was the problem of how to define when and how to make the transition. The British wanted unmistakeable prior success. The Americans wanted to proceed when the Allies had reached a given strength, regardless of the extent of prior progress. Diplomatically, the Americans had to be convinced that the British were not opposed to the whole concept. The reception of COSSAC would be an important litmus test. Logistically, the CCS would have to learn how to manage far more flexible but precise accounting of resources in order to adapt to what was certain to be an even more rapidly changing global situation. The British would also have to learn that their claim to equal status, based on superior combat power engaged and greater experience, was a wasting asset.[58] They displayed no such recognition at SYMBOL. SYMBOL was a decisive conference, particularly for its impact on American attitudes and what this would mean for British status and grand strategy.[59] It established that there would be a finite limit set on "wear down" by a partner who would have the power to enforce that limit. It ensured that whatever final grand strategy emerged for the strategic offensive would be a blend, barring an early German collapse. It was also the **ultimate** paradox in terms of the definition and formulation of grand strategy. At SYMBOL, the British taught the Americans how effective a well researched, well applied guiding consensus concept could be. Within a year, the pupil was to switch places with the master.

Endnotes to Chapter 7

1. Ben-Moshe, 518-519. This conclusion was seconded in more restrained fashion in another recent study, Wilt, A.F., "The Significance of the Casablanca Decisions, January, 1943," JMH, vol.55, #4, 10/91, 517.

2. PRO, CAB79/25, COS minutes, JIC(43)3(O), 7/1/43; 79/88, Secretary's Standard File, Jacob to COS, 4/1/43; PT, vol.7, Eisenhower-CCS, NAF84, 4/1/43.

3. PRO, CAB65/33, War Cabinet minutes, 4/1/43; CAB80/39, COS(43)10, 9/1/43 PT, vol.7, Eisenhower-CCS, NAF84, 4/1/43; PT, vol.4, Wilson & Alexander-COS, 12/1/43.

4. PRO, CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 6/1, 13/1/43; CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 13/1/43; CAB65/37, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 11/1/43; CAB79/25, COS minutes, 12/1/43; PT, vol.6, JSM650, 2/1, COS(W)429, 3/1/43.

5. PRO, CAB92/40, JWPS minutes, 6/1, 15/1/43; CAB66/33, WP(43)28, 17/1/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F189, Cherwell to Churchill, 2/1, 8/1/43; F170, 12/1, 19/1/43. Cherwell specifically noted the supposed Roosevelt pledge at this level at least three times. See below Chapter 8.

6. PRO, CAB80/67, COS(43)3(O), 5/1/43; CAB79/25, COS minutes, 9/1/43; CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 6/1, 13/1/43.

7. PRO, CAB80/67, COS(43)14(O), 11/1/43; CAB79/25, COS minutes, 14/1/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F169, Cherwell to Churchill, 8/1/43.

8. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 15/12, 22/12/42, 5/1/43; Wedemeyer, A.C. Wedemeyer Reports!, New York, 1958, 177.

9. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, JCS-Roosevelt meeting, 15/12/42 Supplementary, JCS-Roosevelt meeting, 7/1/43. Roosevelt's aloofness may well have been restricted to a procedural matter, but a firm detailed consensus was not established. Leighton & Coakley, 662-665; Matloff & Snell, 376-379; Stoler, 72-74; Foreign Relations of the United States: The Conferences at Washington, 1941-1942, and Casablanca, 1943, (hereafter cited as FRUS, Casablanca), Washington, 1968, minutes of White House meeting 7/1/43, 505-514; Wedemeyer, 174; Pogue, F.C. George C. Marshall: Organizer of Victory 1943-1945, New York, 1973, 15-16.

10. PT, vol.6, COS(W)422, 2/1/43.

11. PT, vol.6, JSM671, 7/1, JSM677, 8/1/43; PRO, CAB79/25, JIC(43)4, 8/1, COS minutes, 9/1/43; Kimball, vol.2 C-258, 10/1/43; PRO, CAB79/25, COS minutes, JIC(43)4, 8/1/43.

12. PRO, CAB79/59, COS minutes, 1/1, 12/1/43; CAB80/67, COS(43)4(O), 5/1/43; CAB84/51, JP(42)1005 (revise)(Final), 10/1/43; PT, vol.6, COS(W)432, 6/1/43.

13. PRO, CAB79/59, COS minutes, 12/1/43.

14. PRO, CAB80/67, COS(43)3(O), 5/1/43; PREM, 3/499/12, Churchill-Smuts, 11/1/43. 8th Army's advance on Tripoli was avowedly to be exploited to influence the conference: Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 584-585.

15. PRO, PREM3/499/12, Churchill-Smuts, 11/1/43; Ben-Moshe, 517.

16. Leahy was left behind due to illness. This did seem to affect the conclusions.

17. Gilbert, Road to Victory, 294, noted that Churchill was nevertheless displeased that his "Ultra" flow could not be maintained and took steps to remedy this in future.

18. Danchev, 127; Wedemeyer, 179, for an impression of the contrast in approach.

19. PRO, CAB99/24, SYMBOL Papers, CCS minutes, 15/1, Plenary Session, 15/1, minutes of Brooke-Alexander-Marshall-Eisenhower meeting, 16/1/43. Eisenhower was swayed by his reluctance to rely on French troops and poor logistics, as well as new American respect for Eighth Army combat power as compared to the poor effort in Tunisia; see CAB79/88, COS minutes, Secretary's Standard File, 18/1/43.

20. PRO, CAB99/24, SYMBOL Papers, COS minutes, 13/1, 14/1, 15/1, CCS minutes, 14/1, 15/1/43.

21. UW, JCS minutes, 15/1, 16/1/43, Meetings, Reel 1; FRUS Casablanca, US delegation minutes, 15/1/43, 559-560.

22. PRO, CAB99/24, SYMBOL Papers, CCS minutes, 16/1/43.

23. PRO, CAB99/24, SYMBOL Papers, COS minutes, 17/1, CCS minutes, 17/1/43; Pogue, Organizer of Victory, 21, emphasized the tension at this point.

24. PRO, CAB99/24, SYMBOL Papers, CCS minutes, 18/1/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 18/1/43.

25. PRO, CAB99/24, SYMBOL Papers, CCS minutes, 18/1/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3A/VIII, 18/1/43 diary entry and retrospective; Richards, 257-260;

Pogue, Organizer of Victory, 29-30, 32.

26. PRO, CAB99/24, SYMBOL Papers, Plenary Session, 18/1/43; Wilt, "The Significance of the Casablanca Decisions," 528, was unconvincing on a point of significance extending beyond King's attitude, as will be seen below.

27. PRO, CAB99/24, SYMBOL Papers, CCS minutes, 21/1, 22/1, 20/1/43.

28. PRO, CAB99/24, SYMBOL Papers COS minutes, 20/1, 21/1/43, CCS minutes, 20/1, 22/1/43; LHCMA, Ismay Papers, II/3/158/2a, Ismay to Churchill, 15/6/49; Brooke Papers, 3/A/VIII, 13/1, 21/1, diary entries and retrospective.

29. PRO, CAB99/24, SYMBOL Papers, CCS minutes, 20/1/43.

30. PRO, CAB99/24, SYMBOL Papers, CCS minutes, 21/1/43.

31. PRO, CAB99/24, SYMBOL Papers, CCS minutes,15/1, 18/1, 21/1/43.

32. PRO, CAB99/24, SYMBOL Papers, CCS minutes, 14/1, 15/1, 21/1/43; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 591; Matloff, M. Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare 1943-1944, 27-29; Richards 257-260; Overy R.J. The Air War 1939-1945, London, 1980, 74. Privately, the JCS agreed to accept Portal's role only until U.S. forces were larger and their methods proven: UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 21/1/43.

33. PRO, CAB99/24, 3rd Plenary Session, 23/1, CCS165/2, 22/1/43; Gilbert, 294-313. The argument in Kimball, W.F. The Juggler: Franklin Roosevelt as Wartime Statesman, Princeton, 1991, 73, that the final accord largely confirmed the existing views of Churchill and Roosevelt, overlooked this crucial difference in disposition._

34. PRO, CAB99/24, SYMBOL Papers, Plenary Session, 15/1, Plenary Session, 18/1, CCS minutes, 19/1, 20/1/43; CAB65/37, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 20/1, 24/1, 25/1/43.

35. PRO, CAB99/24, SYMBOL Papers, CCS minutes, 19/1/43; CAB65/37, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 18/1/, 19/1, 20/1/43; Kersaudy, 238-257, stressed Churchill's resentment of de Gaulle's behaviour; Barker, Churchill and Eden at War, 70.

36. Greenfield, American Strategy in World War II, 32, and Stoler, 78, well understood the mutual suspicions and political pressures that shaped the result. Wilt, "The Significance of the Casablanca Decisions," 518-528, made the useful point that the SYMBOL directive laid down the broad basis for subsequent Allied grand strategy, but overlooked the real failure of the CCS to agree on a basic approach.

37. UW, JCS Papers, Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 18, 19/1/43. Brooke strongly supported Portal's case at SYMBOL: PRO, CAB99/24, SYMBOL Papers, CCS minutes, 21/1/43; Frankland & Webster, vol.2, 12.

38. Armstrong, A. Unconditional Surrender, New Brunswick, NJ, 1961, was the first really comprehensive treatment, but it has not stood up well; Campbell, A.E. "Franklin Roosevelt and Unconditional Surrender," in Langhorne, Diplomacy and Intelligence During the Second World War, 224-226; Wheeler-Bennett, J. & Nicholls, A. The Semblance of Peace, London, 1972, 56-64; Matloff & Snell, 379; Eisenhower, D. Eisenhower at War, 99.

39. Wheeler-Bennett & Nicholls, 60; Howard, vol. IV, 284; Balfour, 315; and above, Chapter 6.

40. Hoffmann, P. "The Question of Western Allied Co-Operation with the German Anti-Nazi Conspiracy," HJ, vol.34, #2, 1991, 449-451, for policy aspects; PRO, CAB66/26, WP(42)311, 21/7/42 and above page 305, for an emphatic statement of this position.

41. Hoffmann, 452-464; Schöllgen, G. "Another Germany: The Secret Foreign Office Contacts of Ulrich von Hassel during the Second World War," IHR, vol.XI, #4, 1989, 649-667; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 595-600. The strongest criticism of the policy from staff circles on the grounds that it needlessly abandoned the German Resistance was expressed by an American, Wedemeyer, as a central theme in his account; for Casablanca, see 169.

42. Wilt, "The Significance of the Casablanca Decisions," 519, offers a diametrically opposite assessment of unconditional surrender and British grand strategy.

43. PT, vol.5, Alexander-WO, 30/1, vol.7, Eisenhower-CCS, NAF134, 9/2/43; PRO, CAB79/59, COS minutes, 3/2/43; 79/25, 9/2/43; Kimball, vol.2, R-257, 8/2, C-263, 10/2, R-259, 10/2/43.

44. PT, vol.2, Churchill-Wavell, 3/2, Wavell-COS, 3/2, 8/2, 10/2/43; UW, JCS Papers, Pacific, Reel 12, Memorandum for Information #14, Minutes of Chungking Conference, 22/2/43.

45. PRO, CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 20/1, 3/2, 10/2/43; CAB79/25, COS minutes, 27/1/43; PT, vol.6, JSM721, 9/2/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F170, Cherwell to Churchill, 9/2/43; Costello & Hughes, 241.

46. PRO, CAB99/24, SYMBOL Papers, CCS minutes, 22/1/43; CAB80/67, COS(43)51(O), 9/2/43; PT, vol.6, COS(W0457, 2/2/43. Leighton & Coakley, 682-683, stressed the improvement in development and production.

47. PRO, CAB99/24, SYMBOL Papers, CCS minutes, 23/1/43; CAB88/2, CCS minutes, 5/2/43.

48. PRO, CAB99/24, SYMBOL Papers, CCS minutes, 23/1/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 20/1, an astonishing confession by Somervell, 2/3, 23/3/43; Rosen, 129; Eisenhower, D. Eisenhower at War, 99, made the untenable claim that the CCS logistic review was realistic; Leighton & Coakley, 676-686, and Leighton, R.M. "U.S. Merchant Shipping and the British Import Crisis," in Greenfield, K.R. Command Decisions, Washington, 1960, made a more accurate analysis of a "flimsy" and "perfunctory" process.

49. PRO, CAB79/25, COS minutes, 25/1, 5/2/43; 79/59, 30/1, 1/2, 8/2/43; CAB80/67, COS(43)29(O), 23/1, COS(43)35(O), 31/1/43; CAB65/33, War Cabinet minutes, 25/1/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F170, Cherwell to Churchill, 10/2/43.

50. PRO, CAB79/59, COS minutes, 29/1, 30/1, 9/2/43; CAB80/67, COS(43)32(O), 28/1, COS(43)44(O), 7/2/43.

51. PRO, CAB79/25, COS minutes, 8/2/43; CAB88/2, CCS minutes, 5/2/43; PT, vol.6, JSM715, 6/2, COS(W)463, 8/2/43; Behrens, 330, aptly termed the British attitude "ignorance and hopefulness."

52. PRO, CAB65/37, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 7/2/43; CAB80/67, COS(43)45(O), 7/2/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-260, 3/2, R-256, 5/2/43.

53. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VIII, 20/1, 22/1, 23/1, diary entries and retrospectives; CCA, Grigg Papers, 9/7/14, Brooke to Grigg, 23/1/43; PRO, CAB80/39, COS(43)46, 12/2/43.

54. CCA, Grigg Papers, 9/7/14, Brooke to Grigg, 23/1/43; PRO, CAB88/2, CCS minutes, 5/2/43; Ismay, 285-287.

55. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 7/1, 16/1, 6/4, 27/4 Supplementary, 4/5, 10/5/43 for the reaction to Casablanca and the marked change in JCS practice, apoint which more than anything else, undermines two key arguments in Wilt, "The Significance of the Casablanca Decisions," 528-529; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VIII, 20/1, 23/1/43, diary entries and retrospectives; Wedemeyer, 185-186, 191-192, 215-216; Pogue, Organizer of Victory, 197; Howard, vol.IV, 244; Ismay, 285-287. See also Chapter 8.

56. Dunn, 31-32; D'Este, Bitter Victory, London, 1988, 51, Higgins, 184; Hastings, 181, were all examples of the received version of a trade-off on one level of grand strategy; Matloff & Snell, 381, was the standard "non-decision" thesis, expanded by Leighton & Coakley, 661.

57. Howard, vol.IV, 244-273; Matloff, 30-42; Overy, 74; Wilt, "The Significance of the Casablanca Decisions," 518-529, went too far in his own argument, but certainly laid the non-decision case to rest.

58. Leighton & Coakley, 686, went as far as to claim that the logistic dispersal of late 1942 capped by the decision at SYMBOL to move into the Pacific together killed all possibility of ROUNDUP and propelled the British plan to build on existing efforts by default; Callahan, R. Burma 1942-1945, 54, accurately portrayed how obsolete British assumptions had become, as well as the resulting consequences.

59. Interestingly, although the focus in Kimball, The Juggler, pp.75-78, is on a different dimension of the conference, the author also identified clearly paradoxical situations: unconditional surrender as reflecting the Roosevelt-Churchill view that the U.K. and the U.S. would be able to impose a settlement, even though their grand strategy leaned heavily on the Red Army; the distinct feeling that Casablanca was simultaneously the apex and the end of a U.K.-U.S. condominium.

Chapter 8

Strategy Ebbing - The Break

"[he was] in complete agreement with the line to be taken with the Americans, namely, that nothing should prevent us from adhering to our main policy for the defeat of Germany first, and that the greatest step which we could take in 1943 towards this end would be the elimination of Italy."

- Churchill, 10/5/43

"Operations in Italy, therefore, must have as their main object the creation of a situation favourable to OVERLORD...Sufficient forces must be used in Italy in order to make OVERLORD a possibility..."

- Brooke, 15/8/43

On questions of grand strategy, the attractions of "what was meant to be" and "what might have been" have often tended to obscure "what was." The problem of British grand strategy and national war policy in 1943 was no exception. Some have argued that a deeply laid plot, to lead Allied forces into specific campaigns in the interest of preserving specific British post-war interests, dominated British ideas and actions. Others have suggested this helped preclude the adoption of an alternative and superior Allied grand strategy in 1943.[1] It remains the argument of this study that a probing enquiry into the assumptions and perceptions of those British leaders who controlled the central direction of the war strongly contradicts these theses. 1943 was the year the Allies assumed and pressed the grand strategic initiative. The prospect of victory became certain enough for concerns regarding the post-war order to intrude on the central direction of the war. But for the British in particular, continuity remained as powerful a factor as change.

British leaders made every effort to apply the latest revision of "wear down," which they felt had been accepted at Casablanca. Belatedly, it became clear how tentative American acceptance had been. Whitehall found that long awaited success in the field brought problems and confusions as well as opportunities. Its great strength, the ability to revise and maintain a consensus on fundamentals, was severely tested. Four powerful forces combined to call the underpinnings of grand strategy almost continuously into question: mixed results in the field; growing American self-confidence

and leverage; serious divisions over emphasis within the "rolling seminar"; and the inexorable approach of the saturation point of British structure. The British entered 1943 looking ahead, but carrying with them the legacies of three hard years. A fascinating pattern emerged, one far removed from shallow speculation and conspiracy theories. Dominated above all by uncertainty, the British came to focus on implanting as much of the "wear down" framework as possible into a grand strategy which evolved steadily beyond it. Two connected dialogues now matured: the running argument over the balance between campaigns, and the more fundamental dispute over basic grand strategic approach. From winter to late summer 1943, the British moved with a caution that reflected a continued sense of relative weakness. At the same time, the Allies revised their grand strategy in a manner which did not quite establish a new outline but certainly marked a clear break with the old.

The one factor which most directly unravelled the SYMBOL outline, and exposed its artificiality, was the serious - and largely avoidable - shipping crisis which dogged the Allies in winter and spring 1943. Yet shipping was the central catalyst for change in a process that led to another conference. It makes more sense to start from the outer layer and work in. The major campaigns envisaged or reshaped by SYMBOL went in directions that would alone have forced a review of plans. These campaigns - the India-Burma theatre, the Pacific, the Mediterranean, the "Second Front," the Atlantic, and the strategic bombing of Germany - remained understood by the British as parts of their prevailing "wear down" concept. This continued to make British grand strategy familiar in approach, if not always coherent. This was certainly the case regarding the war against Japan.

The course of events in the India-Burma area followed a familiar pattern: an agreed plan eroded by setbacks, shortages, and caution, leading to a decision to abort and start again next season. This time, however, there was a twist. In both London and Washington, a more serious focus on long range prospects and priorities emerged. The prerequisites demanded for ANAKIM, the all out effort to reconquer Burma, were never

in sight. Whitehall was well aware of how inadequate British forces in the area were, and how essential it was to strengthen the logistic infrastructure in Assam. Instead, that was further weakened by tne reduced convoy cycle. Full Chinese participation was indispensable in any case. A consensus of sorts seemed to be reached with Chiang Kai-Shek in February. But Dill, who led the talks, did not forward an encouraging report. It was generally agreed that large margins of forces and resources were required, while the Chinese seemed unlikely to move before a clear British success.[2] Even as Dill spoke, events were already intervening.

In order to launch ANAKIM, the preliminary operations already underway had to succeed. By late February, the Chinese advance from Yunnan had ended. Worse, the British drive into Arakan had been roughly handled. This sparked considerable acrimony, and weakened New Delhi's already feeble support for a campaign it considered too ambitious.[3] This acrimony spread to London, where Churchill demanded an accounting of "this lamentable tale." The COS shared his frustration, but felt that logistic shortfalls already imperilled ANAKIM. As a diversion, they noted two points. Some success had been gained further north by the use of Long Range Penetration Groups (LRPG), small lightly equipped units sent to disrupt enemy rear areas. Also, Wavell had already proposed to study plans for attacks further afield. Given the prevailing view that British forces were too weak to press on, it was decided to recall the Commanders-in-Chief for consultations.[4] Over the latter part of April, Wavell and the COS forged a new consensus by a potentially risky means: they distracted the Prime Minister with the prospect of bolder more fruitful operations elsewhere, at a later date.

It was all too easy to convince Churchill that ANAKIM no longer seemed "a reasonable prospect." Serious study should be given to operations to isolate and by-pass Burma, thereby avoiding the difficulties of snarled logistics, deep jungle and poor lines of supply, and co-operation with the unreliable Chinese. Churchill took the bit between his teeth and called for the study of an early naval and air sweep to by pass Burma, a prospect even more appalling for commanders who considered their forces too weak to pursue existing plans. The COS worked to steer the issue back to safer ground. There were three limiting factors: 1) operations could not be allowed to drain resources needed

in Europe; 2) the threat to India had to be removed; 3) some effort had to be made to aid the Chinese. On these terms, both ANAKIM and far flung amphibious operations were impossible in 1943. The final advice was twofold: 1) for 1943-44, concentrate on improving the logistic base, and revive the planned limited attacks; 2) consult the Americans regarding an overall grand strategic offensive against the Japanese.[5] At the price of planting a seed in the Prime Ministerial mind, the COS thus revived the standing policy. But the last point reflected the fact that Washington thinking had not been static.

The JCS were no longer afraid of losing the initiative to the Japanese, after victory at Midway and Guadalcanal. But they still worried that unless Allied efforts were increased the Chinese might collapse. However, the debate over how much strength to deploy against Japan, where, and under whose control, remained heated. CARTWHEEL, a new outline for expanded but still limited efforts in the southwest Pacific, was accepted. But the ongoing dispute over whether to emphasize air or ground operations in the China-Burma-India area now boiled over. A carrot and stick approach was pursued to keep ANAKIM afloat. On 16 April the British were offered 20 ships. On 30 April, the Americans insisted ANAKIM was imperative in 1943, to help the Chinese and CARTWHEEL.[6] This pressure caught the British in a confused and vulnerable position, with an internal argument raging over policy and priorities. Indeed, any charge that the British were working to a well defined master plan must confront this constant uncertainty. Cabinet noted on 14 April that it would be premature to define long term policy for Southeast Asia, because the operational situation remained so vague. Churchill's anger over the setback in Arakan was the final straw. For some time it had been felt that a reorganization of command machinery would have a positive effect. This suggestion now attracted attention. In addition, the LRPG operations under Brig. Wingate were described as a great success which had improved the troops' sense of their own ability. This caught Churchill's attention and added to the new debate about whether to bypass Burma altogether. The COS were determined to prevent early action, but serious Allied discussion was obviously in order.[7]

A different, and to London, far more important effort unfolded in the Mediterranean. At Casablanca the Allies had agreed to clear north Africa and then

invade Sicily, operation HUSKY. The British focused all efforts on clearing up the overseas campaign that had initiated "wear down" in 1940. On 12 February, Middle East Command was directed to focus on maintaining Eighth Army and ass ing HUSKY preparations. Efforts to press Turkey, and plans for operations in the eastern Mediterranean, were downgraded.[8] North Africa was duly cleared, but in a manner which had widespread repercussions. To the British, this area remained the one place the German Army could safely be engaged. Success in north Africa raised the serious prospect of an expanded campaign for the first time. British reactions in three aspects - the next step in the central Mediterranean, prospects further east, and overall ramifications - suggested much about the evolution of their grand strategy.

The main grand strategic consequences of the final effort to clear Tunisia were serious, but complex. Certainly, there was a measure of grand strategic success for both sides. At the very moment when all available resources, especially transport aircraft and armoured forces, were needed to try to salvage the debacle in southern Russia, Hitler mounted the most concentrated Axis effort to reinforce their forces in Africa. From November through March, German forces were increased by three good divisions and nearly 200,000 tons of supplies, including 544 tanks and over 1,000 guns. Unfortunately for the Allies, this successful attraction of German power put the Germans in a position to once again employ the formidable combat power of their ground forces to unhinge Allied plans.[9] This became a recurring problem, as will be seen below. For now, the strain on Allied shipping capacity was worsened and British pessimism regarding Allied combat power was reinforced. Most of all, the delay in clearing up the initial campaign affected all future Allied plans.

The integration of the commands of Montgomery and Tedder with Eisenhower's forces coincided with a brief but embarrassing setback for the U.S.II Corps at Kasserine, in central Tunisia. A fortnight later, Eighth Army, forewarned by Ultra, brushed off a last attempt by Rommel to upset its advance by an attack on its forward elements at the Mareth Line.[10] The most insidious consequence of the conjunction of the two battles was that it generated a widespread denigration of American combat power in British circles. Montgomery and Alexander denounced American organization and capabilities

in private but scathing fashion. Portal also blamed American shortcomings in a defensive reaction to fierce criticism from Churchill about the inability of the Allied air forces to isolate and crush Axis forces in Tunisia. Churchill held firm, described RAF efforts as "failure," and insisted on improvement as "here is the place where we want to fight the Hun."[11] Yet British commanders remained convinced that American and French shortcomings obliged a methodical advance. For six weeks from late March, 18th Army Group pursued a slow set piece advance. The final inexorable effort to isolate and crush the Axis forces demanded great exertion. The lesson Alexander drew was not positive:

> "Unless we can do something about it, the U.S. Army in the ETO will be quite useless..."[12]

Simultaneously, Allied planners at several levels tried to organize preparations for HUSKY. Naturally, events in Tunisia affected these efforts, resulting in a curious blend of caution and ardour. The first clear result was to settle the long debate about the target date. Delay in Africa forced the CCS on 24 March to settle for 10 July.[13] This did not sit well with the COS. Aware that the Germans intended to stand in Tunisia, they pressed for a quick crushing victory, an early resumption of convoys through the area, and a serious look at how to exploit expected success. In fact, British overall plans relied on all three points. Disappointed in the first two, the COS turned to the third. On 19 March, the JPS were directed to assume HUSKY would succeed and study how best to exploit it, under the code name FANFARE.[14] Meanwhile Montgomery, amidst great controversy, successfully forced a revision of the assault plan for HUSKY.[15] This forced principals to concentrate on essential points amidst the confusion of current and future plans. Two clear threads emerged: theatre commanders were greatly influenced by respect for German combat power, and the central Mediterranean was now the centre of Whitehall's attention. Demands for HUSKY grew large enough to disrupt global allocations of landing craft and naval vessels. Eisenhower went as far as to argue the assault could not be risked if anything larger than scratch German forces were sent to Sicily. This was dismissed with one voice in both capitals, Churchill describing it as "defeatist pusillanimity."[16] On the other hand, the overall American and British reaction to these issues was clearly divergent.

The merest hint that the British were considering going beyond HUSKY raised hackles in Washington. The question of whether the SYMBOL outline was becoming obsolete was openly raised. But, in fact, the atmosphere in Washington was one of considerable confusion. Roosevelt assured Churchill post-HUSKY options could be studied, but felt Tunisia had to be cleared before any concrete steps were taken. Then, on 16 April, Marshall raised a War Department idea: make HUSKY an accelerated "bounce" assault, launched even perhaps prior to clearing Tunisia.[17] The British easily demonstrated how this plan would hopelessly snarl Allied lines of supply and launch HUSKY with no firm base of support. They had less success in keeping track of the JCS attitude regarding the whole question of what to do next. Even Dill was of little help, because the erosion of the SYMBOL schedule set ideas in Washington adrift. Marshall spoke in the same breath of fearing being dragged into a bottomless pit, and then wanting "all else possible done to clean up the Mediterranean."[18] Success in the Mediterranean was a mixed blessing for Washington also.

To London, however, it was, ultimately, long overdue deliverance. Here the direction of thought was clear: do whatever it took to make HUSKY a success, even if it meant scrapping any sort of cross-Channel move in 1943. Churchill agreed on 13 April that the large numbers of landing craft required for HUSKY meant "SLEDGEHAMMER" was again "dead." He then set the terms for further study himself. Three options should be reviewed: a move in the Aegean, a move up Italy itself, or a move to secure a bridgehead in Italy as a basis for efforts to "ignite" resistance forces in the Balkans. In any case:

"of course our choice must depend upon what the enemy do."[19]

As the study of FANFARE was already advanced, the COS were able to suggest three scenarios: an advance into Italy, an invasion of Sardinia, or a landing in southern Italy for use as a "springboard" for landings on the eastern Adriatic coast. From 13 to 20 April, the COS, led clearly by Brooke, sorted out a firm basis for FANFARE. The idea of a move into the Balkans was raised, but it was quickly agreed that Allied resources would not sustain anything other than a bridgehead for use as a funnel of supplies to resistance forces. It was agreed that a move into Italy should be feasible, as

inadequate supply lines would constrain any German buildup. The Staffs were directed to study all the specific problems and prepare a justification for this new agenda. This was to be based on the argument that the agreed Allied priority remained to assist the Russians, and it now seemed that the best way to do this was to "knock Italy out."[20]

Naturally, plans for action in the eastern Mediterranean were not unaffected. It could hardly have been otherwise given the focus on HUSKY and the tendency to expand existing efforts. But it had never been intended to abandon all hope of inducing Turkish belligerency or pressing Axis positions in the area. Cairo soldiered on, hampered by inadequate information as to what was going on in the Balkans and insufficient forces to do anything about it. Disputes about which resistance group should be supported dragged on. Churchill asked to be able to mention Aegean plans in a message to Stalin, a request influenced by a report that the Soviets were engaging 185 German divisions to the Allies 12. The COS were forced to remind him of the demands of HUSKY. PAIQ steadily became a shadow command, left behind by the course of the war. But the Turks continued to avoid any movement towards active entry.[21] Success in Tunisia focused the issue, raising the question of whether post-HUSKY opportunities would also arise in the east.

Seen through the prevailing perceptions of "wear down," this heightened interest does not appear sinister. Advocates of escalated operations in the Balkans, including Churchill and Smuts, saw this as a supplement to the "main moves" further west.[22] Naked opportunism and uncertainty continued to dominate. The sense of imminent success naturally raised hopes for action in an area well known to be sensitive to the enemy. Yet the limiting factors - the westward transfer of forces, the need for Turkish air bases, political confusion in the area, the unknown effects of an Italian collapse - were clear to all. It was, in fact, the Turks who first raised, as a serious point in strategic concerns, the most notorious of all "ulterior" factors - the fear that the tide of war would lead to a dominant Soviet position in eastern Europe. Clearly, this prospect now began to appear in British discussions; however, more weight was still placed on the dangers of a German response. On the one hand London resolved to seize any chance to revive active operations in this area of British strategic control.[23] On the

other hand, in late April the COS set firm parameters and priorities.

On 22 April, a discussion on plans for an attack on Italy turned into a broad discussion of the whole scope of FANFARE. Several vital assumptions emerged. The aim of any operations east of Italy would be to "foment revolt versus the Germans and add to their commitments in this area." Brooke insisted the Allies must focus on Italy, where there were uncertainties enough, and could not afford a major commitment to a Balkan bridgehead. It was felt the Germans might abandon Italy; but Brooke went no further than to support an attack on the "toe" and ordered close study of the ramifications of any subsequent move. The thread of continuity is too strong to ignore. Preparations were to be made to exploit a planned operation, but no new overall blueprint could yet be established. The only clear next step was a cautious probe into Italy, from which all else should be planned accordingly.[24] The main points of a new outline were unfolding, but the picture was incomplete.

There is some evidence that the JCS were aware of British thinking on how a vigorous FANFARE might well "stretch" German forces and make them more vulnerable. But as of April they disagreed, on the grounds the Germans could secure reserves by contracting their line in Russia.[25] This brought the dialogue back to its perennial and controversial alter ego, the preparation of a "Second Front." Two great offsetting influences on central decision makers must be noted. On the one hand, the delay in clearing Africa, the increased needs of HUSKY and the basic "wear down" assumption left many predisposed to see preparations for any sort of 1943 cross-Channel move as pointless. On the other hand, the American emphasis, the agreement to establish COSSAC, and the ultimate "wear down" assumption only boosted a trend towards substantial preparations for an eventual sortie. In order to execute the SYMBOL decisions, three related questions needed answers. How would current operations affect the BOLERO effort? What would the status of COSSAC be? And what would be his specific task? The first was answered by events; the British response was consistent with "wear down" but aggravated American suspicions. As early as 26 February, Mountbatten warned the COS of what they had surely always suspected: Eisenhower's increased demands for landing craft might rule out any 1943 U.K. based sortie. The

decision was clear and unanimous: nothing was to be done that would "pull our punch on HUSKY." Churchill quickly concurred:

> "...we must not throw away the substance of HUSKY for this shadow. BOLERO was always intended to be the residuary legatee."

The consequence of earlier American decisions in this one area were clear - given sombre views of relative combat power, the landing craft pool could sustain only one major campaign in 1943.[26]

This only aggravated the task of sorting out the role of COSSAC. That was not accomplished until late April. What appears as a petty squabble over power and place was seen by Whitehall as the prospect of interference with British plans and channels by the injection of a strong Combined Staff body with a vested interest in controlling the pivotal plan of the war. The COS made a determined effort to control COSSAC, in order to preserve existing channels and halt momentum behind an operation they regarded as contingent on current efforts. Under pressure from Marshall, a revealing compromise was suggested. Let COSSAC assume control of plans for 1944 in the name of the Supreme Commander, but leave plans for a 1943 "opportunity" as the charge of the Combined Commanders. This proposal was rejected, but another compromise - COSSAC to supervise all preparations under the guidance of the COS and the Commanding General, U.S. Forces ETO - was accepted on 13 April.[27]

The argument over specific plans helped focus the issues. Lt. Gen. Frederick Morgan, successful British nominee for COSSAC, found deep scepticism regarding any move in 1943. His first proposal tackled not only this issue but also the central point of "wear down" itself. Morgan outlined three scenarios: 1) a "reverse Dunkirk," after a German collapse; 2) an "opportunity" move to establish a bridgehead in 1943, which could become a fixed campaign; 3) a "ROUNDUP" move in 1944, against opposition at least as strong as then in place. Morgan favoured the latter, given the belated turn to the offensive syllabus and shortages of amphibious equipment. This was clearly in line with the prevailing vision of the "rolling seminar," given the redefinition of grand strategy in late 1942 and their interpretation of the SYMBOL accord. But two more explosive statements went far beyond the prevailing consensus. Morgan felt that henceforth all

Allied operations should be related to the objective of "the defeat of the German Army on land." He also insisted that the "ultimate issue" depended on the Allied strategic reserve - the **American** Army. Nothing could have been better calculated to upset the "rolling seminar." Here was a British general, in a key post, calling for a shift to the American policy of "decisive concentration" and noting that this would inevitably propel the Americans into the lead role.[28]

In response, the COS played two strong cards. First, the demands of HUSKY were underlined. Then, the unreadiness of Allied forces in the U.K. was painstakingly stressed. The best estimate was that only two (2) divisions could be ready for amphibious assault by September, and only five by April 1944. Given the shortage of landing craft, more could not be trained. The COS sincerely argued that even if HUSKY were scrapped, the expected strength of defences in France required more forces than could be prepared for any 1943 move. The Americans were suspicious, but bowed to the argument that even at Casablanca a 1943 move had been considered a slim chance and the inflation of HUSKY now ruled it out. COSSAC's directive was clarified on 23 April on terms that left the issue open. 1943 preparations were to focus on a comprehensive deception effort, to pin German forces and incite air attrition. An invasion was to be prepared for "as early as possible in 1944."[29]

Against this seeming reluctance to establish an operative COSSAC, there were clear indications that a corner had been turned in ongoing preparations for a grand strategic offensive. On 12 April, Portal forecast that for the first time most RAF commands at home and abroad would reach their target strength by June. That cleared the way for the resolution of old headaches. On 19 February, Portal declared his intention to tie in the ongoing resolution of ground-air co-operation with COSSAC's mandate. Brooke soon seconded this by setting limits to the airborne forces to be offered HUSKY "in view of Second Front requirements." On 29 April, Portal, acting on Leigh-Mallory's advice, proposed to abolish Army Co-Operation Command. It would be replaced on 1 June by the Tactical Air Force (TAF). This allowed Morgan to submit a positive report on the progress of British reorganization. However, one careful caveat listed by the COS laid a minefield for the future: the Expeditionary Force air

commander would control only those U.K. based forces, other than the TAF, that were allotted through channels.[30] Clearly, Whitehall was pressing preparations for the ultimate offensive, but with mixed feelings.

Morgan spurred action here as well, calling for the accelerated formation of the nuclei of Expeditionary Force ground and air commands, and the assumption of active control of operations by the latter as soon as possible. Portal and Grigg explained that their plans to project outward from existing structures were moving along. The Army planned to separate headquarters from routine tasks and start by preparing a six division Second Army for offensive action. A new note of sophistication was evident, underlined by the COS decision on 30 March that reports by the Combined Commanders on "basic factors" involved in invading France were now of "academic value," as specific plans were under review.[31] It may be argued fairly that April 1943 was pathetically late to be taking these concrete steps to prepare the forces that would take the offensive. But this was a function of the course of circumstances since 1940 and the perceptions that had so deeply entrenched "wear down" in the first place. What does it suggest about British motives? The belated but forceful revision of deception plans, now clearly front and centre for 1943, offers a clue. Brooke pressed for and received agreement to orchestrate a comprehensive effort to distract and wear down the Germans, but with no assault; if it led to an "opportunity" well and good.[32] Was this Whitehall's objective for 1943 all along? The answer seems to lie in the perpetual discourse of the "rolling seminar."

If the paper trail from the end of 1942 through April 1943 is systematically examined, it only really suggests one thing: British insiders were agreed "wear down" had to prevail into 1944, but disputed how precisely to proceed. Churchill raised his old favourite JUPITER, then went so far as to suggest the British do HUSKY alone if necessary. HUSKY's triumph helped focus the Prime Minister's thoughts. On 15 and 18 April the COS received two more sweeping visions of future strategy. Three points emerged. BOLERO should be continued, while COSSAC and the LCS pursued their respective tasks. The reorganization of U.K. forces should be pressed. The new Second Army should be held ready for any requirement from JUPITER to FANFARE, although publicly tied to SLEDGEHAMMER in order to deceive the Germans.[33] This was the

sort of proposal that aroused later cries of duplicity. Yet nowhere did Churchill suggest that a "Second Front" was off the agenda. His only focus was, as always, on inciting the maximum possible constant pressure on the enemy. His only posture remained opportunism. As Michael Howard pointed out, Churchill's enthusiastic adoption of FANFARE led him to be branded its author. This was a simplistic view of what remained a corporate effort. In fact, the "rolling seminar" had not yet decided what kind of "Second Front" to adopt. Their only consensus was that the next move should be the direct exploitation of HUSKY by attacking Italy, without yet being sure how and to what precise end, because it seemed feasible and would extend "wear down."[34] There was indeed no desire to attack France because "wear down" had not yet clearly succeeded.

Soviet pressure to change this decision was frank, intense and constant. Maisky connected the issue to questions of long term co-operation, in an interview Eden considered important enough to report formally to the DC(O). Maisky insisted that it was essential that Germany be overrun by two large fronts. This would lay the "best possible basis for future co-operation," whereas a mainly Soviet victory would be less safe all around. Stalin addressed similar statements to Churchill. No doubt they reflected the strain of further heavy fighting around Kharkov and the Soviets' own perceptions of relative weakness. The British response was consistent - Allied policy was to help the Soviets as quickly as possible, due to physical constraints the only feasible arena in 1943 was the Mediterranean, but results there would seriously stretch German forces. This did little to mollify either the Soviets or a smaller but still vocal domestic lobby, who still saw the "Second Front" as a test of faith.[35] The "rolling seminar" continued to appraise it more concretely. But all this did was increase Churchill's desire to escalate other campaigns. The strategic bombing campaign was the obvious choice, and it had a particularly clear link to the "Second Front" - both relied on the constant effort to determine German overall strength and intentions.

All indicators seemed to suggest the Allies needed to escalate the pressure but had not the ability to do so effectively. From early 1943 the intelligence authorities became more cautious in their estimates of German capabilities, but previous assumptions still seemed to condition their advice. The Allied Air Forces were now considered to be 30%

larger than enemy forces, perhaps twice as strong if the Red Air Force was included. Yet the Germans were able to undertake a wholesale reorganization of their aircraft industry and appreciably increase production. MEW and the JIC detected this shift but underestimated its scope, still distracted by their erroneous belief that the German war economy had no real margin to expand. Its increasingly obvious success at doing just that forced a more speculative tone into appreciations of morale and structural capability. The only point that could be made with certainty was that the Eastern Front was the overriding German concern. The only advice intelligence continued to offer was that if only the pressure was escalated and maintained, sooner or later the enemy would "crack."[36] It was also true that Bomber Command was in a better position to make the effort than ever before. In relative terms, it now at least received reasonable numbers of new technical aids, greater assistance from 8th Air Force, and adequate numbers of effective aircraft. By April it was agreed that only the Halifax and Lancaster, which now made up nearly half the force, could manage the stiffening defences at bearable cost. This had obvious implications for wider policy,* as Bomber Command launched a heavy "offensive" on the Ruhr. With the heavy bomber forces set, as a result of previous decisions, to more than double during the year,[37] hopes of unleashing a really massive pounding on Germany finally seemed within reach.

Another powerful impetus behind the bombing offensive emerged from an effort to determine whether, in the new situation created by Soviet success, the policy of paving the way for a "Second Front" by strategic bombing still made sense. In the process, a fundamental difference of opinion surfaced inside the "rolling seminar." The debate was launched by the Americans, who pressed their view that the Germans had the option of adopting a defensive posture in Russia and reverting to the offensive in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. The CIC never really reached a firm consensus,[38] because of an unexpected division inside Whitehall. On 19 February, the COS, for the first time, directed the JIC to study the possible effects of a German collapse on the Eastern Front and its wider repercussions. After initial uncertainty, the JIC came up with a sensational

* *See below, Chapter 10*

report on 12 March. It raised the issue of the "Second Front" forthrightly:

> "...largely as a result of efforts in Russia, the strength and quality of German divisions in France and the Low Countries has markedly declined..."

Only 12 good German divisions were still in northwest Europe. The JIC concluded:

> "At whatever cost to the West, the claims of the Eastern Front will always have first priority."

The muted "Whitehallese" cannot conceal the depth of the COS reaction: they "did not subscribe to all it contained," severely restricted circulation, and ordered a reappraisal. Stubbornly, the JIC reiterated that while the Germans might well abandon Italy and escalate Atlantic efforts, their main effort would be to regain the initiative in Russia.[39] The COS did not dispute the importance of the Eastern Front, but certainly objected to the idea that it might have opened a "window of opportunity" in France.

The reaction was led by Brooke. Under the pressure of a running and heated debate with the Soviets over the transfer of German forces from western Europe to Russia - which the British followed fairly consistently through Ultra - the CIGS felt obliged to reiterate what was now a mantra. It did not matter how many German divisions were in France. The issue was how many could be concentrated, if necessary. Brooke insisted that the Germans held a large central reserve, which offset the JIC contention about the importance of the Eastern Front. The JIC were forced to amend their report. The essence of the debate was German capabilities, not intentions. Brooke simply did not believe that the Soviets had brought about the "wear down" point, nor would they soon do so. Here again was evidence of the deep scars inflicted from 1940 on. Brooke's views were adopted, but the JIC remained unconvinced.[40] This was the first non-Churchillian crack inside the keep since March 1942. It also, again, left strategic bombing as the only means to aid and match Soviet efforts by direct pressure on Germany.

Inevitably, this intensified the prevailing arguments about the "sequence" vision of "wear down" and the nature of a truly "Combined" offensive. The Air Staff continued to insist that Bomber Command retain a favoured access to resources, as its efforts were to clear the way for the ultimate blow. Portal raised the language of 1942 by objecting to an increase in airborne forces on the grounds that if Bomber Command

did its job there might be no need for them.[41] This was still the familiar problem of "too few resources, too many tasks," but now new factors were coming into play. While the Air Staff argued that airpower would make an invasion possible, the American position was that it could make it a success by direct intervention before and during the battle. Churchill intervened to demand an enquiry into the claim that bombing could breach the Atlantic Wall. That issue petered out,[42] but detailed questions were now being asked about the "sequence" vision. The Air Staff fell back on the original imperative, the need to engineer and harness massive American participation in a truly Combined offensive. The objective could remain that sketched out at Casablanca: "the progressive destruction and dislocation" of German power and morale. The problem was to increase the American effort and harmonize strategy.

Interpretations of the Casablanca directive diverged from the start. The RAF took it as confirmation of the policy of "wearing down" overall German power and cohesion by "area" bombing. The Americans became more convinced of their ability to launch precision attacks and the value of doing so. One obstacle was removed when Portal finally convinced Churchill that the projected growth in 8th Air Force would make its day operations feasible and provide the essential boost to the whole campaign. But what precisely did a large 8th Air Force imply for "Combined" strategy? As always, Harris had an answer. On 9 April Harris backed up the efforts of 8th Air Force to increase its priority with a proposal that drew extreme conclusions from shaky evidence. Given the advent of H2S, the strain of the Eastern Front, and apparent success in "destabilizing" the Ruhr, Harris felt Bomber Command

> "can **wear down** the Germans and especially the Ruhr and the Rhineland pretty steadily at night and thus bring morale to the edge of a decisive break. But to ensure success, the presence of a strong USAAF prepared to operate by day from [the U.K.] is essential."[43]

This was clearly the latest in a long chain of ideas from 1941, capped by the assertion that this was the only feasible decisive blow of 1943. It underlined an axis of airmen which led by the end of April to a joint report to the JCS. This report was a bid for Marshall's support with a proposal to fill in the broad outlines sketched at Casablanca. The mission, noted several times, was to ensure Germany was "so

weakened as to permit initiation of final Combined operations on the Continent." This would be done in stages. First, the main threat, the German Air Force, would be broken. Then, 76 targets would be destroyed in the six priority systems -submarine facilities, aircraft plants, ball bearing and rubber plants, oil targets and motor transport plants. Success would "gravely impair and might paralyse the Western Axis war effort." The three prerequisites were adequate fighter escorts, a first line strength of 1746 B-17's in the U.K. by late 1943, and a truly co-ordinated campaign. Given previous momentum and prevailing ideas, JCS approval was easily obtained.[44] It remained to be seen whether the last prerequisite could be achieved; but this section of the SYMBOL outline was more centrally placed than ever.

There was a far more immediate problem which underlined the changing nature of Allied problems and the very essence of British problems. The "Battle of the Atlantic" was not settled. This, plus the exponential growth in demands on shipping capacity, meant the American war machine could not be unfettered. Worse, Whitehall remained unsure whether the Imperial war effort could be maintained at the necessary level. Firm plans to deal with these problems had been settled at Casablanca. But one took time to bear fruit, while the other was undone by an egregious error. Together, the submarine and shipping questions unravelled the SYMBOL accord and forced the Allies to review their plans.

The Atlantic battles of February through April 1943 saw the seeds of victory emerge through real peril. Yet they merit inclusion as one of the worst British disasters of the war. Why? Because the defeat of the worst enemy threat should have been a first priority long before Casablanca. The reader will be familiar with why it was not; it remains to account for how belated success was achieved and assess the grand strategic consequences. The ultimate paradox of the Atlantic campaign was that it reached the apparent point of maximum peril just as the combination of factors which led to success came together. This, at least, was the gain from the investments made from 1941 and jolted at Casablanca. Five developments combined to turn the tide: more auxiliary carriers, more escort and support groups, more VLR aircraft, more advanced equipment, and more effective intelligence. These were all the result of long sustained effort and

all were essential. But even at the time, responsible authorities were impressed by the impact of the closing of the "air gap" and the intervention of Liberators in the battle of convoys SC122 and HX229.[45] Airpower remained the most decisive and controversial factor.

The SYMBOL decisions ensured more air forces would be devoted to the Atlantic, but did not settle controversy over how. Indeed, it is fair to argue that the lengthy debate over the balance of air operations hampered all U.K. based efforts.[46] It took the spur of real catastrophe and the sharper voice of operational research to engineer a workable response. While Allied escort strength remained fairly static, U-Boat strength reached its peak - over 200 boats on patrol. It was now understood that timely relief depended on more aircraft more effectively used.[47] Debate revolved around four interlocked problems, all familiar and all requiring Allied solutions: command machinery, VLR aircraft for convoy escort, a proposed offensive in the Bay of Biscay, and heavy bomber attacks on land based targets. Staggering losses in February and March, including the climatic battle of convoys SC-122 and HX-229, brought matters to a head. The Canadians remained eager to help but, hampered by poor equipment and confused command machinery, at this point, RCN forces were virtually under British oversight. The solution lay in King's hands, and the conference he convened in Washington in March proved an important step forward. King resolved the issue of divided control by transferring all USN forces except one support group to the central route; a new Canadian command was established to control the northwest sector, as of 1 May. No solution was found to the issue of control of air forces, but an effort to resolve the problem was set in motion. Finally, King reduced confusion in American organization by creating the nominal 10th Fleet, directly under himself, to assume control of anti-submarine operations.[48]

The key issue, the provision of VLR Liberators to close the "air gap," epitomized the whole problem - finally settled, but after avoidable delay and difficulty. King, Portal, Harris, Cherwell and their respective supporters continued to aggravate the issue by protecting their preferred efforts and arguing about "defensive" commitments. It took the direct intervention of Roosevelt, and the completion of substantial research reports

by Dr. P.M.S. Blackett, to clear the way. Roosevelt ordered King to stop diverting Liberators to the Pacific. Blackett's report brought together in triumph the ideas that had been circulating for months about how to deal with the U-Boat threat. Pound and Portal used it to circulate a joint report on 10 March which made two main points. Allied resources would fall short in all critical aspects for the next six months. The best remedy, and most decisive move to check the U-Boats, would be constant effective air cover over the entire convoy route.[49] Over the next two terrible weeks, efforts in London and Washington to hammer a consistent clear policy out of a swirl of ideas were focused by one ominous fact - the Allies were still unable to close the "air gap," or even maintain a front line strength of 40 Liberators. Portal finally and belatedly signalled surrender:

> "[he was] so convinced of the correctness of the policy of attacking U-Boats around threatened convoys rather than in other areas, that, after consulting [Slessor] he recommended converting all 90 Liberators for VLR duties..."[50]

There were limits to Portal's conversion. He flatly refused to divert any aircraft from Bomber Command. Indeed, a concurrent debate had emerged over the relative merits of an "offensive" assault on the constricted U-Boat transit routes in the Bay of Biscay as opposed to "defensive" convoy escort. There was enough evidence to cast doubt on the value of the Lancaster in this role to enable Portal to shield Bomber Command. But the emergence of a belief that a technological lead had been gained, which would lead to great results if pressed in time, was used by Air Marshal Slessor, the eloquent new AOC-in-C of Coastal Command, to keep the concept alive. The decision, as always, was to ask the Americans for help, in the form of six squadrons or the equivalent aircraft. The same "buck pass" delayed the solution of the Liberator issue, as King and Portal each tried to saddle the other with the burden of meeting increased targets. Finally, Portal's decision to release his own Liberators, and a powerful CPS report on 29 March, tipped the CCS hand. The target was raised to 260 to be deployed by July. The USN was now to supply 60, as opposed to 15, the USAAF 75, and other steps were taken to press the effort. This, plus the reorganization of escort forces, machinery, and tactics, meant that April 1943 marked the point at which the

Allies at last "gripped" the anti-submarine campaign.[51] That is not a compliment, and no factor was more responsible than the issue of the role of airpower.

The only really unresolved issue was the most controversial, at least from a grand strategic perspective - the role of the heavy bombers. Underneath the technical wrangling, the issue was constant: was strategic bombing so central to "wear down" that any major shift in its strategy was still undesirable? Portal thought so, and tried to halt further raids on U-Boat bases on three grounds. If the aim now was to "seize the overall initiative" rather than "avert defeat," it made little sense to reinforce the "defensive." Portal now admitted that while Bomber Command could certainly devastate French housing it could not guarantee to hit the strengthened submarine pens. Finally, the Americans liked this sort of "precision" task. In other words, the RAF felt the job was pointless, could not do it anyway, and hoped to fob it off onto the Americans. Pound and Portal dug in their heels, which led to a full review. Pound gave Harris a target by asserting that recent raids on Lorient had prevented three U-Boat sorties. Harris took flight: 4,000 tons of bombs to save one merchant ship - the estimated result of the aborted sorties - was "appalling extravagance." It was also, of course, a comment on Bomber Command's efficiency! Portal was forced to confess this when he brushed off pleas from Harris to cite supportive intelligence reports by confessing, privately, that intelligence authorities were finding it difficult to estimate responsibly the **precise** impact of "area" bombing.[52] Both men ignored the profound question and pressed their case, to keep Bomber Command safe from becoming "the Admiralty's toy." The decision fell to Churchill, who, in an indecisive mood, opted to favour Coastal Command for the allocation of ASV radar sets but to leave raids on bases to 8th Air Force and mining sorties.[53]

What then had changed, in grand strategic terms? Had a substantial Allied effort simply at last paid dividends? Or had a major improvisation under pressure been more important? Were the Allies finally on the point of securing the most critical supply line of their global effort? Yes; but the price had been very high. The unwillingness of both Allies to make the Atlantic campaign a sustained first priority until 1943 - never for heavy bombers - delayed the grand strategic offensive at least a year. This alone was

enough to scuttle ROUNDUP. The COS would never have agreed to abandon "wear down" with the U.K.'s life-line still at stake. It is impossible to gauge how much sooner more sensible priorities would have brought success; but it is not difficult to assess the consequences for British policy. Until the Atlantic was secure, India had to be maintained on perilously narrow margins, and it required an immense effort to sustain the advance in the Mediterranean, a peripheral campaign for the enemy. One responsible estimate suggested that the Germans had forced the Allies to devote resources to countering the U-Boats at the lopsided ratio of six to one.[54] It was not entirely unreasonable for Whitehall to risk a total war beyond Imperial means; but it was surely reckless to allow British grand strategy to be threatened needlessly by failure to put first things first.

Other Atlantic related consequences underlined this point in a manner which reflected a continuing sense of relative weakness. One involved a neutral, the other an ally. The COS now decided that air bases in the Portuguese controlled Azores islands were needed to help close the "air gap." That raised the diplomatic problem of how to secure the aid of a nervous neutral who was also an ally of three centuries standing. But the COS were more concerned with the military issue, which involved balancing the Admiralty's estimate of the value of the bases against a possible need to help Portugal fend off a German reaction. After much debate the proposal went forward in early May after victory in Tunisia, which it was hoped would ease Lisbon's fears. Nevertheless, Brooke warned that any pledge to reinforce Portugal would rule out HUSKY.[55] Again, military weakness restricted diplomatic leverage at a critical time. A more explosive problem was the continued pressure on the Murmansk convoy run. On 15 March Pound urged that the convoys be suspended yet again, because of both a renewed German concentration in Norway and the desperate need for escort vessels. After the Admiralty refused to seek battle with the Home Fleet, Churchill accepted the request and loyally defended it to Stalin. The Admiralty was pleased to gain 27 escorts, but the ramifications were serious. Stalin was promised increased efforts to raise the flow on other routes, which accelerated the decline in Britain's share of a major Allied effort.[56] Churchill was now even less disposed to accept reduced efforts elsewhere. Finally, the

strain on Allied shipping capacity was hardly offset at all.

Paradoxically, one narrow item, shipping capacity, had the broadest of consequences. The reason was simple: unless the Allies strained their productive and organizational skills to the utmost, there would not be enough shipping to launch a grand strategic offensive. For the British, this was literally a life and death issue whose resolution was long overdue. It was supposed to have been resolved by the reduction of the loss rate and the Lyttleton-Roosevelt accord, written into the "audit" of resources approved at SYMBOL. However, that accord had not been understood in Washington. The problem was largely one of control and distribution. British moves had been made on the assumption that enough shipping would be available to carry 27 million tons of imports in 1943. Somerwell's misinterpretation of this pledge and his running feud with the WSA brought about a crisis. This again raised in London conflicting claims for import and overseas supplies. The crisis was aggravated by British suspicions that the American services were misusing ships in the Pacific and American suspicions that U.K. import claims were padded. Finally, irritation swelled all around as a central truth slowly dawned: the expansive outline agreed at SYMBOL was based on an incorrect appreciation of the shipping position.[57]

As early as 10 February Leathers warned that confusion in Washington threatened to hinder American assistance so much as to offset the recent drastic cuts in overseas sailings.[58] Over the next two months, Whitehall was forced yet again to rethink its whole policy as plans eroded one by one. ANAKIM went first, probably doomed by Churchill's cuts in sailings to India alone. The COS' efforts to reverse these cuts revived the argument over equipment scales and led Cabinet to reaffirm the standing policy that U.K. imports had priority. Not surprisingly, Wavell finally insisted on 8 April that the plan accepted at Casablanca was no longer feasible.[59] To make matters worse, both BOLERO and the Mediterranean campaign now also seemed at risk. The COS reviewed the position on 27 February and grimly agreed that it was unlikely the full SYMBOL outline could be carried out unless the import situation improved. Brooke noted the lag in BOLERO, blamed it on diversions to the Pacific, and suggested that as this would again leave the British the burden of carrying any "Second Front," agreement on

COSSAC should be delayed until the situation was reversed. Churchill was no help, insisting determination could make up for absent ships. In order to make clear to the COS the need to pare all claims, Leathers and Cherwell spelled out the position on 1 March. Due to the unexpected strain in north Africa, the feuding in Washington, and the fact that only 3 million of the Allies 25 million tons of shipping were carrying U.K. imports, the current flow was only at the rate of 14 million tons for the year. The COS acknowledged the problem and finally agreed that American resources could only be secured by pleading in Washington. This cleared the way for two positive decisions. The Americans were to be shown how Britain's ability to carry its share of the SYMBOL outline depended on receiving U.S. ships, and Leathers was to be kept in closer touch with COS' ideas as a "Combined" review proceeded.[60]

This new clarity led to a forceful report to Churchill on 7 March. The Prime Minister was advised that unless additional American assistance was received, the need to make up the import gap would make it impossible to meet the increased needs of all other efforts, including HUSKY. Churchill would not relent, and his position was surely vindicated by a LPC report that the import decline now threatened to force the broaching of basic stocks. Here was a desperate situation: the COS could not agree to further cuts in overseas claims, Ministers would not sacrifice imports, and the earlier plan to rely on the Americans had collapsed. The only possible move was already clear: send another high powered mission to Washington, to clear up the mess.[61] The misunderstanding of the Roosevelt pledge was aggravated by the JCS' belief that Douglas's support for U.K. import claims was aimed at loosening their control over shipping. London soon realized that BOLERO traffic had been reduced because the Americans assumed that the ships leant to the British would soon be returned to this task. Dill was directed to seek an explanation, on the grounds - be it noted - that this nullified the SYMBOL accord.[62] That brought the issue out into the open.

Dill's answer was a rude shock: the Somervell-Leathers report at Casablanca had been based on "false premises." Suspicions intensified all around. King aggravated London's by refusing to allow a CPS review to "hamstring his Pacific operation." The JCS were warned that the import lag threatened all future plans, but suspected that this

was a ploy to challenge their control. They agreed to allow the CPS review to proceed, but refused even to discuss the matter, in formal session, with the CSAB![63] The argument raged through March. On one side King challenged the accuracy and priority of U.K. import claims and the role of the CSAB. On the other side Dill lapsed into rare sarcasm, insisting that "the British were particularly interested in imports to keep production going." Marshall and Leahy helped restore some equilibrium by reminding the CCS of the policy of "Europe first" and establishing U.K. imports as a first charge. Dill spelled out an acceptable compromise on 19 March. To offset the mistake made at Casablanca, the CPS review would proceed. Meanwhile, an interim - and revealing - order of priorities would prevail - imports, HUSKY, SICKLE and the Pacific equally, ANAKIM and BOLERO, with all deficits to be evenly shared.[64]

Clearly, the shipping tail was wagging the grand strategic dog. Dill's efforts helped, but the real breakthrough was a decision by Roosevelt to direct Hopkins to review the whole problem. This was in response to appeals from Douglas and to the British decision to send Eden to Washington, to discuss this and other issues. These decisions stoked the JCS constant fear that civilians and the British would "get to Roosevelt" and undermine their authority and plans. That brought the issue to a peak in the atmosphere of a naked power struggle. London had the advantage of realizing what had happened: the optimism at Casablanca had been undone by Somervell's error and the inflation of HUSKY. Leathers welcomed the prospect of convincing the Americans the problem was on their side, assuring Churchill the British had "no cards up their sleeves." Naturally, the JCS disagreed. Somervell blamed British import claims, after it was realized that the real nature of the Roosevelt pledge would cut planned American overseas movements in half. Somervell stuck to his guns, advising that British demands be declared a threat to agreed plans. The JCS duly so advised. Salter warned London of all the machinations in Washington and the determination of the JCS to fight like trapped prey. Thus primed, Eden was sent over with a letter from Churchill to Roosevelt that the American Staffs later termed "the British bombshell."[65]

The letter, actually the result of a concerted Whitehall effort, deserved the title. Remorselessly, it demonstrated how the shipping position had unravelled. The problem was simple: while Allied fortunes were improving, the U.K.'s essential imports were declining. Since November the rate had been 1¼ million tons a month, compared to the pre-war high of five. Imports of food and raw materials had been cut by 50% and 60% respectively. No further cuts could be made without hurting war production. Stocks were down to 15 million tons, a level accepted by U.S. experts as a bare minimum. That level would now have to be breached, which put British programs in a "hand to mouth" situation. Unless imports were accepted as an overriding first charge, or at least made equal to other tasks, the British would **not** be able to meet any new commitments. This was a little overdone, but clearly the fiasco in Washington had upset British plans.[66] Whitehall could always make a powerful case when it could blame someone else. The bombshell, coupled with the JCS recalcitrance over U.K. imports, had the desired effect. Roosevelt ordered the JCS to ensure an adequate level of U.K. imports by the outright loan of American ships. This vague directive left open details of execution and gambled that improvements at sea and in organization would meet the imminent increase in overseas needs. But it also finally secured the minimum British position. Even though the offer implicitly abrogated the "pool" concept, the British wisely accepted the prevailing wind and settled on 7 April for a firm promise of ships over an uncertain battle for status. The point had been gained, but weakness exacted a price.[67]

That price went beyond a new reduction in British status. The atmosphere was now highly charged. Roosevelt agreed that "something must give," but the JCS were able to convince him it should not be ANAKIM. Roosevelt's command decision, and the JCS crude bribe of 20 ships, were fused into pressure to reappraise BOLERO and ANAKIM.[68] The COS warned Churchill the situation was too uncertain for such forward planning. This prompted Dill to warn them on 19 April that Roosevelt and the JCS saw the ship offer as a quid pro quo for "ANAKIM as planned," and frankness was essential. Dill was too late. The "rolling seminar" was in no mood for adventure. On 9 April it was decided to delay the resumption of full sailings to India until the shorter

Mediterranean route was reopened. To answer the expected outcry, Wavell, Somerville and Peirse were recalled for consultations; this matched a decision to recall Stilwell and Chennault, to settle the debate over the relative merits of air or ground operations.[69] The shipping crisis thus closed this circle of frustrations caused by its erosion of the SYMBOL accord, making another conference clearly essential.

The atmosphere was not very conducive for preparing another conference. London was very unsettled by the exposure of the facts that the Allied material position remained unbalanced while British influence over it was declining. Brooke for one was convinced that the shipping bottleneck limited the Allies to one strategic offensive theatre at a time; erroneously, he felt that the JCS wanted the Pacific to be that theatre.[70] The JCS attitude was worse. The clumsiness of their handling of the shipping debate was striking. Rather than making the arguable case that U.K. stock levels might be generous, they stood on the indefensible ground that U.K. imports were not an Allied priority. This was foolish. It breached the clear limits of interdependence, recognized by the American policy to exploit the U.K. war machine to the full. The Presidential override again left the JCS, as in November 1942 over the production issue, looking arbitrary and inefficient. A variety of factors were involved: loose liaison with Roosevelt, Somervell's empire building, divergent views on the JCS itself. The end result was the feeling that, just as at Casablanca, the British had "out organized" them and subverted American plans by lobbying the President. The JCS entered on another sweeping series of preparations for a conference in an angry and determined mood.

By April 1943 London and Washington agreed that a reappraisal of grand strategy was necessary, but for different reasons. The British, more confident as their ideas coalesced and their shipping problem improved, decided that another conference was needed not to change but to reaffirm Allied agreements. The Americans, sensing their growing share of Allied power, at first argued that while the Casablanca outline needed to be reviewed another full scale conference was not necessary. The decision to convene the full CCS emerged from several factors. For the first time, diplomatic issues with post-war connotations were being seriously discussed. Churchill tried to entice the JCS to London, to again influence their thinking. The Americans countered by inviting

Wavell, Somerville and Peirse to Washington for the same reason. Finally, an open dispute in the CCS and the approaching climax in Tunisia broke the deadlock. Roosevelt suggested a full conference in Washington, an offer accepted by Churchill with alacrity.[71] A trace of the preparations for this conference suggests that both sides sensed the approach of a crossroads in Allied grand strategy.

The link between diplomatic and military problems in national war policy was never cut and dried. Both were in constant play. The more relevant issue is that when the operational issue became a matter of time that brought forward, very unevenly, problems relating to the post-war order. The running discussions on the consequences of Lend-Lease and a post-war economic system, the fate of the colonial Empire, the reconstructed international order pledged in the Atlantic Charter - all these and more were discussed by Eden and Roosevelt in March. It seemed at least possible that such issues might soon affect basic strategic decisions. Already, neutral powers were being quietly warned of post-war consequences if they continued to undermine the blockade. London more and more came to see a strong France as an essential post-war factor. Unfortunately, as de Gaulle increased his control over politics in Algiers and resistance in France, American antipathy towards him increased.[72] Such issues aggravated the already complex task of maintaining consensus on overall coalition policy.

These diplomatic issues were, however, only beginning to assume some sort of shape; that was also the case regarding Soviet policy, the most urgent of all such problems. The chronic difficulty of working with the Soviets was now greatly aggravated by a rupture between Moscow and the Polish government-in-exile. On 13 April the Germans revealed the discovery of a mass grave of over 10,000 executed Polish officers in the Katyn forest, near Smolensk. The issue exploded into a full scale crisis, much to the British government's dismay. Even as the Allies tried to prevent disputes in the coalition, the perennial question "what exactly were Soviet intentions in eastern Europe" was becoming more urgent.[73] This helped concentrate attention on the review of grand strategy, but it is difficult to establish anything more than the sense of a looming shift in the diplomatic and strategic context, which became yet another factor in the swirl of ideas.

This had some positive effects on the effort to harness the miscellaneous initiatives controlled from the centre. SOE and SIS finally received categorical directives. Their plans were to be integrated completely with unfolding operations, in order of priority. They were to concentrate on Italy, the Balkans, France, central Europe, Norway and the Far East. PWE also received new instructions. It was to assist operations by pursuing "wars of nerves" aimed at Italian forces, German forces on the "Atlantic Wall" and Axis public opinion.[74] Now that more concrete conventional offensive plans were at hand, the abstract vision of these efforts that surfaced in 1940 could finally be abandoned altogether.

The area of most immediate interest remained the Mediterranean and, as the end approached in Tunisia, the scrutiny of FANFARE became intense. Having accepted the Mediterranean as the principal theatre of 1943, Churchill threw his great weight onto the scale. The eastern Mediterranean remained an area of "active concern."[75] But as the prospect of operations loomed, London came to realize two things: 1) more reliable information about which resistance forces in the Balkans were doing what was required before any policy could be settled; 2) the Turks, afraid now of Soviet intentions, were still resisting all efforts to entice them into the war. After lengthy study, Cairo made it clear that any operation north of Cyprus could only be risked if three things were available: Turkish air bases, adequate numbers of LCT and LST, and "a lavish proportion of air support, especially long range fighters."[76] The obstacles to any campaign in the region were in fact clear; it remained for the COS to establish precise conditions for any forward moves. The issue was raised on 4 May. Portal felt that if Turkey entered the war a major ground campaign in the Balkans, up to some 10 divisions, would be possible and desirable. Brooke emphatically disagreed; given American refusal to guarantee ships and landing craft beyond HUSKY, he felt that neither Ally would be able to muster the strength for a solo campaign in the Mediterranean. Worse, if the shipping position did not improve, the British might well be forced to wind down the Mediterranean campaign and revert to the buildup of forces for an assault on France in 1944.[77]

This was the first time Brooke ever suggested abandoning "wear down." This placed the issue in its proper broad context. In fact, Brooke grasped the very essence of the Allied position. Relative weakness at the "sharp end," and the intermingled war effort, had left Allied grand strategy **interdependent**. The Americans could not move alone anywhere but the Pacific; they could not win the war singlehandedly. The British could not move **anywhere** without American support in some form or another. There was only one place both might approve further immediate action, as a reasonable compromise. It also held the virtue of being an extension of an existing effort and a long desired British aim. The JPS were directed to review all options, but Brooke's new vision of a direct attack on Italy was clearly emerging. That meant de facto acceptance that any activity in the British "sphere" to the east would become contingent and supplementary. Unfortunately, Churchill had already fostered the impression in Washington that a consensus had developed in London to push for significant effort in the autumn, east of Italy.[78] This made the American attitude even more important than ever.

The American Official Historians saw the SYMBOL outline as a decision to reinforce current momentum and lay out broad parameters for an ultimate offensive, not as a firm, final blueprint. The "wear down" perspective confirms this thesis. The British assumed that their approach had been accepted at Casablanca and vindicated by subsequent events. The JCS, frustrated by continued uncertainty and a perceived dispersal of power, reached the opposite conclusion. In their view, the candid opportunism of British grand strategy concealed "ulterior" motives.[79] They mounted an unprecedented effort to put their own house in order, so as to challenge "wear down" with a strategically and logistically sound vision of "decisive concentration." This entailed three things: 1) reorganizing American methods, to avoid another "administrative defeat"; 2) defining a plan for further action in the Mediterranean which would maintain the pressure but not lead to a limitless commitment; 3) defining a new vision of a concentrated offensive more in line with the changes in circumstances since mid-1942.

Driven by the belief that superior British organization prevented American plans from prevailing at conferences - Marshall even discussed this with a Senate Sub-Committee[80] - the JCS finally streamlined their administrative organization and procedures. They also acted on another lesson ingested at Casablanca: the need to reach a prior consensus between themselves and to secure Presidential support. It was decided to study possible British views and to place "the U.S. point of view in regard to global military strategy" atop the conference agenda. By late April American preparations were decidedly more professional than for previous conferences. Ten plans, starting with "Global Estimate of the Situation in 1943 and 1944," were fully reviewed. A very healthy respect for British preparedness and ability to press a consensus point was expressly noted. Nevertheless, it was decided to take the offensive. A comprehensive outline was accepted on 8 May as the agreed American position.[81] This position was heavily influenced by perceptions of British motives; these perceptions must therefore be assessed.

The months of frustration had led to a broad consensus in the JCS machinery: the British, for "ulterior" motives, would insist on an escalation in the Mediterranean which would "further dilute the basic concept." This was most clearly expressed in a long Joint Strategic Survey Committee (JSSC) report on 3 May. This advisory body grasped the effects of finite manpower resources and the strategic challenges of a cross-Channel foray on British thinking. It even admitted that it was "difficult to assess" the relative weight of the military feasibility of "decisive operations" and the desire to improve post-war political positions in British thinking. Yet the JSSC had no trouble in arguing that American policy focused clearly and squarely on military factors and the need for early decisive progress. They forecast British opposition to ROUNDUP based mainly on the desire to improve post-war Imperial positions. This expressed broadly held views in Washington and helped to shape a slowly evolving American position. The JCS were, in fact, well aware of and moved by "political" factors. These soon began to include the Soviets, but right now the main concern was the British. The final American position was based on containing pressure for Mediterranean escalation, on the grounds that it was a policy based on "ulterior" motives which would delay final victory.[82]

London soon became aware of American suspicions. Now that it was clear that all future Allied plans would depend on a large and flexible pool of landing craft, the British pressed the Americans to reverse the decisions of 1942 to cut production and tie allocations to approved imminent operations. King refused, on the grounds that British obstruction had already caused a dispersal of American forces and this could not continue. Whether logistic uncertainty confused grand strategy or vice-versa, it now seemed clear that the convergence of basic approach that emerged at Casablanca would be physically unavoidable. CCS support would now be necessary for all future plans, in the British case especially. In this vein, Dill warned London in April that the JCS were becoming dubious of any plan "which did not directly affect U.S. forces and interests."[83] This meant the Mediterranean. The JCS confirmed this by forwarding a "clarification" of the SYMBOL outline, based on the perceived relative merits of making the "main effort" across the Channel or in the Mediterranean. Hard words were exchanged in the CCS on 23 April. Churchill sensed danger and took steps to contain British complaints about American behaviour. Nevertheless, the COS countered that the American paper amounted to a plan to jettison the SYMBOL outline. The points at issue epitomized the ongoing debate about fundamental grand strategic approach. On the surface the issue was again the balance of effort between Europe and the Pacific and within Europe. But again the deeper issue was the clash between "wear down" and "decisive concentration," deliberately reopened by loosely worded clauses regarding control of the allocations of major equipment.[84]

The issue dominated the CCS meeting on 30 April. Noble made it clear the British would stand by the SYMBOL outline. Marshall insisted the American paper remain on record, but agreed to include British comments. Beneath the rhetoric, the realization that the Allied war effort remained interdependent was having an effect. This may well have persuaded the JCS to accept a conference.[85] Dill urged London to approach the conference with an open mind. The author of the American paper urged the JCS to avoid a clear break between British and American grand strategic approaches.[86] The result was that each side prepared for a tense conference well aware of the ultimate imperative: to restore grand strategic consensus and carry on an

integrated war effort. This of course had been the very basis of the alliance and it remained so: neither war effort could be effective without the other, and a co-ordinated effort gave the Allies a major advantage over their enemies. This continued to set a limit to Allied bickering. Nevertheless, Churchill and the COS set off for Washington realizing that the shift in American attitudes would make the jockeying for position more intense than ever.

On 5 May the British delegation left for Washington on board the **Queen Mary**, accompanied by 5,000 prisoners of war. This would be the sixth CCS conference, the third in Washington. Unlike its predecessors, this meeting met in an atmosphere of success. The conference opened just as 18th Army Group delivered a final power drive which at last cleared Tunisia. Axis forces fought hard, but overwhelming Allied power brought about their total destruction, including the capture of over 230,000 prisoners (more than 100,00 Germans). For the British this was sweet and timely revenge. The long awaited reopening of the more efficient Mediterranean passage was at last possible; the first convoy since spring 1941 passed through in late May. It was very useful for Allied armies led by 11 Imperial divisions to have won a major campaign as a conference began. Even better, the efforts invested in the Atlantic anti-submarine campaign finally turned the tide. Although final victory was clearly not at hand, the initiative seemed firmly in Allied hands. This was enough for Churchill to note, near the end of the aptly named TRIDENT conference, the "presence of a new fact."[87] All this promised early relief in the shipping position. The time seemed ripe to define concrete visions of a grand strategic offensive. But there were other factors involved.

The consequences of previous decisions continued to set limits to Allied options. Again, these victories had been expensive and belated. German performance only reinforced healthy British respect for German combat power. The result of this blend of success and caution was to confuse the CCS debates on both a fundamental approach and the balance between campaigns. The ebb and flow of the conference can best be traced in four parts. First, the British were as always able to restore a consensus en route. The CCS locked horns over the pivotal issue of future operations in Europe, which raised the

fundamental clash. This was resolved with difficulty by an important compromise. Finally, the other major issues discussed must be assessed. It will be argued that the central fact was the emergence, in paradoxical fashion, of a developing break in Allied grand strategy.

The consensus which the "rolling seminar" sought in mid-Atlantic was, as noted, already largely in place. The COS were able to agree quickly on several points. The SYMBOL outline should be defended. As ships and landing craft seemed likely to be the limiting factors, grand strategy would be settled first; only then should the attempt to relate resources to plans be made. Hopefully, this would secure American controlled resources for agreed plans. Any required transfers should come from BOLERO or the Pacific.[88] Only two questions seemed open: the exact nature of prospective campaigns in the Mediterranean and from India. Regarding the war against Japan, the issues were whether ANAKIM still had any grand strategic value and whether Churchill would agree to revive earlier more modest plans for the 1943-1944 season. The COS agreement that no commitment be made which would need resources required elsewhere helped focus the issue. But to harness Churchill, the COS again resorted to dangerous tactics. The Prime Minister was advised that while it seemed desirable eventually to bypass Burma, for now the best policy appeared to be limited ground operations plus a major effort to increase the aerial flow of supplies to China. This could be fit into proper context by calling for the study of the whole basis of grand strategy against Japan. Churchill agreed, but only on condition that strenuous efforts be made in 1943 and a major blow prepared for 1944.[89]

The Mediterranean question was also nearly resolved. It was agreed the main effort should be to "knock out" Italy and exploit whatever German reaction ensued. The question was how and where to launch this main effort. Portal pressed the idea of a major move east of Italy, arguing this would provoke a fiercer German reaction. Brooke stood firm - the Germans would not give up Greece; the Turks would not intervene; the idea was to aid the Soviets and improve Allied prospects, but the Allies had only enough forces for one large stroke in 1943; therefore, the best move would be to attack Italy. This would put already strong Allied forces in a position to exploit poor enemy lines of

communication, and would also force the Germans to replace Italian garrisons in the Balkans and the Aegean or lose the positions. The JPS now agreed, convinced by the multiple uncertainties of attacking even Italy alone. Options ranged from aerial pressure alone to a full scale ground advance as far north as Pisa. The only conclusion on this point was to discuss it with the Americans.[90]

This consensus was placed before Churchill bound together by the most fundamental point. It would be necessary to convince the Americans that in order to launch a "Second Front" in 1944, the Germans would have to be worn down in 1943, and the only feasible means were strategic bombing plus the exploitation of HUSKY. This concept of linkage had been developing for months; arguably, it was a **general principle** of "wear down" from June 1941. But this was the first articulation of "wear down" in its final mature phase. Churchill accepted it; "wear down" now had at last a blueprint for grand strategic offensive - clear the way for the ultimate attack by the dual thrusts in 1943 - as well as a justification - keep the pressure on, to relieve the Soviets and reduce potential opposition to cross-Channel attack. The concept had its weak points, as the conference would reveal. Manpower limits were already a concern.* The actual effects of bombing Germany and invading Italy remained uncertain. Dill specifically warned that the Americans would raise the latter point.[91] However, it seemed that yet again the spur of necessity and the bond of a common ground of prevailing basic assumptions had allowed the British to reshape "wear down" as a grand strategic approach adapted to new circumstances. This time the consensus only barely held and proved only barely adequate.

The TRIDENT conference ran from 12 to 25 May. There were six full plenary sessions, the CCS met almost daily, and the various Staffs were at full stretch. Both sides expected the sharp exchange of views which ensued. It took three full days just to establish the full dimensions of the central issue; it again became clear that the fundamental clash was over grand strategic approach. Time and experience were used by both sides to substantiate their arguments over the likely pitfalls of each other's position. But below the surface, lopsided but clearly converging pressures had an effect.

** See below, Chapter 10*

Churchill delivered the consensus British position in inimitable fashion on 12 May. The SYMBOL accord stood, but it was now possible to define the next step. The issues under debate were merely ones of "emphasis and priority." It was time to ponder the outline of an overall offensive against Japan. But the vital questions were in Europe. The central fact was the Soviet war effort, which put the Allies in a debt "from which he would like to emerge." The basic policy should be the maximum possible continuous effort to stretch the Germans and relieve the Soviets. Unfortunately, while the largest forces would be assembled in the U.K., the only realistic place from which to launch a major effort this year was in the Mediterranean. A lull was unacceptable. The best case would be to "knock out" Italy, because the repercussions would directly assist any "Second Front."[92] That summed up the British case, which it was hoped would dominate the conference.

The Americans had other ideas. The next day, Leahy outlined their well prepared brief. All issues had to be related to an agreed "Overall Strategy of the War." The cardinal issue was how to defeat Germany as quickly as possible. The best way was to seek a decisive clash in the field by an all out assault on the Continent. All other campaigns should be related to this. The main issue was joined, and it took little time to reach, in Marshall's words "the heart of the problem." The British felt that Allied plans should be based on realistic estimates of relative combat power. As always, they argued that the Red Army was and would remain the only Allied force large enough to engage the bulk of the German Army. Therefore, a return to the Continent could not seek a decisive clash on land. It must instead be planned as a strong knockout punch delivered to an already reeling enemy. That could only be done by creating the conditions required to allow a safe return to the Continent. Without the 80 odd French divisions lost in 1940, the only way was to augment Soviet efforts by escalating strategic bombing and exploiting HUSKY on favourable terms. This would both stretch and "wear down" German power, ensuring that they would not be able to concentrate massive forces to oppose a "Second Front." The Americans were deeply sceptical on three grounds: 1) any assault on Italy could become a major commitment, and delay the ultimate campaign; 2) that campaign could be secured by the efforts of what would be

irresistible Allied airpower; 3) finally, any deviation from seeking a decisive clash in the field would prolong the war, which was unacceptable. Clearly, the British were still fundamentally moved by perceived relative weakness, whereas the Americans now more than ever sensed relative and absolute strength.[93]

That evening, the COS drafted a paper to meet American suspicions that the British hoped never to launch a cross-Channel attack. The paper summed up in one paragraph the strengths of the prevailing assumption of relative weakness and three hard years' experience:

> "It is our intention to carry out ROUNDUP at the first moment that conditions are such that the operation will contribute decisively to the defeat of Germany. These conditions may arise this year, but in any case it is our firm belief that they will arise next year. They can be created only by the Russian Army. Our action, therefore, must consist of a) continuing and increasing bombing b) drawing off maximum forces from the Eastern Front."

The Americans were indeed suspicious, as the next day revealed when they privately termed the British plan "aimless" and decided to demand the British explain "how they expect to win the war."[94] The sense of relative weakness no longer influenced American thinking. For the next two days, this basic argument simply filled out.

The COS insisted a "Second Front" could only be "a small part of Continental operations." The American response was blunt. TORCH had been intended as a stop-gap. Instead, it took six months and dislocated global plans. Unless the British could prove escalation in the Mediterranean was the best way to win the war:

> "The strength of the forces to be employed in the Mediterranean will be so limited as not to prejudice the success of a 1944 ["Second Front"] U.S. ground and naval forces will [not be used east of Italy]."

Just to make sure, "simultaneous unremitting pressure "would be exerted against the Japanese, to retain the hard-won initiative. The argument now became abusive. Brooke challenged the Americans to demonstrate how ROUNDUP could succeed, so the CCS could "consider global strategy in terms of concrete facts." Marshall argued that unless the Allies decided to take charge of events their full power could never be concentrated. This was an impasse. There was only one solution. The Americans would sketch out the prospects of limited post-HUSKY efforts and a full scale focus on ROUNDUP. The

British would do likewise for a determined effort to "knock out" Italy. Both would assume an escalated bombing offensive.[95] The first round was over.

These debates were certainly heated, but it must never be assumed that the Allies lost sight of the fact that they needed to work together. Also, this was not January 1942. The British were not shying away from a grand strategic offensive, they were merely insisting that its prerequisite - the success of "wear down" - be reaffirmed. The Americans were not suggesting that momentum and previous decisions could be set aside and everything focused on ROUNDUP after HUSKY. There was room for consensus, if the gap on fundamental approach could be bridged. However, this remained a serious problem. One preliminary clash ensued over the definition of "Agreed Essentials." Soon it became nasty. Leahy warned that if an "unfortunate" situation again arose in the Pacific, as at Guadalcanal, the U.S. would respond **regardless** of CCS agreements. Brooke responded in kind: the dispersal of Allied forces and the shipping strain enabled only one major offensive thrust at a time, and "Europe first" was still coalition policy. The issue was left open,[96] but the messages were clear. The Americans were more ready to exercise their material leverage to press their policy; the British were prepared to gamble that interdependence would continue to preserve theirs.

The CCS now turned to specifics, as the respective papers were presented on successive days. They were as sincere as could be expected of any foray into meteorology by an interested party holding preconceived notions. Neither was well received, but both contained a germ of motion. The British paper, CCS 234, presented on 18 May, applied the full force of "wear down" scepticism to a predominant BOLERO/ROUNDUP. The critical issue would be relative reinforcement. The Allies best effort would to muster 25 divisions, 125 days after invasion (D+125), to face, as a worst case, up to 35 German divisions. This did not rule out invading France; indeed, "this final blow can only be struck across the Channel." But the operative word was **final.** The best solution was to even up the odds by "knocking out" Italy with the forces already at hand. If this were not done, it would only free three plus divisions for ROUNDUP, given shipping and other constraints. If it were, the Germans would be stretched and France could be safely invaded in spring 1944. Marshall pointedly doubted

the argument that the great effects of toppling Italy could be gained without opening up a limitless commitment.[97] However, he did not miss the decisive point: the British signalled their willingness to accept the current strength in the Mediterranean as adequate and to tie their outline to a specific commitment to ROUNDUP in spring 1944.

This signal coincided with the JCS decision to accept the logic of the situation created by previous events and decisions. This was a moment for leadership, and Marshall responded. While King and Leahy sought confrontation, Marshall demanded unity, resolve and an effort to secure:

"something more than SLEDGEHAMMER and less than ROUNDUP."

Brooke felt the essence of his case, the interdependence of European theatres and the risk of premature concentration, was not understood. He was wrong. On 19 May Marshall told his colleagues "some opinions" [surely Dill] felt the issue was not irreconcilable and the COS were serious about a 1944 ROUNDUP. In fact Marshall understood Brooke:

> "...in the past the British had stated that SLEDGEHAMMER would not be mounted until there was a decided deterioration of Germany [sic]. Now it is their proposal to produce a German deterioration."

That had in fact **always** been the British position, but now it could be highlighted by a **concrete** outline for its execution. This helped the JCS adjust to the fact that it was no longer possible to muster the 48 division initial force envisaged in 1942. Now they agreed to settle for a more incremental outline, staring with a smaller assault temporarily labelled ROUNDHAMMER. The outlines of a transition and a bargain were taking shape, especially as the COS, in their own councils, now agreed to accept a definite June 1944 date for ROUNDUP.[98]

Both sides held out for a hard bargain. The American counter-proposal, tabled later that day, concealed their evolving attitude. The U.K. was an "unparalleled base" which would allow the concentration and projection of greater force than could be managed anywhere else. In order to ensure this concentration ensued, the only exploitation of HUSKY should be from the air. Brooke challenged the paper for ignoring what the British expected to be the consequences of the collapse of Italy on the one hand or months of lull on the other. Then he made a small move. If ROUNDUP

could be moved back from April to May, or even June, it could be synchronized with a likely Soviet offensive and meanwhile Mediterranean operations could have some effect. Marshall accepted a date of 1 May but charged the British with calculated over-optimism regarding Italian based operations and calculated pessimism regarding ROUNDUP. This raised tempers to dangerous heights. Driven by the need to reach agreement, Marshall called for all but the principals to leave the room. Off the record and away from their subordinates, the CCS, "after a full discussion," reached a compromise.[99]

The issue is apparent, even without the final record. This was more than a debate over projected deployments of forces. This was a question of good faith and a sincere difference of opinion over Allied latitude. The British still felt that it was militarily essential to pursue an opportunistic approach. But Allied success, American pressure and their own basic vision led them to accept again a scheduled shift from "wear down" as Allied policy. For their part, the Americans accepted the need to allow, within limits, the extension of existing efforts, in order to ease the decisive campaign and maintain coalition accord. The final deal incorporated American reservations on the Mediterranean and British reservations on the "Second Front." BOLERO was to be resumed. This time the object would be to launch an attack on France, not now to seek decisive battle at once but to "secure a lodgement on the Continent from which further operations can be carried out." Initial forces would now total 29 divisions, nine in the assault wave. Eisenhower would be directed to exploit HUSKY by "such operations as are best calculated to eliminate Italy from the war and contain maximum German forces." He could use all forces then available, with two conditions: 1) each specific operation was subject to CCS approval; 2) from 1 November four American and three British divisions were to be prepared for transfer to the U.K., to bolster the 1944 offensive. Finally, this accord was to be reviewed at another conference in July or August, in light of the prevailing situation.[100]

For the first time since July 1942, a specific "Second Front" was the formal focus of Allied grand strategy. Churchill and Roosevelt welcomed the breakthrough later that day. Churchill, with reason, noted he had only accepted the delay of the "Second Front"

for reasons beyond his control. Brooke also welcomed the accord as a success.[101] The accord can be seen as a barometer of changing perceptions of Allied prospects, and in this case it did reflect the continued influence of British assumptions. But there were other issues at stake, interlocked with this central problem. It will be necessary to pursue them before the conference itself can be assessed.

The questions of future operations in the India-Burma area and an overall offensive outline against Japan took up nearly as much time as the main issue. This frustrated the COS but reflected their importance in American thinking. The only new factor in the India-Burma debate was the controversy between air and ground lobbies. The COS used a series of detours to press their main aim, in the process almost outsmarting themselves. ANAKIM and the idea of bypassing Burma were successfully raised and then rejected on the familiar grounds of logistic disarray and inadequate forces. That let the COS press the suggestion to increase greatly the flow of airborne supplies and air forces to China as the safest positive move for 1943. This put the burden of effort on the Americans and attracted easy support from the air lobby. It also promised to contain all efforts while Germany remained in the war. That was now even more important a factor because growing doubts about the loyalty and quality of the Indian Army had forced Whitehall to reduce its planned ceiling from 20 to 17 divisions. Unfortunately, Stilwell was able to persuade Roosevelt that ground operations remained essential in order to secure firmly the routes to China.[102] The COS were able to sidestep yet again, but at a price. They revived the proposal of limited ground attacks, with a coastal amphibious assault, and added further LRPG operations. The CCS accepted this as the policy for 1943-1944, on the conditions that the flow of supplies by air reached 10,000 tons per month by the autumn and that the aim of ground operations be to reopen the Burma Road.[103] This preserved British plans, but cemented the success of the air lobby and set specific objectives.

Concurrently, the Americans tabled their first fairly complete vision of a grand strategic offensive against Japan. In general terms, American forces in the Pacific were to isolate Japan from its overseas assets, Allied forces would secure China and establish a massive bomber force, and Japan would then be "worn down" and invaded, if

necessary. The goal for 1943-1944 was to open the way to China by securing the central and southwest Pacific and Burma. The Staffs disagreed as to Japanese capabilities. The Americans felt Japan could still take the offensive, especially in China, while the British disagreed. Nevertheless, the COS accepted this outline in order to block Churchill's complaint that it rejected a bypass of Burma. Mainly on a lowest common denominator basis, it was agreed to proceed with the study along these lines and to pretend to the Chinese that this was tangible progress.[104] That left the British formally bound to the policy that the main aim of operations in Burma was to relieve China. This was a price the COS accepted in order to limit those operations.

The question of the Combined bombing offensive was also resolved by an accord which meant different things to each partner. The Eaker plan was accepted after perfunctory debate. The only real issue was the American claim that airpower could make the invasion of France a success. The British agreed in theory but, ironically, stressed that the German air defences must be crushed first. Churchill inadvertently exposed the difference of emphasis by welcoming the agreement as at last pledging the very large American forces seen as essential to British plans. Indeed, estimates now called for a total of 80 squadrons, some 1,600 heavy bombers, in Bomber Command, to be joined by 51 groups of 2,448 heavy bombers in 8th Air Force; the reader will recognize the significance of a first line force of 4,000 heavy bombers. This force was to be in place by May 1944, having accomplished the Casablanca directive.[105] That was assuming Eaker's reinforcements actually arrived. It was also unclear whether Harris would, in fact, agree that the growing strength of the German defences, the spark of the plan, called for a change in strategy. The directive was left to the airmen to settle. It would soon become clear that the British wanted the American aircraft more than their plan.

The discussions on Atlantic problems reflected the fact that here the grand strategic questions were largely settled. Desultory discussions on command arrangements and the full execution of standing policies led to a painless compromise, eased by the emollient of success. The "Biscay offensive" would be pursued, the full deployment of escort and air forces would be maintained, and an advisory body would be established

to monitor the anti-submarine campaign.[106] This theatre seemed in a condition ripe for delegation to the responsible commanders. One major exception was the COS call for securing bases in the Azores, operation LIFEBELT. Whitehall was divided over whether or not the bases should be seized. The CCS supported Churchill and the COS and LIFEBELT was duly set in early motion. But Cabinet continued to insist that negotiations be pursued, and the conference left the issue open.[107] Churchill's reflex desire for action was an obvious and powerful factor, but a more profound issue was in fact at stake. Were the Allies approaching the point where caution need only influence, rather than govern, their strategic choices?

The same issue emerged in more extreme form regarding relations with the French. As the tussle for power and authority between de Gaulle and Giraud reached its climax, Roosevelt's patience waned. Churchill felt obliged to direct the COS to consider the consequences of a breach with de Gaulle. The VCOS noted that French controlled areas were valuable lines of communication and France itself was becoming the prime focus of operations. Therefore, such a breach would be militarily expensive. Cabinet added that it would be politically undesirable, both because de Gaulle's stature in France was rising and because any breach would be seen as an American diktat. This balanced Churchill's desire to keep in step with Roosevelt, and it was decided to await the outcome of French consultations in Algiers.[108] Here again, the perceived latitude of choices remained fairly restricted.

The most concrete answer to this question of latitude was felt to be in the obvious place. Would projected resources now be assessed as sufficient to execute the new outline? Maritime equipments were the most important uncertain factors, therefore they commanded the bulk of the attention. Success was less than complete, due partly to unavoidable uncertainty but also to continued American indecision. This was not evident at the very top. Marshall and Roosevelt expressly overruled continued complaints about U.K. imports. After the conference, Roosevelt formally accepted the British position that earlier Allied decisions left them entitled to guaranteed American assistance. His policy was spelled out as the outright transfer over the next ten months of 150 to 200 ships, for the duration.[109] That settled one issue. Marathon and better organized consultations,

which now included the WSA, settled another. A paper estimate of shipping forecast a position Somervell declared "manageable." The CCS were assured that if the loss rate continued to fall the result would be a slight deficit, equal to one month's forecast BOLERO traffic, through 1943. This could easily be spread, and a surplus might well develop in 1944. On this basis, with some adjustments, all the forces required for projected operations could be made available. These results were received with great satisfaction. Unfortunately they remained a synthesis of separate estimates, rather than a fully Combined review.[110]

The uncertain aspects of the landing craft situation were more apparent. It was agreed that adequate numbers of all types could only be made available if American production and allocations to the U.K. increased as planned, and if Mediterranean based craft actually returned to the U.K. for 1944. It also was agreed that the existing targets for ROUNDUP would have to be reviewed. The answers could only be speculative at this point. It was now estimated the larger "ROUNDHAMMER" amphibious assault would require 143 LST and 531 LCT. At that moment, one and 172 respectively were available in the U.K. All depended on allocations from new production, returns from the Mediterranean, and the final targets.[111] In this aspect at least, this latest Allied "audit" was another charter of faith resting on a lot of uncertain variables.

What then had been settled by the conference? Did the decisions reflect a shift in Allied perceptions? The first point to note is that TRIDENT was, like its predecessors, mainly a council of war. Broader diplomatic issues were indeed discussed. Churchill took pains to float his developing ideas about post-war order to highly placed Americans. His central concern was fostering the "special relationship," which seemed bolstered by success in persuading Roosevelt to reaffirm the general policy that the nuclear weapon program should remain a shared effort.[112] But the conduct of the war remained the central issue. Broader issues were seen through the perspective of their place in Allied grand strategy. In this light, there was a sense among the British that a moment of transition was approaching and it must not be mishandled. This led to trouble.

A comparison of initial expectations and final results justifies Brooke's satisfaction to some extent. The shipping question seemed resolved. BOLERO was back in place. The COS could not stop further escalation in the Pacific; but they did secure a voice in the study of an ultimate offensive against Japan and a vaguely worded right to have the CCS review the impact of any escalation on the "overall objective." That reflected the key issue, the debate over fundamental grand strategic approach. The implications were present in every issue. It was implicitly clear that the Americans, and Churchill, had accepted the erosion of plans regarding the India-Burma area for the last time. Churchill moved the proposal to reorganize the command machinery to the top of the Whitehall agenda. He also pointedly commented on the commitment to increase the aerial flow of supplies and the concept of bypassing Burma altogether.[113] At least these were problems for the near future. The Prime Minister's reaction to the decision on Mediterranean operations nearly undid the conference itself.

The Americans' attitude towards further ground operations after HUSKY resulted in an accord which, in practice, left the final decision to Eisenhower. The American aversion to operations east of Italy did not really trouble the COS. They loyally rallied to Brooke's panacea of "knocking out" Italy, confident that the momentum of Allied operations would bring it about. Plans for operations to the east could be explored, but the Allies would have to focus their limited forces on one main thrust. Churchill did not agree. His broader perspective, and natural disposition to favour bold and far reaching plans, was galvanized by success in Tunisia and the prospect of an opportunity to challenge the whole southern flank of the Axis. Encouraged by wandering references to the Aegean from Roosevelt, Churchill set off a bombshell at the plenary session on 24 May:

> "the prime factor which should be kept in mind was the position in the Balkans, where 34 Axis divisions were held in play by rebels, who would become much more active if we could gain touch with them through Durazzo, or any other suitable point. Of course, if Italy went out of the war, then the Italian divisions would have to withdraw, and Germany would either have to fill the gap or retire to the Danube. The effect on Turkey would be very important..."

Brooke did not dispute any of this in principle. Even the CCS had accepted a possible

bridgehead to funnel supplies to the Balkan resistance, if the situation allowed.[114] But Brooke was furious with Churchill for voicing the very points the COS had set aside to win "approval" for the attack on Italy. It seems likely that the off the record deal made on 19 May was that in return for a veto on serious amphibious operations east of Italy, an attack on that country could be favourably considered. Churchill's move was clumsy, for above all else the Americans suspected that in order to protect their own interests, and prevent full concentration of American forces in a pivotal campaign, the British wanted to set off a campaign which would suck in and further disperse those forces.[115]

Were these suspicions justified? The answer is not straightforward. By now the British were fairly confident the Germans would be unable to regain the initiative on the Eastern Front.[116] That gave planners a certain latitude not hitherto accepted. Also, operations in the eastern Mediterranean remained under active review. Immediate and long term political aspects regarding the Balkans were now - only now - a constant factor in strategic deliberations. The JIC were convinced that the Germans' worst fear was an Allied attack on the Balkans. Cairo bombarded the "rolling seminar" with plans for "a large scale land offensive" to exploit conquests in the Aegean "in the more remote future," and also to "strengthen our hand in reaching final settlement on Eastern European problems with the Russians." However, Cairo and the COS agreed before and during TRIDENT that all plans should be based on the assumption that Italy would be attacked, and any move further east would depend on the consequences and be designed to exploit them. The program submitted to the CCS mentioned only a bridgehead at Durazzo and saw it as a direct offshoot of an attack on Italy. Indeed, it was generally agreed that no move would be made east of Italy unless the effects of the "knock out" lived up to expectations.[117]

What does this demonstrate? The unremarkable fact that the post-war Soviet position in Europe had become one of the many problems considered in the formulation of British grand strategy. This is not a sinister development given that Britain had been concerned about a balance of power in Europe for nearly 300 years and about Russian intentions for almost as long. The vital point is that **operational** priorities, again shaped by the perception of relative weakness, carried the day; despite his growing concern over

diplomatic issues, sparked by the Katyn Affair, Churchill did not waver from the agreed course. One way to question British motives is to challenge their commitment to a "Second Front" as duplicitous. However, direct statements at the conference, and on-going preparations in the U.K. during it, undermine this thesis.[118] A more substantial charge is that, just as in April 1942, the British made a paper pledge fully expecting events to push forward a different agenda.[119] This can be accepted, but it must be understood. The COS did not insist that grand strategic decisions could never be based on post-war concerns. They did insist that **now was not the time**. Why? Because they still considered relative weakness the dominant fact of Britain's strategic position. COS plans for post-HUSKY operations remained based on the belief that a decision could not be sought by confronting the bulk of the German Army in the field.

Brooke tried to head Churchill off, but the damage was done. Churchill insisted on visiting Eisenhower, to be sure he was aware of the "politico-strategic vistas" opening before him. Eventually, Roosevelt agreed to send Marshall to accompany him.[120] This rather awkwardly exposed the point the CCS had hoped to cloak in a polite veneer. In principle it was agreed to exploit HUSKY, but each side hoped events and the man on the spot would support its idea of how to do so. This unprecedented end to an Allied conference reflected several important facts. A new situation was indeed at hand, and new ideas were taking shape. But the ultimate decision lay ahead, a point reflected by the decision to stage the next conference about the time the results of HUSKY would be evident.[121] The CCS realized that the fundamental issue of grand strategic approach remained to be settled. In that limited sense, TRIDENT marked a moment of indecision.

That indecision influenced subsequent appraisals of TRIDENT. Roger Parkinson termed it a British success, because the Mediterranean remained an active theatre. Michael Howard felt it settled the central issue by designating the Mediterranean a secondary theatre. Maurice Matloff saw TRIDENT as both an Allied success, because it accepted the need for a synthesis grand strategy, and an American success, because it marked a new maturity in American coalition diplomacy. Leighton and Coakley saw TRIDENT as the first yet incomplete step towards a realistic harmonization of resources and plans.[122] None of this is absurd, but a deeper issue was involved. TRIDENT

continued a process begun at SYMBOL. Most of the major decisions extended earlier ones - the bomber offensive, Atlantic efforts, the Burma fiasco, even the decision to sort out the next step after HUSKY. However the JCS had learnt from British practice and applied their lessons. This helped bring about the critical departure, the revival of a specific "Second Front." Why did the British agree? Partly because they had always seen it as a coup de grace and were now willing, in theory, to chart a specific course. Partly also because they had no choice.

There were still more Imperial forces in contact than American. The Allied war effort remained interdependent. However, a growing shift in the share of coalition power was increasingly obvious. The JCS could openly reserve decisions on a major theatre - the Pacific - to themselves, regardless of Allied accords.[123] The COS could not. In order to extend "wear down," delay "concentration," and bring them closer to synthesis, the British had to accept the principle that the basic Allied approach would shift at an appointed time. Views on the specific balance between campaigns, even inside Whitehall, were still diverging. Views on the fundamental grand strategic approach were still converging. Interdependence was forcing both sides to compromise. But the shift in power was bringing an imbalance to this whole process. The American vision of a concentrated power drive to seek decisive battle would now govern, rather than merely follow, the final phase of "wear down." For the British, this was a seminal fact.

If "wear down" finally succeeded, the "Second Front" would be the finishing touch always envisaged. If it did not, it might now lead the British into a campaign where their forces would eventually become a minority, or even put their last great reserve of power at risk. These factors, status and safety, were the really powerful "ulterior" factors; they remained grounded on offsetting pressures of time and perceived relative weakness. The impact of TRIDENT was four fold. It marked the first decisive step in the decision made at Casablanca by the Americans to wrest control over Allied grand strategy. It set a specific schedule for the evolution of "wear down." It reflected a new realistic grasp of the shape of an interdependent grand strategy. But it also strengthened American suspicions of British motives.[124] Now the British knowingly faced a challenge with a new dimension. "Wear down" either had to succeed soon, or

as much of it as possible would have to be grafted onto what would become a diluted yet increasingly American approach. Previous hopes of absorbing American power into "wear down" now seemed likely to be reversed. TRIDENT was not yet a break, but it indicated that one was fast approaching.

In the summer of 1943 Allied campaigns finally met with visible success on almost every front. As usual, however, success came only after great exertions and a heavy cost was exacted by still potent German and Japanese forces. This only intensified the debates over Allied grand strategy. Piece by piece the Allies filled in a detailed outline for the grand strategic offensive. The confusion caused by enemy action and unresolved differences of perspective and emphasis was monumental. However, the safety net of a common ground of basic assumptions again provided British leaders with a firm basis from which to reorient their ideas. It also again reflected the preoccupations, priorities and constant pressures that shaped their deliberations. The issues involved in the war against Japan, Atlantic operations, strategic bombing, the Soviet factor, the "Second Front" and the unresolved issue of post-HUSKY campaigns combined to bring the fourth major phase of British grand strategy to a crucial point. The parameters of decision were set by a combination of the issues generated by success, the constant assumptions of "wear down," and the general direction laid down at TRIDENT. Because TRIDENT left the immediate question "what next" open, it came to the fore. For the British, the problem became a race between surface progress and underlying erosion.

Working from the outside in again raises first the problems of the war against Japan. The chronic friction over the China-Burma-India theatre and the evolving vision of an overall grand strategic offensive were again predominant. The familiar erosion of plans occurred this time against a backdrop of maturing American plans and growing Churchillian restlessness. The result was a blend of obstruction and progress. The JIC continued to advise that the Japanese could at most launch limited offensives to preclude any apprehended Allied move; the COS pressed for and secured CCS agreement on 16 July. In return, the British agreed that the Chinese were a vital strategic asset, tying

down nearly 40% of the Japanese Army, and must be relieved. Plans must be made to meet any Japanese reaction.[125] That fitted in with the prevailing trend of debate; the real spur for new accord was, however, the evolution of ideas regarding an ultimate offensive.

Conventional wisdom now suggested that a fairly concrete vision of a grand strategic offensive would develop quickly. That feeling was based on three factors: American determination to keep Pacific operations "dynamic and escalating," the deployment of large USN forces, and Marshall's desire to preserve both the policy of "Europe first" and a strong Army voice in Pacific plans. The growth and concentration of American naval power in the Pacific made it clear even to MacArthur that his arduous ongoing campaign to unravel the Japanese perimeter through the southwest Pacific would soon at best share equal billing with a drive further north. The British scrambled to exercise their voice in the review of plans; Churchill specifically warned Roosevelt that in order to undertake timely preparations for mounting a full effort against Japan after victory in Europe, the British role had to be defined.[126] However, the basic decisions were already emerging. After weeks of review the JCS settled on a compromise. In order to make use of the "great carrier forces now available," from November 1943 a great "triphibious" force would drive westwards through the Central Pacific, parallel with MacArthur's thrust. The basic but still vague idea remained to isolate Japan and establish a bastion in China.[127] This ensured further escalation in Pacific. It also made plans regarding Burma more urgent than ever, because China could still only be sustained from the British controlled theatre.

Unfortunately, the signal accomplishment of the TRIDENT decisions was to exacerbate all the obstacles impeding operations from China and India. The differences between Churchill and the COS and Stilwell and Chennault in particular, and British and Americans in general, remained unresolved. It was hoped that big dividends could be gained from increasing the flow of supplies by air. Unfortunately, this literally cut across the tangled and still inadequate logistic infrastructure required to launch attacks into Burma. Whitehall resisted American efforts to work on facilities in Assam, ostensibly to protect the interests of Fourteenth Army but also privately to resist a

perceived American effort to gain greater influence in the area. This and a renewed "air versus ground" debate in American circles only aggravated British efforts to develop the infrastructure. The Indian Army establishment was again reduced - levelling off at 14 field divisions - amid continued fears as to its quality and reliability. The Eastern Fleet was again stripped, to bolster HUSKY.[128] An organized policy, and the will to pursue it, remained elusive.

The British hoped that the proposed wholesale reorganization of command machinery would help solve the problem. Because of the nature of the issue, it raised all the cross purposes and suspicions that had dogged Allied efforts since the loss of Burma. A firm British proposal was ready by mid-June. To eliminate cross purposes, a new command would be set up to prosecute offensive operations, divorced from the statutory command responsible for India. A Supreme Commander would supervise, and invigorate, the efforts of the service commanders. After some debate, Cabinet approved this proposal plus a wholesale shuffle of Indian appointments, culminating with the appointment of Wavell as viceroy. The COS began to review the issue of the new command's relationship with the Chinese, the Americans and the CCS. But the proposal went forward to Roosevelt on 19 June. The British proposed to appoint a Briton as Allied Supreme Commander, with an American Deputy, responsible for all offensive operations and the forward logistic base needed to sustain them and aid China. These would supervise three British service commanders and a commander of the aerial supply of China. The connection to the CCS should be based on the "MacArthur model" - direct control by the responsible Ally, in this case the British, with the CCS to exercise only the broadest oversight.[129] The JCS strongly supported the proposal in principle, but rejected Sholto Douglas as Supreme Commander, insisted the new command be under the CCS on the "Eisenhower model," and refused to submerge Stilwell. This reflected their intense suspicion of the British agenda. Weeks of debate led to a deadlock on the issue of the link to the CCS, an agreement to exclude China itself, and American insistence that Stilwell hold his existing post in addition to becoming Deputy Supreme Commander.[130] This guaranteed future trouble.

Meanwhile, the currently responsible commanders proceeded to study the prospects of plans approved at TRIDENT. This only made the situation worse. The "new" outline called for LRPG sorties, several ground thrusts into northern Burma, and yet another vision of amphibious assault on Akyab, BULLFROG. At first BULLFROG held the field, and landing craft were transferred from Egypt to India. Then on 23 July the COS agreed that the serious lag in logistic preparations called for a complete review of all plans regarding Burma. On 29 July they also decided that the proposal to bypass Burma and attack Sumatra in spring 1944, CULVERIN, was ruled out by commitments in Europe and the Pacific.[131] The issue went to the DC(O), where the COS made a definite stand. CULVERIN was impossible, and BULLFROG would have to be reviewed carefully, because nothing could be done that might lead to an open-ended commitment before victory in Europe. Churchill feared this would "look bad to the U.S.," but the COS timed it well. Given developments in Italy,* the DC(O) agreed that no plan that might prejudice Mediterranean efforts should proceed. That in fact meant a repudiation of the TRIDENT accord, a point not concealed by lip service about studying a large operation for 1944.[132] That left the whole problem badly confused. The British resented the American stand over the command question and rightly feared Stilwell would be given an impossible task - pressing Allied land operations which competed with his American-Chinese responsibilities for resources. Churchill and the Americans remained convinced that nothing would move until a new team was in place.[133] The whole debate clearly exposed the COS priority - the determination to limit all activity in the theatre until victory in Europe was in sight.

The trend was quite the reverse in the Atlantic, where Allied efforts at last paid dividends. The effort to secure the Atlantic life-line was at last front and centre, notably in the telegram to Stalin reporting the TRIDENT decisions.[134] The Allies were able to parlay their experience and organization to improve their own security and strengthen their intelligence. This shifted the intelligence edge decisively.[135] That allowed now adequate Allied surface and air forces to keep the pressure on. Doenitz was forced to pull his forces off the main convoy route in late May. He then played into Allied hands

* *See below p.554*

by ordering his boats to resist air attack in the Biscay area, which led to the best results Coastal command had yet scored. The Allies were now able to hunt down systematically the supply U-Boats needed to sustain distant sorties, and to send support groups to reinforce HUSKY. The required strength of Liberators was reached. The Americans finally settled arrangements for control of air forces. From June through August the Allies did not lose a cargo ship on the main convoy route.[136] The tide had clearly turned.

Yet there was no sense of euphoria and a healthy lack of complacency. The AUB Committee remained in place. While the shipping position improved, new overseas demands were widely expected. Great efforts were, therefore, made to restore U.K. stock levels. The Allies had learned their lesson and expected Doenitz to resume the challenge with new tactics and equipment. Indeed, it was now felt that to maintain the initiative the Allies had to win the technological race. The situation was satisfactory, but would continue to require a major commitment. This time the Allies accepted this situation with few illusions.[137] The related question of bases in the Azores also reflected a changing grand strategic situation and a local of complacency. Cabinet eventually decided to negotiate with Lisbon but prepare to seize the bases if the talks failed.[138] The Americans felt that if the talks succeeded Portugal would have to be offered aid; Marshall feared the COS would cite this to block cross-Channel preparations. He could not have been more wrong. The COS flatly refused to consider a major "Iberian Front." Brooke felt this would be a "fundamental change" in grand strategy. Pound declared that this would threaten HUSKY, which was now considered more important than the use of the bases. The Portuguese solved one problem but started another by agreeing to lease base rights quietly in due course but to the British alone, and insisting on remaining neutral. The COS were again able to shape policy by insisting that no unsafe commitment on the Continent be risked - period.[139] Relative weakness remained the prevailing influence.

An apparently new situation developed in the air over Germany. Three new facts emerged: 8th Air Force attacked Germany in strength, Bomber Command genuinely hurt the Germans, and the German air defences developed into an expensive but effective

force. The Allies now clearly held the initiative. In June, Portal noted that the Allies had dropped 40 tons of bombs on Germany for every ton dropped on the U.K., from January to May. Cherwell agreed that the enemy was shifting visibly to the defensive.[140] But that enemy reaction combined with both familiar and new problems to make the chronic questions - would the bombers "crack" Germany at bearable cost, and were they being used efficiently - now even more acute?

The Air Staff and Harris continued to resist pressure to "divert" the heavy bombers to any task other than attacking Germany. Two urgent issues arose in June. The JCS suggested that B17's be sent to attack the **Tirpitz** and other heavy surface vessels based in Norway. The COS objected, arguing that such a mission was problematical and would absorb over 50% of 8th Air Force's current strength, thus delaying the "Eaker Plan."[141] Morgan made a more dangerous plea: in order to make the now very elaborate plans for feint attacks from the U.K. successful, they had to be given credence by a "very considerable" bombing concentration on the Atlantic Wall. Harris complained that this was another attempt to "unravel" Bomber Command. Portal was less prickly but agreed that as this was "only a deception" no heavy bombers could be "diverted." Medium bomber sorties would be "loaned," but the heavy bombers were withheld, in order to pursue the new "Combined plan."[142]

The nature of Portal's commitment to that new plan could be mistaken for deceit, unless the investment in "area" bombing, and Harris' position, are clearly understood. The plan approved at TRIDENT called for a "Combined" effort to execute the Casablanca mission, starting with the growing air defences. But, to poach John Terraine's apt phrase, "Sir Arthur Harris did not, in general, take kindly to directives."[143] Harris was able to dilute the evocatively titled POINTBLANK directive before it emerged in final form on 10 June. Eighth Air Force would launch the all out attack on the German fighter force; but Bomber Command would hold to the "main aim," the progressive destruction and dislocation of German industry and the undermining of German morale. It would synchronize with 8th Air Force "as much as proved possible." The Allies thus fell back on two autonomous and occasionally intersecting campaigns, as Bomber Command carried on its own effort to devastate

German cities. The Air Staff oversaw this distortion of grand strategy.[144] The obvious question is "why"?

The multi-faceted answer lies at the heart of the grand strategic issue. The sheer momentum of the effort invested in Bomber Command and its strategy was a powerful underlying force. For instance, there were now indications that a stronger, better equipped Bomber Command might become efficient enough to warrant reconsidering "precision" tactics. Harris would not be turned. He argued that such attacks were only feasible by training and equipping select crews at great expense. In his view, the new equipment now available should be used to strengthen the main forces - which, ironically enough, now depended on the Pathfinder Force, the only units fully supplied with new equipment.[145] Harris insisted that "area" bombing should now be **emphasized**, as it at last seemed capable of decisive success. The case of WINDOW, a simple airborne device to confuse enemy radar, epitomized the whole. As Bomber Command's losses over the Ruhr rose to over 6% per mission, Harris pleaded for permission to use the device. Portal agreed, but the DC(O) was not convinced until 15 July that the potential gain far outweighed the risk of retaliation in kind. WINDOW was introduced in a series of four large "area" raids on Hamburg from 24 July to 3 August, supported this time by 8th Air Force raids. Losses fell to 2.8%. A firestorm set off by the second raid killed nearly 50,000 and destroyed 61% of Hamburg's houses. These results, set beside the mounting losses of 8th Air Force, seemed to vindicate Harris' position.[146]

However, numerous ironies soon emerged. The torching of Hamburg seriously frightened official and unofficial German opinion. But it also spurred the Germans to intensify their effort to counter the threat. The supporters of "area" bombing stressed the former but not the latter. Cherwell argued that the new equipment had increased bombing efficiency from 20% within a five mile radius to 60% within three miles. The airmen did not ignore the growing enemy defences, even though the shift of effort was underestimated. They argued that "area" bombing, as it could now be conducted, would best handle them and was at last on the verge of a real breakthrough.[147] It would have been remarkable if the RAF had reacted any other way. After years of effort it finally had a force - 49 heavy bomber squadrons, 22 with Lancasters, as of 30 June[148] - which

seemed likely to inflict real damage. Intelligence estimates - which were now more cautious about damage done to productive capacity, but still saw "considerable" effects on morale - only reinforced these views. Most importantly, it was now argued that the Germans were being forced to pour resources into a major defensive effort. No one at the centre yet seemed to wonder whether the **relative** burden of effort involved in the campaign would remain favourable. Evidence of success seemed apparent - from March to July, Bomber Command cut its losses and doubled its average load dropped, while 8th Air Force losses rose.[149] It remained impossible to offer clear evidence of failure. This was enough to preserve the momentum so laboriously developed.

One final and vital irony is that to an extent this was exactly the role "wear down" had envisaged for strategic bombing. If Bomber Command was really forcing the enemy to shift resources, battering him, and reducing its own losses, it was fulfilling the vision sketched out in 1942. The Allies agreed on objectives, as that very vision became an integral part of the TRIDENT outline of a "Second Front." But they failed to agree on methods. The British action amounted to a gamble that "area" bombing would succeed soon, while the reinforcing of 8th Air Force paced German defences in a parallel campaign. The issue was unclear in early August, but the stake was obvious. If "wear down" and POINTBLANK both failed in the air, the apex of both, the "Second Front," would remain an excessive risk. The investment in Bomber Command was such a cornerstone of national war policy and grand strategy that the British refused to submerge it in an American plan. Strategic bombing had become a microcosm of the parallel convergence and divergence in grand strategy.

The focal point of those parallel trends remained the elastic TRIDENT coupling of future Mediterranean operations and the "Second Front." The former was the more immediate issue, but important strides were made regarding the latter. Several ongoing issues were involved. Foremost remained relations with the Soviets. Coalition tension rose in this period, and Allied policy and grand strategy were, of course, affected. The joint report sent to Stalin regarding the TRIDENT decisions reflected a keen awareness of how strongly the Soviets desired a "Second Front." Great emphasis was placed on the intention to resume full scale preparations and the problems involved; all was

carefully framed by the glowing prospects depicted for Mediterranean operations. All plans were to be designed to further the main objective: provide early, constant and significant assistance to Soviet efforts.[150] One such effort was, of course, the convoying of materiel to the Soviets. Despite the suspension of the Murmansk run, Churchill and Roosevelt continued to regard this campaign as a priority. After weeks of debate a Third Protocol was settled in June. It pledged five million tons of supplies with, again, no quid pro quo other than the usual caveats about delivery. In fact, the overall effort now seemed in hand. Bolder use could now be made of the Pacific run. American efforts had increased the capacity of the Iran route. Thus this politically influenced campaign was to proceed, although the British share was set to decline steadily.[151]

Planned and predictable decline was not Whitehall's intention regarding direct contact with Stalin. That issue arose innocently enough from Stalin's reaction to the news there would be no "Second Front" in 1943. Whatever his motives, Stalin made it rudely clear that the Soviets regarded this as another betrayal. Soviet intentions became more mysterious than ever. Reports surfaced of low level diplomatic contacts between Soviets and Germans in Sweden. In July Moscow established a Free Germany Committee, made up of captured German generals. Wild rumours circulated: the Soviets were planning a separate peace; the Soviets would try to conquer and communize Germany by themselves. The separate peace rumours were fairly confidently dismissed, the general feeling being that the bitterness and the stakes of the Soviet-German clash were too great.[152] But Soviet aspirations were another matter. A full scale crisis developed when Roosevelt again suggested that the best way to sound out Stalin, and ease his suspicions, would be a conference between himself and Stalin, without Churchill.

Churchill was upset but not fearful when Stalin severed correspondence in response to the exchange about the TRIDENT decisions. Roosevelt's proposal to cut out the British was another matter. It was seen as a real threat to Britain's status in the first tier of the coalition. Churchill concealed his deeper concern by asking Roosevelt not to play into Axis propaganda about a divided coalition. The fact was that while American power and position had reached the point where Churchill could meet Stalin alone

without questions being raised about American status, the reverse was no longer true. After a determined lobby, and some deceit by Roosevelt, Churchill gained a promise to convene the next conference in August at Quebec. Despite protests to the contrary, the British were surely relieved when Soviet aloofness left that conference holding the field. It now seemed likely a trilateral conference would occur, but only in the autumn. The fact was that the British felt they could not afford to be cut out of any issue, because they lacked the overall power to guarantee a place at all discussions. Whitehall started work on a proposal to establish Allied machinery in London to discuss the issues that would arise as the Allies advanced. Just as Soviet efforts had long been a part of British grand strategy, Soviet intentions now became a major issue in British policy. Whitehall remained under increasing pressure to preserve its voice while addressing the concerns of its behemoth allies.[153] It could not lightly continue to stall a "Second Front."

Another increasingly strong if more remote spur towards a "Second Front" was now operative. Since 1939 sporadic reports had been received of German efforts to develop weapons of advanced technology with which to strike the U.K. These reports increased from late 1942, until by April 1943 the COS felt there was a need to warn the Prime Minister. The details of subsequent developments are controversial and familiar. After much confused debate, the DC(O) decided on 29 June that there was enough evidence to warrant the study of, and preparations to counter, two possible threats: a rocket and a pilot-less aircraft of uncertain propulsion. Setting well known issues aside, this affair had grand strategic repercussions. It was agreed that the main development site at Peenemunde and other installations would have to be attacked by Bomber Command. In hopes of aborting the whole threat, the RAF would move when it felt able to "really hammer" Peenemunde.[154] The dimensions of the problem remained vague, but its potential consequences were now being discussed. The more time the Germans had to develop these weapons, the more likely it became they could threaten the "Second Front," if not the whole U.K. war effort. The decision to "divert" Bomber Command speaks for itself. There was an at least implicit feeling by August that here was another good reason not to obstruct unduly the final offensive.

Naturally, ongoing preparations to launch the offensive from the U.K. continued in summer 1943. However, these continued to be shaped by the prevailing "wear down" posture. Does this suggest caution? Yes. Insincerity? No. By this time the British were both more willing to plan for the early success of "wear down" and less able to afford to plan on its continued shortfall. The key point is that for the first time the constant aspiration to return to the Continent took shape as a specific active outline. That point alone should have dispelled any post-facto doubts about British resolve to return to France. It had been agreed that as Eisenhower had the Mediterranean command, the appointment for the U.K. based campaign would go to the British. Churchill duly promised it to Brooke. In July he even dated the change: January or February 1944. Both men stipulated that this would occur "only...if it looked pretty certain that the operation was possible." But the reader will note how consistent this was with the "wear down" consensus. There was no disingenuity here whatsoever. On the contrary, Brooke looked forward to the post as the culmination of his career.[155] It is preposterous to suggest the CIGS would have felt this way about a campaign meant never to occur or to be a side-show. The "Second Front" was to be the final blow, but it was expected to be a spectacular effort.

The effort to define how and when to launch a "Second Front" visibly quickened under the impetus of an established COSSAC. Ideas developed along three lines, summed up by Morgan on 12 July. The basic focus was to be the full scale deliberate assault of 1 May 1944, now codenamed OVERLORD - surely a silly security lapse. The comprehensive scheme of 1943 feints, COCKADE, was underway. Finally, a specific outline, RANKIN, was being developed to meet the event of a sudden German collapse, in part or in whole.[156] This was a far cry from the "distant future" vision of 1940-1941. But a trace of all three lines reveals continuity in thinking, within the changes.

Naturally, uncertainty about what would be on hand in time continued to hamper preparations. Ironically, some of it was due to the Americans. At least 17 U.S. divisions were to be poised in the U.K. by spring 1944, including the four to be sent from the Mediterranean. In June, Hollis estimated that only 11 would be on hand unless BOLERO was accelerated soon. Landing craft were an even greater unknown. Now the

decisions of 1942 came to haunt the Allies. The vital LST, the only vessel capable of carrying the lavish mass of vehicles considered necessary for the assault and buildup, were now to be found from American production. But King continued to gamble that there would be no need to increase output or transfer craft from the Pacific. Morgan spoke of being forced to settle for a risky three division assault. By mid-July, the COS agreed to set early firm target dates for the arrival of all craft; those from the Mediterranean were to be in the U.K. by 1 January.[157] This was an expression of faith, but it was also avowed British policy. The dimensions and details of the problems OVERLORD faced were now under constant discussion. The greatest progress seemed to come in the area of, to the British, the greatest concern. In June the swirl of ideas produced plans to develop "artificial harbours" and other projects to make extended supply through the beachhead feasible. This might well solve the problem of relative reinforcement capability. Churchill also endorsed the project because it would convince Washington that the British were serious about OVERLORD. By late July, the French were requesting a role and Morgan was calling for an executive authority to take matters in hand.[158]

The immediate active concern was COCKADE, the deception ploys for 1943. The objectives were to force the Germans to pull forces out of Russia or at least prevent them from sending more in, spark air attrition, and keep the enemy off balance. The plan was threefold: STARKEY, a feint near Boulogne in September involving the actual approach of amphibious forces; WADHAM, an "aborted feint" near Brest in October; and TINDALL, its supposed replacement, an "attack" on Norway. The plans were approved on 21 June on condition that none be designed to lead into an "opportunity" move. The COS now insisted that all deception schemes be firmly subordinated and complementary to the main plans. The desired uncertainty was set off in the British press, but OKW proved less gullible. The Allies were able to convince it that their Order of Battle was larger than it really was, but not that the Mediterranean was no longer the focus of early efforts. So far, deception remained a long term investment.[159]

Nevertheless, even though a cross-Channel attack was not imminent, this was clearly a new phase. It was now obvious that the days of raiding were over, and the next

move would be a major thrust. That was admitted in June when Churchill, under pressure from the American press, asked the COS "why no large raids since Dieppe?" Mountbatten's answer amounted to a summary of grand strategic change since autumn 1942. Large scale raids had been abandoned because successive and always inflated operations - TORCH, HUSKY, now OVERLORD - swallowed the necessary resources. The COS agreed; indeed, this merely stated the obvious. Events now reduced Combined Operations to the only role they ever wanted for it: development of training and techniques and launching pin-prick raids.[160]

Perhaps the most dramatic advance in ideas came in the area most central to "wear down" - what to do about a sudden German collapse. For the first time, this problem was discussed under the assumption that it might actually occur! Ideas for the response, RANKIN, crystallized into three scenarios: 1) a German withdrawal in relative order from the occupied areas to deal with internal disarray; 2) a sudden collapse of general cohesion due to strategic bombing; 3) a total collapse of German authority and organized resistance. Plans were to be prepared for all three. But the COS also set down important parameters. Firstly, only broad outlines should be drafted; in each case, action would depend on the actual situation. Secondly, barring a spectacular and total German collapse, Allied forces would advance methodically under strong air cover and with secure logistics. The juxtaposition of continuity and change was never clearer. For various reasons it was agreed that Allied forces would have to enter the Continent in strength if the Germans collapsed. But the COS still showed healthy respect for the potential of the German Army. The Allies intended to impose their will, but Whitehall did not want to do this by seeking open ended battle on land before the issue was clear. This is striking. Work on the "Atlantic Wall" had already made German defences something to consider, but caution was to govern even in stages of German disarray.[161] Clearly, the prevailing influence of "wear down" assumptions was strong enough that the COS had not even begun to settle a concrete vision of **exactly** how to press the final campaign. This atmosphere shaped Morgan's draft of the first outline plans for OVERLORD and RANKIN, which became wrapped up in the preparations for the

Quebec conference. The "Second Front" was now a fetus, but the issue of when life began remained open.

Washington's greatest concern was not the timing of life but rather the danger of abortion. The relationship between OVERLORD and further Mediterranean operations had been left in the hands of events and Eisenhower. As this was clearly the critical question, the ensuing talks in Algiers initiated by Churchill and Marshall, lasting from 29 May to 3 June, set the tone for further review. The British position was strengthened by the fact that somewhere en route Churchill swung wholeheartedly back in favour of concentration on Italy. Churchill supported Brooke's vision of paving the way for OVERLORD by stretching German forces now, and added three points of his own. The British were determined to launch OVERLORD in 1944. He personally had no intention of "sending an army into the Balkans now or in the near future." Finally, the British were so convinced that "knocking out" Italy was the best possible move that to assist they would strip Middle East Command of yet more forces and even cut U.K. rations still further. Brooke dwelt on his view that only the Red Army could carry on an openended ground campaign against the German Army. Churchill insisted the Allied - still largely Imperial - forces in the area must be kept engaged. Together, they tried to play on Eisenhower's natural desire for further action by depicting a move into Italy as a logical extension of HUSKY. The final conclusions were revealing. It was agreed to review the situation during HUSKY, but Churchill's declaration that all were agreed Italy should be attacked went unchallenged.[162] There was still no specific plan, but the British concept was moving forward.

The ensuing weeks saw a situation develop similar to that of late 1942: events on the battlefield set off an accelerated and fluid reaction to a daily changing situation. Once again, it became clear that while the British operated under certain broad prevailing assumptions, they had no specific detailed vision of the way forward. Publicly, Churchill acted as if the Algiers talks had settled all questions. Privately, he was well aware that Marshall would not budge regarding the OVERLORD schedule. That meant "we have five months to use all our strength." On the central point, Whitehall remained constant: the exact nature of Allied operations would be determined by the effects of, and the

German reaction to, HUSKY.[163] From this opportunistic basis, the COS defined a clear policy on 25 June. Middle East Command was to lose four divisions and the bulk of its air forces to Eisenhower. Also, Wilson would now have to cede so many amphibious and logistic assets that he would no longer be able to mount any serious operation. Therefore, Cairo's plans should now be restricted to exploiting any opportunity that arose due to Eisenhower's operations.[164] This was the logical result of the belief that Allied strength allowed for only one major campaign in 1943 plus the need to bring British and American positions together. It was a responsible decision based on operational priorities. It was also the last coherent decision on the area for many weeks.

The confusion that soon erupted in Allied circles occurred in spite of the fact that Allied intelligence sources were now very proficient at tracing German moves and appreciations. This was partly due to the success of Allied deception schemes. On the eve of HUSKY, the JIC noted that the Germans were nearly as concerned about Greece as Sicily. The root cause of success was the careful inflation of the Allied Order of Battle. On 9 July the Germans listed 40 battle ready Allied divisions in the theatre, double the real figure. That made feint attacks credible. The German garrison in the Balkan theatre rose from nine divisions in March to 26 in July. This greatly improved the prospects of HUSKY, even though Brooke continued to insist the Germans could and might divert reserves to the Mediterranean area.[165] This would meet the grand strategic aim, but it fostered strategic caution. That caution was reinforced by the constant respect for German combat power. Intelligence officers noted with respect the stiff fight put up by German forces in Tunisia and expected the Italians to fight harder on their own soil. Theatre authorities unanimously agreed that HUSKY would succeed, but overwhelming firepower would be required. Alexander and Montgomery continued to worry about the capabilities of the American Army and the intentions of the German Air Force. These views fluctuated with events but also influenced plans; in early July Montgomery went as far as to suggest that the strain of taking Sicily would rule out further action in 1943.[166] This was not generally accepted, but the prevailing caution had an effect.

The military decision to curtail aspirations east of Italy flew in the face of both British political concerns and the developing situation in the area itself. On the one hand, London had strong reasons for holding out hopes of active operations. The area was a British controlled theatre, and therefore a potential field for visible promotion of British efforts. It was also a vital bastion of Imperial resources and a link in the chain of communications, still threatened by German air forces in Crete and the Aegean. London was in fact concerned about American views on British policy in the area. But now, unless the Germans retreated or Marshall changed his mind, there seemed little hope of being able to mount any worthwhile activity. One of the great benefits to be derived from the toppling of Italy was to unhinge Axis positions in the Balkans. Yet the COS had felt compelled to strip Wilson of so many forces that all he could contemplate was stepping up aid to resistance forces in the Balkans. At least London was now finally taking steps to build a more accurate picture of the military and political situation in the area, especially in Yugoslavia. That helped the COS define a policy - groups were to be aided only according to their willingness to set aside internecine feuds and fight the Germans.[167]

Execution proved even more difficult than definition. To aid resistance forces, SOE Cairo needed aircraft. Portal agreed to increase its strength from 14 bombers to 36, but no more; after all, operations "must be set in strategic context." As long as the Allies were about to engage, or engaging, the German Army, the COS refused to release significant resources for new ventures.[168] The Allies hoped to secure the use of Turkish air bases, in order to strengthen their ability to inflict real punishment on German forces in the area; the Turks wanted no part of the war until those forces were clearly finished. All this added up to near paralysis. The proposed solution was unoriginal: persuade the Americans to change their mind. At Churchill's direction, a long Ultra based report on "Recent Activities and Present Strengths of Opposing Forces in the Balkans" was prepared for use at the imminent conference.[169] In an important respect, nothing had changed. The British were able to sort out priorities and felt able to extend existing campaigns, but were unwilling to abandon other prospects completely.

Such ambivalence was inherent in Britain's position, let alone the fog of war. As part of the basic "wear down" framework, from the start British planners aimed to "knock out" Italy as a major step. But when in July 1943 that goal was achieved, the Allies found that nobody knew what "knock out" meant or how to exploit it. The events of July - the great Soviet victory at Kursk, the invasion of Sicily and the advance of 12 divisions of 15th Army Group - set off a familiar pattern. HUSKY was a pygmy compared to Kursk, but the conjunction of the two set off hopes of sudden far reaching opportunities. It also became clear that losses of landing craft were much less than expected,[170] before it was clear how hard the Germans would fight for Sicily. The reaction in London and Washington recalled that of November 1942, as decisions were soon propelled then overtaken by events and confused by divergent aims. Once again, Allied grand strategy was formulated on the run.

The early news from Sicily upset all prevailing views. Suddenly, it looked as if the Allies might have enough amphibious forces, and the situation in Italy might become chaotic enough, to "bounce" the mainland directly after overrunning Sicily. The prospect of rapid and spectacular success set thoughts in London, Algiers and Washington in motion. Unfortunately, they all came up with different answers to the question "what next." On 13 July, Churchill insisted that current plans for a cautious probe onto the "toe" of Italy should now give way to a "strike at the knee," near Naples, in a bid to upset the whole Axis southern flank. The JPS and COS disagreed as to whether the Germans might try to hold southern Italy (the Italians were now discounted), but agreed that the Allies would have to move rapidly to forestall them. Brooke insisted that no invasion could be launched beyond the range of fighter cover. Eisenhower would have to make the decision on the spot, and one clear consequence must be faced. Any attack on the mainland would lead to some form of ground campaign, which would inevitably raise questions about Allied ability to meet the TRIDENT schedule. So advised, Churchill did not hesitate. The Allies should plan to launch the most ambitious venture that German posture allowed - the decision to be Eisenhower's - and **all** grand strategic options should be reexamined.[171] Just like that, the TRIDENT accord was reopened.

The reason Churchill dared to take this decision was his assessment of the reaction in Washington to early success in Sicily. Advised by their own intelligence, the Americans proposed to the CCS on 16 July that Eisenhower should be encouraged to expand his plans and launch an amphibious assault near Naples. Marshall hoped that a bold improvised assault could topple the Italian government and allow the Allies to snap up central Italy, before the Germans could react. Churchill, already determined to place Allied forces in Italy, was delighted: "Post HUSKY: I am with you heart and soul."[172] London intensified its lobby, determined this time not to let a campaign be hampered by a half hearted compromise (as it was felt TORCH had been). Roosevelt agreed in principle to invade Italy. This cleared the way for major decisions on 20 July. Churchill ordered the review of all standing plans, suggesting that the Germans were too strong to risk OVERLORD before August 1944. The COS reversed previous policy and ordered all amphibious forces slated for transfer to India to be held in the Mediterranean. The assault near Naples, AVALANCHE, was to be planned on the assumption the Germans would challenge any bridgehead but then retreat north of Rome if it could not be eliminated. These decisions were notified to Washington on the confident assumption that the JCS now agreed special steps were needed to seize this "fleeting chance."[173]

However, the British seriously misunderstood Marshall's position. Privately, the JCS considered the new British position "an unacceptable complete change of the strategy adopted at the TRIDENT conference." Publicly, they correctly noted it had never been their intention to reinforce Eisenhower. The JCS hoped that if a favourable situation developed in Italy, it could be exploited so as to forestall, rather than open up, a new campaign. The American position was in fact strong. The CCS had already been forced to release more shipping to sustain HUSKY. Any new campaign in Italy would require resources slated for other plans. The debate was heightened by the ouster of Mussolini and the formation of a new Italian government on 24-25 July. Naturally, this whetted Allies appetites for a coup de main. But the issue of what consequences should be accepted remained open. For the British, this was a moment of truth. The most fundamental issue seemed at stake. "Wear down" had at last scored a possibly open ended success; as it was the vital preliminary to the ultimate offensive, it must now be

pressed forward vigorously.[174] However, there were two weaknesses in this position: Allied forces had, in fact, already lost the chance for a quick decisive victory in Sicily, and it was still impossible to define the precise objective of a move into Italy.

A determined German force exploited confusion in Allied command circles to establish a stable line in Sicily and conduct an orderly fighting retreat. The Allies were too strong to resist, but by late July it was unclear whether they would be able to cut off the four German divisions covering the approach to the mainland. All Eisenhower's commanders felt a major effort would be required. Mussolini's fall did not persuade them that anything but a deliberate assault on the mainland could be risked. Much worse, none seemed aware of "the whole policy of future operations on the mainland."[175] This caution only entrenched positions in the Allied capitals. The JCS agreed to let Eisenhower plan AVALANCHE, but without reinforcements. The British decided to continue their "freeze" of resources.[176] An impasse had clearly been reached. The Americans were willing to seize the moment but denied this called for a change in grand strategy. The British felt that such a change was essential in order to make the move a reasonable risk. Ominously, by late July German forces were moving into Italy itself. At this point, Churchill took matters into his own hands.

The "rolling seminar" now agreed that it was necessary to prepare a full scale assault intended to drive north of Rome. Given the CCS deadlock, Churchill now called for all options to be kept open until the next conference.[177] Churchill then made a determined effort to explain the British view of prospects in the Mediterranean, in appealing terms, to Roosevelt. Instead, he merely made it clear that the British were filling in the details as they went along. After long debate, the political aspects were clear enough. Italy must be required to offer unconditional surrender, as interpreted by the Allied governments. But operational concerns were paramount. The aim was to seize as much of Italy as possible before the Germans could react. Churchill insisted he would deal with any non-Fascist regime that could deliver this. There was to be no repetition of TORCH - the Allies would insist on unconditional surrender, but interpret it so as to advance rapidly.[178] The strategic and grand strategic aspects were less clear.

Churchill offered Roosevelt another sweeping forecast of "events in motion," which accurately laid out British thinking but, as always, emphasized optimism. The Italian government must surrender all its forces in Italy and at least withdraw all those garrison forces further east. It should be "encouraged" to "confront" German forces in Italy. As this happened, Allied forces could move in to "assist." The aim should be to drive as far north as possible, to stretch German forces. The Balkans should be flooded with "agents, supplies and commandos," to help resistance forces compound German problems. The Turks should again be pressed to intervene. Roosevelt approved the conditions to be demanded of Italy. He also agreed to launch an opportunistic move into Italy and discuss the next step at the conference.[179] But the visions of "events in motion" backfired.

All Churchill did was convince Washington that its suspicions of British motives were accurate. To the JCS, the "freeze" order and Churchill's vision seemed to be the forerunners of the ploy they had long expected: to establish the drive from the Mediterranean as the major Allied offensive. This meant trouble. The JCS were willing to move into Italy, but saw OVERLORD as the main stroke.[180] Unfortunately, once again the Americans misread broad and vague consensus as precise detailed future plans. Certainly, Whitehall had always hoped to "knock out" Italy and now hoped to exploit the consequences of Mussolini's fall as vigorously as possible. That included reviving plans for possible moves into the Aegean. But did this reflect a far reaching predetermined detailed agenda? Since Casablanca, the COS had twice relegated and then twice revived Aegean plans. Specific plans remained opportunist and reactive. The only consistency was on a more fundamental level. The enemy had to be weakened, it was only safe to do this in the Mediterranean, Imperial forces had to be engaged, and if that meant reopening the TRIDENT accord so be it. The basic tenet that had given birth to the set of ideas that took shape as "wear down" - relatively weaker combat power limited Allied options - remained the core of British policy. Plans could be revived for widespread activity, but everything must remain contingent on the effects of the main thrust into Italy.[181]

The parameters had been set, but the bizarre result can only be understood when it is realized how the prevailing "wear down" consensus shaped British ideas. The Allied armies were now to attack Italy, but nobody was sure exactly what they might face or what their mission should be. Whitehall could only be sure that the move must be made in great strength. The British were now certain that "wear down" was on the verge of open ended success; but their arguments persuaded the Americans that vagueness on specific objectives was part of a deliberate plan to alter grand strategy, rather than an inherent part of British assumptions and a corollary of fast paced events. In this atmosphere, the Allies turned towards preparation for the conference in Quebec.

The conference set for Quebec in mid-August, codenamed QUADRANT, was clearly seen for what it was: the moment when the questions left open by SYMBOL and TRIDENT must be resolved, in light of prevailing conditions. These questions remained basically two fold: the issue of the balance between campaigns and the uneasy convergence of "wear down" and "decisive concentration." The issue was not, nor had it been since Casablanca, a question of "either or." Rather, it was whether the new synthesis approach would be based on assumed caution and relative weakness or confidence and adequate strength. In other words, would it be the British approach with an American finale or the American approach with a British preliminary? This was a subtle but vital question, ripened by the clash over AVALANCHE. It was now time for it to be answered.

The American position was based on three strong assumptions: 1) the British view of the Allies as relatively weak in combat power was no longer correct; 2) British willingness to operate in an area seemed directly related to how much influence their forces there had and how serious their concerns over its political future were; 3) it was time the U.S. asserted itself and took control of Allied grand strategy. This would lead to two things: the concentration of enough Allied forces to seek an early decisive clash, thereby also ensuring that American preponderance shaped grand strategy in American interests. In other words, the JCS felt now was the time to rectify the mistake of 1942.

The question of an overall grand strategy against Japan remained unsettled. Views were mixed regarding a British role, but Marshall insisted that no major initiative

in the India area could be launched without London's support. It was agreed to demand a resolution of the command issue, press for a sincere effort to attack Burma that year, overestimate Japanese naval power, and shield Pacific plans from counter claims.[182] Closer to Marshall's heart was the first serious draft outline for OVERLORD. The JCS were most interested in the prerequisites laid down by Morgan.* Gen. Barker, COSSAC's American representative, reassured the JCS that Morgan saw them as guidelines rather than absolutes. The plan also helped focus the running debate over the perceived link between OVERLORD and the Mediterranean. Barker confirmed existing views by assuring Marshall that while the British services were "100% favourable towards OVERLORD," Churchill's glance drifted towards the Aegean. The JCS ordered a definite study of the relative merits of OVERLORD or the Mediterranean as the "main campaign." But Marshall virtually pre-drafted the conclusion:

> "in Mediterranean operations, political consequences were hoped for; whereas, on the other hand, OVERLORD must be acknowledged to be an aggressive, positive offensive action from the beginning that will achieve results in itself."[183]

This suspicious self-righteousness epitomized the frame of mind in which the final American position was reached. Washington convinced itself that the perceived political priorities of its allies made it imperative to take control of grand strategy, in order to press for an early victory. It was agreed to support AVALANCHE but enforce the TRIDENT schedule for transfers. This would limit operations in the Mediterranean and shield Pacific plans. This time the JCS were determined to out manoeuvre their British counterparts. They were also convinced that an acceptable grand strategy could only emerge under an American lead. Therefore, the JCS made sure to seek a firm consensus with Roosevelt before the conference. Their efforts were assisted by a letter to the President from Stimson. It was Stimson's view, reinforced by a recent overseas visit, that the British, especially Churchill, hoped to avoid OVERLORD altogether. Haunted by losses on the ground in the First World War, and preoccupied by political prospects in southern Europe, they hoped to lure the Allies into an all-out Mediterranean campaign.

* *See below, p.562*

At their meeting on 20 August, Stimson and the JCS found Roosevelt in wholehearted agreement that British plans were now excessively influenced by fears that Soviet penetration into the Balkans would threaten Imperial interests and the balance of power. Roosevelt blamed this on the Foreign Office and declared:

> "he thought it most unwise to plan military strategy based on a gamble as to political results...,"

an incredible statement from the prime mover of TORCH! The President accepted the JCS position and agreed that in order to guarantee OVERLORD the American share would have to be increased, in order to be able to insist that the Supreme Command go to an American.[184]

The operative factors must be understood, because in a real sense this was the beginning of the end for "wear down." Concentrated forces would give the Americans the decisive voice by bringing their full power into play, overcoming the dispersal that gave the British greater leverage. Victory would be won by American preponderance, which nicely harmonized with the desire to lead post-war reorganization. Roosevelt even suggested doing OVERLORD without the British, but Marshall demurred. The Allied war effort remained interdependent. Nevertheless, Washington was now confident it could assume the role of senior partner. This new consensus reflected the maturing of a power ready to lead.

British preparations again carried on through another voyage on the **Queen Mary** and eventual arrival at Quebec on 11 August. As usual, the "rolling seminar" worked systematically to forge a consensus. The "wear down" framework remained the essential guide, but the British were clearly apprehensive about the American attitude. Their position reflected an ambivalent feeling that "wear down" might be defeated in conference just as it finally succeeded in the field. It also proved difficult to restrain Churchill and to forge detailed proposals for specific campaigns. The final result seemed dangerously unbalanced.

The COS remained concerned about the position in India, unaware of Marshall's view that in the last resort British decisions must hold sway. Their assumptions were only reinforced by serious flooding damage to supply lines in Assam and more concerns

about the Indian Army. Only the recycled limited operations could be attempted that year; BULLFROG would have to be delayed until spring 1944. Churchill pressed the COS to reconsider their views, and impulsively brought Wingate along so as to convince the Americans of British determination to press the campaign. The COS approved of using Wingate as window dressing but again refused to consider any plans that might lead to claims for resources needed elsewhere. Their position remained: 1) secure a favourable Supreme Command set-up and 2) ensure it did nothing significant that year. As for a British role in the overall offensive against Japan, American power would be so preponderant that their views would have to be solicited.[185] Neither position was expected to satisfy either the Prime Minister or the Americans.

A fresher issue was the draft outline for OVERLORD, received on the eve of departure. Morgan's plan helped shape the British position just as it had the American - by offering concrete appreciations around which ideas could be reoriented. The plan amalgamated the evolution of strategic and tactical ideas since 1941, the development of forces and equipment, and an appreciation of likely and acceptable relative situations. The objective was "to secure a lodgement area from which further operations can be developed" from 1 May 1944. The method would be to launch a three division assault - assisted by airborne forces and with a follow-up wave of four divisions - on the Normandy area. This would have to be preceded by an escalating bombing offensive against German defences and communications in northwest Europe. The assault forces would carve out a bridgehead hinged on Caen. This would be expanded, with the help of supply over the beaches until ports were available, until the Normandy peninsula was secure. The Supreme Commander would then decide on further operations. The Germans were expected to react sensibly and retreat in good order. The limiting factors were the range of fighter cover, landing craft, logistic capacity and relative reinforcement capability. There were three prerequisites: 1) the German fighter force must suffer "an overall reduction"; 2) there must be no more than 12 good mobile enemy divisions in France on D-Day, and the enemy must not be able to send in more than 15 more by D+60; 3) the artificial harbours project must succeed. Finally, all Allied efforts should now be tailored to bring these conditions about and thus bolster OVERLORD.[186]

Despite the fact that in principle this echoed the COS own line - all current efforts aimed to bring on OVERLORD - they studied it sceptically. Their reaction reflects their main concerns. Brooke and Portal stressed the issues of relative reinforcement capability. As Morgan's estimates relied on the uncertain effects of air operations, they were deemed over optimistic. The COS only agreed to support the plan in principle, subject to a review of this issue, the prospects of taking Caen immediately, and the extent to which the prerequisites must be met. The last point shaped the British stance on OVERLORD from here on,[187] but Morgan's paper also raised the widest issues of grand strategy. The COS were forced to reconsider their own views of the balance and relationship between campaigns.

This reconsideration involved coupling existing broad aspirations with newly emerging specific proposals. The central point was to describe exactly how current Allied efforts could best contribute to achieving the prerequisites for OVERLORD without impeding it. One obvious issue was how the attack on Italy might help the strategic bombing offensive. POINTBLANK was a direct response to the stiffening of German defences; Allied airmen felt that heavy bombers flying from bases in Italy might be able to outflank those defences and reach hitherto remote targets. But was this enough reason to risk a major ground campaign? Exactly where were the most useful bases? Portal felt that the use of bases in the far north, above the Po river, would enable the Allies to "overwhelm" German defences; he also agreed with Arnold that bases near Pisa and Ravenna, well north of Rome but below the broadening point of Italy, would be "very valuable." This assumed that the now very strong Allied Air Forces would be able to make rapid decisive use of such bases.[188] It also added grist to Brooke's mill for a major attack on Italy.

Portal's conclusions helped the COS insert the first specific outline of strategic objectives in Italy into their position for QUADRANT. It was settled on 9 August as follows. The bombing offensive must be continued. Morgan's prerequisites were sensible and must be accepted. The two could be combined by an attack on Italy as far north as possible, aimed at advancing rapidly to the Po valley, in order to: 1) secure air bases to flank the German defences; 2) force the Germans to give up Italy or else send

in forces to hold it. The COS argued that the Germans would not fight south of Rome, but if they did so much the better. Only an attack in Italy would scare Berlin enough to force the commitment needed to create the OVERLORD prerequisite. This single stroke would allow the Allies to stretch German forces safely and still let OVERLORD proceed "as near to target as possible."[189] Now, at last, "wear down" had become a true "blueprint."

The most controversial item of the outline - an Italian collapse could stretch German forces to the east and open up opportunities - was carefully downplayed. The COS considered the issue settled. Brocke notified Wilson that he would now be directed to supply even more forces for the main effort. With the small forces Wilson had left, including only five combat ready divisions, he could plan to exploit any clear German withdrawal or Italian-German conflict. This focus on the central effort merely confirmed earlier policy, as the COS stated to the deception planners on 7 August.[190] Unfortunately, Churchill and Wilson seemed to infer that the COS agreement to exploit any opportunities amounted to authorization to probe as soon as Italy surrendered. Churchill and Wilson seemed to settle on a logical fallacy: the COS decreed the collapse of Italy was likely to have certain effects, they agreed certain moves could be made if these happened, therefore these prospects could be taken for granted. In fact, for various reasons* Churchill and Wilson were predisposed to count on improvised action in the Aegean. This seriously unbalanced the British consensus. In order to present a united front to the Americans, this difference in attitude was let to pass in hopes that events would supersede it.[191] That meant that this time Churchill and the COS held different interpretations of a consensus based on an operative plan and situation which guaranteed to set off early repercussions.

This reckless move amounted to a two fold gamble: the effects of AVALANCHE would in fact open up a real opportunity, or else the uncertainty would be strong enough to contain Churchill's enthusiasm. This risk was accepted despite an ominous warning from the JSM about the general American attitude. The Americans were suspicious of British plans in every theatre and overall they considered recent British behaviour as

* *See below, Chapter 9*

"backsliding on TRIDENT." The JCS, supported by Roosevelt, apparently intended to stop this.[192] Nevertheless, the COS pressed on with an outline so full of uncertainties it was bound to raise American hackles. This suggests one profound point: they no longer felt they had any alternative.

Events helped reassure the COS their gamble was reasonable. Eisenhower was now very keen on AVALANCHE. American production of shipping and landing craft seemed likely to solve Allied problems by mid-1944. The Soviet advance proceeded so well that Stalin resumed relatively benign contact.[193] This seemed to justify moving into Italy to see what would happen. But most of all, what else could the British do? Brooke complained that the JCS failed to realize "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."[194] Italy was the bird in the hand. It was the only area where operations by concentrated Allied forces were underway, with the enemy in apparent disarray. The British could and did gamble that the Germans could not concentrate enough forces to crush an invasion and would not be willing to tie down forces in central Italy. Some of them could and did gamble that the Axis position would explode in the Balkans, opening up a chance to increase the pressure at no real risk. The evidence could not be conclusive, but to this point it seemed to indicate the Germans were reluctant to stand south of the Po. Yet it was impossible to state categorically that Allied armies would not bog down in Italy, and if they did they would not need to be reinforced. Nevertheless, the British made such arguments - partly because of the tendency to stress the positive, but partly also because this was now the only means to preserve "wear down" as the hub of Allied grand strategy.

If the term has any relevance, this was an "ulterior" motive. But it was **not** the motive Washington felt guided British actions. The really fundamental decisions as to how, where and why British power should be deployed in strength could only be made with the COS support. The COS decided on Italy because that was where "wear down" could safely proceed, and this became British policy. Unfortunately, the Americans did not believe that operational concerns were paramount in British decisions. The Americans did not understand why the British were willing to risk an open-ended pull into southern Europe but refused to risk a decisive clash in France. A different

perspective was a factor here: while American power was waxing, British power had peaked. If OVERLORD went forward before the Germans were worn down, the Americans would have to carry the campaign because British power would be spent; British influence would then decline. The margin was narrow. The British desperately needed an early victory. But the desire to pursue it on both safe and favourable terms was strong enough to influence the British to the point of wishful thinking. On the fundamental level, the American motive was equally "ulterior." QUADRANT was to settle the pattern of the synthesis once and for all.

The conference took place in the Citadel of Quebec from 14 to 24 August. It largely dealt with problems that had been on the agenda since Casablanca; but now was the time to knit the threads together and lay down a grand strategic offensive outline. The Allied offensive in Europe had been proceeding opportunistically since TORCH. The British, pressed by the fear that their overall power was declining faster than German combat power was being reduced, were quite content to maintain this approach. Early victory was essential, but current efforts had to continue until "wear down" succeeded. This did not suit the Americans. They were now determined to impose Allied will on the Germans and American policy on the British. However, this straightforward clash was diluted by continued Allied interdependence. The British strove above all to secure an offensive outline which remained as flexible as possible, to carry the war forward yet preserve their status in the coalition. The end result was quite unfortunate.

The basic question to be answered at QUADRANT was simple: how badly had the Axis been hurt, what could and might it still do? The Allies had reason for optimism. Since Casablanca, they had clearly seized the global initiative. The Japanese were now hard pressed in the Pacific. The Germans had been forced to declare and prosecute total war, devote large resources to air defence and run great risks to prop up their crumbling southern flank. While this was satisfactory, less so was the fact that the Germans had managed to respond to most challenges. In the face of escalating pressure, the Germans managed to intensify their war effort. The main armies had been battered

but were still deep inside Russia and far from finished. Air defences had been greatly strengthened. The JIC and MEW had now concluded that their appreciation of total German war potential had been inaccurate from the start. The intelligence authorities reluctantly admitted that more intense efforts would be required in order to inflict irreparable damage.[195] The JIC felt this could be accomplished, and argued that pressure in the Mediterranean would force the Germans to stretch their forces in response. Yet it was already clear that the Germans were in a position to make such a move. German forces were preparing to respond to any Italian collapse. German forces in Sicily fought hard and well. The Allies overran the island as the conference assembled but failed to prevent a German evacuation in fairly good order. Whatever factors seemed to blame, it was again clear that outgunned German forces had forced the Allies to mass overwhelming power to achieve incomplete success.[196]

The implications were ominous. A strong case could be made that while the Allies would not lose the initiative, they could neither relax the pressure nor attempt reckless moves. As if to underline the point, Bomber Command raided the German weapons research station at Peenemunde on 17 August, the day Sicily was cleared. The results were unclear, while that same day 8th Air Force suffered excessive losses in a raid on Schweinfurt. The extent of Allied latitude remained a central debate. Most American decision makers felt that British ambitions had pinned down Allied forces in the Mediterranean. In fact, as Michael Howard demonstrated, it had been German reactions and combat power that stalled TORCH and delayed the Allies in Sicily.[197] This underpinned the British case, which was that Allied combat power - the ability to engage enemy forces successfully - remained too weak in **relative** terms to challenge the Germans anywhere they might be able to mass really large ground forces. First, German power would have to be worn down further on favourable terms. That meant that all serious Allied assaults would have to be heavily supported and clearly successful. Only then could the main campaign begin. For the Americans, as will be seen, this was no longer convincing.

Despite the confusion caused by the rapidly changing situation in Italy, the fundamental issue was now fully mature. The CCS were able to grapple with the basic

difference over grand strategic approach and define it along agreed lines: the precise definition of the emphasis, objectives and interrelationships of the strategic bombing offensive, the drive on Italy, operations in the Balkans and OVERLORD. Both sides agreed they could and should intensify all efforts. Consensus and certainty ended there.

There was no great controversy about the strategic bombing offensive itself. The CCS described it in optimistic terms to Canadian representatives, but privately did not ignore a troubling fact - while Allied air forces in the Mediterranean were now as strong as the entire German Air Force, that force continued to pace the expansion and efforts of the U.K. based offensive. Portal led the debate on 14 and 16 August by citing the lag in POINTBLANK as the real problem. Eighth Air Force could still only assemble 921 operational aircraft, instead of a scheduled 1,068. Its losses now averaged over 6%. Meanwhile, the overall German fighter force had risen by 22%, to 2,600 first line aircraft; 600 were deployed in western Europe. Divided effort was not the problem. Bomber Command had doubled its load dropped on Germany since Casablanca, with "serious effects," and was now attacking Berlin. The problem was that the Germans were defeating 8th air Force. The CCS swallowed Portal's self serving case and agreed to redouble POINTBLANK efforts, as an urgent priority.[198] They decided this because the connection to OVERLORD was specifically reaffirmed and because the issue tied into the larger debate on the matter of the use of bases in Italy.

By now it was clear Allied armies would invade Italy. The outstanding issue was what their plan of campaign should be and how it was to be related to OVERLORD. The British started with a familiar case. The Eastern Front was and must remain the main land campaign. The Germans were still able to concentrate massive ground forces. That capability must be reduced, as the key to success in OVERLORD would not be absolute Allied strength but rather the potential **relative** strength the two sides could deploy. But now a crucial point was clearly expressed: the only safe way to impair German capability enough was to launch at least 17 divisions into Italy. There the Germans did not seem to intend, nor could they, to concentrate massive forces. A rapid Allied advance would secure the bases needed to galvanize POINTBLANK and force the Germans either to retreat all over southern Europe or strain to cover existing Italian

commitments. Whatever happened, German power would be stretched. This would meet all requirements safely, as long as forces were not moved from Italy arbitrarily. Whether they were needed to keep an advance moving or to secure a line, the seven divisions and landing craft to be transferred to the U.K. in November should go only if the situation allowed.[199]

The Americans agreed to invade Italy but repeated the TRIDENT conditions. The British chose to see them as a basis for agreement. This was stretching a point, as became clear on 15 August. The COS carefully agreed that the objective of the Italian campaign should be to create the necessary conditions for OVERLORD, "the main offensive in 1944." But on the other hand, on the grounds of first things first they objected to any overriding priority for the OVERLORD schedule. The JCS understood British arguments but remained convinced that they concealed "ulterior" motives, or would at best lead to another long campaign requiring more support. Their response was emphatic. If OVERLORD did not receive overriding priority, some urgent need would inevitably arise to delay the transfer of its assets. If the American position was not accepted, this would lead to a "new concept," which would prolong the war and force "a re-examination of our basic grand strategy, with a possible readjustment towards the Pacific."[200]

This brutal response reflected the basic lack of faith that now divided the CCS. The Americans suspected the British of hoping to further their political interests and preserve the dispersal of Allied forces which increased their voice in Allied policy. At best, they felt the British were paying lip service to OVERLORD in the hope events would hamper it. The British felt that the Americans were determined to launch the ultimate campaign, in order to take control of Allied policy, before it was safe to do so. They also feared that this would shut down the one European ground campaign in which British controlled forces would clearly dominate, perhaps at a vital moment. That would be strategically and politically unacceptable. The Americans finally made their ultimate suspicion crystal clear:

> "the acceptance of this design [TRIDENT schedule] must be made without conditions and without mental reservations. They accept the fact that a grave emergency will always call for appropriate action to meet it. However, long range decisions for the conduct of the war must not be dominated by possible eventualities."[201]

This was a pointed thrust at the very essence of "wear down." Marshall sent a senior aide to brief Roosevelt, en route to Quebec, and drove the point home in private consultations with Dill. The COS response to this moment of truth was clever, revealing and reckless. Privately they saw the idea of rigidly adhering to a set schedule as strategically foolhardy. But when the CCS debated the issue in successive closed sessions, the position that emerged was more subtle. The British pointedly accepted the central American demands. Then, on the grounds that the European war had to be treated as an interlocked struggle, they secured a clause which left open the vital question of emphasis. As agreed on 17 August the clause read:

> "As between operation OVERLORD and operations in the Mediterranean, where there is a shortage of resources, available resources will be distributed and employed with the main object of securing the success of OVERLORD. Operations in the Mediterranean theatre will be carried out with the forces allotted at TRIDENT, except in so far as these may be varied by decision of the CCS."[202]

On the surface, that seemed safely Americanized. OVERLORD was predominant and the CCS would control any review. The COS accepted OVERLORD as the main campaign and reaffirmed the transfer schedule on 19 August. Brooke warned Churchill to avoid discussion of alternatives in case the OVERLORD prerequisites were not met. In fact, the British now went out of their way to assure the Americans. Churchill spoke of increasing the size of the OVERLORD assault. Churchill and Brooke disclaimed any intention to press an advance north of the Po valley. Instead, a plan was to be prepared to attack the south of France in order to assist OVERLORD, if the situation allowed. Brooke even answered a Roosevelt query regarding plans to follow up a German retreat in the Balkans by suggesting that the Italian campaign would require all Allied divisions available. This was not disingenuous. It was estimated there were now 16 German divisions in Italy, albeit the British expected them to retreat to the north.[203] But there

was an element of self-delusion here which stemmed from a difference in perspective and a narrowing of options.

Privately, the British were pleased with the compromise. Brooke attributed the "quite fair results" to Dill. Ismay told Churchill the clause was "precisely what we set out to get."[204] In fact, the British were pleased because their aims had been lowered. Rising American leverage was a fact; so was OVERLORD. Therefore, the British were now ready to settle for a stay of execution, but that they had to have. The British prologue had to shape the American main act. The British saw the compromise as flexible, not restrictive, and made this clear at the Plenary Session on 23 August. For the record, Churchill stated that the British wholeheartedly accepted the primacy of OVERLORD but categorically refused to launch it unless conditions promised a reasonable chance of success. The decision to transfer forces from Italy might have to be reviewed if, as Brooke said, it was necessary to "keep one or two of these trained divisions in the Mediterranean **in order to create a more favourable situation for the success of OVERLORD or to avoid a setback in Italy.**[205] In other words, distributing resources "with the main object of securing the success of OVERLORD" might come to mean not moving them to the U.K. to make it stronger but keeping them in Italy to make it possible.

What were the precise implications of this elastic compromise for grand strategy in Europe? For POINTBLANK, it meant greater clarity - at least in principle. A major objective of the attack on Italy would be to allow POINTBLANK to be pressed "from all convenient bases."[206] For the Mediterranean, clarity depended on perspective. The COS remained convinced that activity in the eastern Mediterranean must be restricted to improvised small scale operations. But their own argument about interlocked campaigns and German behaviour confused the issue. It was agreed not to stage any major assault, but the theatre was not to be closed down. Churchill and the JIC argued that a major German effort was underway to hold the Balkans and it should be countered by increased aid to rebel forces. The Americans agreed to an extent, but still suspected a hidden agenda. One question could still not be answered: was it better to push the Germans out of the area or to force them to make a greater effort to hold it?[207] For several

reasons, the COS could not define a firm policy. They saw Balkan activity as an offshoot, in mutual support, of the drive into Italy, and shared Churchill's reluctance to turn a British theatre into a stagnant backwater. But the real problem was that it remained impossible to foresee exactly what would happen when the Italians surrendered. Each party, including within British circles, once again accepted an elastic accord in the hope that events would swing Allied policy in the direction they desired. That tenuous European accord was the core of the debate on global grand strategy, and it must dominate any conclusions on the impact of QUADRANT. Yet to make these conclusions intelligible, the other major issues discussed at the conference must be assessed first.

At least the situation in Europe was advanced enough to allow the CCS to set fairly obvious parameters. This was not the case in the war against Japan. Also, cross purposes between and within both sides, especially regarding the India area, continued to hamper efforts to define plans. The conference devoted a great deal of time to the war against Japan. The end result was not unsatisfactory to the COS, but this time they had to accept substantial changes and internal disputes in order to hold their position that British power was fully engaged elsewhere.

This was the first point at which an overall outline for grand strategic offensive against Japan could, and had to be, discussed in concrete terms. The British needed preliminary guidance regarding their future role in order to begin planning the necessary reorganization of national policy. The American services, after months of haggling over plans and slow but steady advances in the southwest Pacific, were now near agreement. The draft they presented incorporated earlier ideas and recent developments. The objective remained to isolate Japan and reduce Japanese air and seapower by submarine action and complementary thrusts towards China, from whence the final onslaught would be prepared. The drives through the central and southwest Pacific were now to converge on the Philippines by spring 1945. The British, with little real leverage, accepted American plans. In November 1943 the thrust from the central Pacific would begin. The overall aim was now to defeat Japan one year after victory in Europe; this would serve as the guideline for reorganization.[208]

This crystallizing of overall policy now made it necessary, all agreed, to sort out specific plans in the Indian Ocean area and set them in the larger context. Brooke, as always, insisted that no action unrelated to the overall outline should proceed. Both sides placed their familiar views on record. The Americans insisted that Chinese isolation be broken by major ground operations as soon as possible. The British declared that current options were restricted by weather problems in Assam, Chinese unreliability, the weaknesses of the Eastern Fleet and the Indian Army, and a looming supply crisis in India itself. The COS hoped to persuade the Americans to accept another erosion of plans. This, plus their use of Wingate as a talking piece, was a stark confession that they, as yet, saw no scope for serious action.[209]

The discussion was pressed in a new direction on 17 August by the evolution of the overall outline and the presence of Wingate. The Americans preferred an early attack on Burma to bypassing it in 1944, and were impressed by Wingate. The COS used this to develop, step by step, a new prospectus. An Indian division would be broken up to create larger LRPG forces, to move into northern Burma to complement conventional thrusts. The effort to increase the flow of supplies by air would continue. Stilwell would, in fact, assume a dual role, becoming Deputy Supreme Commander while retaining responsibility for American and Chinese forces. The COS would oversee plans, but the CCS would settle the allocation of resources. Unfortunately, Churchill nearly unravelled this neat compromise on 19 August. The Prime Minister, "ashamed" of previous efforts and always eager to press maximum contact, accepted the plans for 1943 but insisted that in 1944, rather than settle for "the future right to toil through the swamps of Burma," the Allies must bypass Burma and attack Sumatra.[210]

Brooke felt that this was part of what he saw as Churchill's greatest flaw: the tendency to be attracted to bold far flung ventures whether or not they were logistically feasible or related to the main objective. The real problem here was that the COS were reluctant to admit that the main objective was to do as little as possible before victory in Europe. The CCS considered the British case on 20 August. The British insisted that no major assault on Burma could be launched until the Allies had the resources to sustain it against any strong Japanese reaction. Was it better to supply China by air now or road

later? This case was plausible enough to open the way for several ideas in circulation for some time. An idea to sustain ground operations by lavish aerial supply, to avoid the logistic bottleneck, was to be studied. The prospects of deploying five groups of the new B29 "Superbomber" in China, through India, for an all out assault on Japan by 1945, were to be studied. The new Supreme Commander was to study a possible smaller assault to seize air bases in northern Sumatra.[211] A final package was assembled from these elements.

As before, the objective would be the early relief of China. Aerial supply was to continue. Limited ground advances, supported by LRPG forays, would be launched in early 1944. The logistic situation would govern only their **extent**. Preparations for an amphibious assault on Burma in 1944 would continue. The new Supreme Commander, Mountbatten, would oversee the conduct of these operations and the study of all other plans - with the exception of the aerial supply and B29 plans, which the Americans would control - and offer a recommendation on how the new South East Asia Command (SEAC) could best contribute to the overall outline. Churchill and the Americans considered this to be a guarantee of escalated action at last. The COS saw it as the formula that would provide enough action to satisfy their tormentors without affecting other plans.[212] Both saw the appointment of Mountbatten as confirming their point of view. Churchill again elevated him to impress the Americans and stir up the pot. The COS accepted him because they felt a lack of resources would restrict his actions, and appointed Pownall his Chief of Staff to "keep Dickie's feet on the ground." The COS were finding their rearguard action harder to maintain, but strong cards remained in play. Somerville could be relied upon to object to any action at all. Churchill could ultimately be persuaded that the war in Europe came first and American influence in the area could not be allowed to expand. The Chinese could be relied on to fail to uphold their end. Most of all, the tangled web of logistic and political cross purposes written into SEAC's very charter could be relied on to impede any serious escalation.[213]

The essential corollary to the settlement of these great questions of offensive plans was the usual strategic "audit." As before, the final verdict reflected Allied positions and

perceptions. This audit was a more accurate exercise than its predecessors. For one thing, the Allies were by now quite experienced at the whole process. Also, the consequences of deployments before 1943 were now accepted. Finally, the Allies were losing far less materiel at sea. U.K. import targets were now in hand; indeed, Leathers warned against over-optimism.[214] With few exceptions, all necessary forces were expected to be available where and when required. The one serious uncertainty was at least recognized: landing craft. Erratic production decisions, strategic fluctuations and shaky compromises now exacted their price. Morgan made it clear that the use of LST for logistics in Sicily, the inflation of OVERLORD and the emergence of AVALANCHE made the TRIDENT estimates obsolete. The position was now clear: because requirements were greater and British capacity had been devoted to specialized support types, the utter reliance on American output meant that even if all transfers returned on time that output would have to be increased, to cover a 13% margin. King agreed to consider reversing policy on production of new craft, but inserted a specific clause in the "audit" to reinforce the basic compromise: the OVERLORD priority meant further operations elsewhere were on no account to upset the scheduled transfers to the U.K. The COS were warned that no more LST could be built in the U.K. and no additional U.S. output would arrive in time for OVERLORD. Nevertheless, their interpretation did not change: every effort was to be made to meet the transfer date **subject to the essential needs of AVALANCHE.**[215] Mutual suspicion and different approaches thus undermined the "audit" in the one item most at risk regarding the strains of the coming year.

Like its predecessors, QUADRANT was foremost a council of war. But the emergence of several issues with implications for post-war prospects could not be ignored. One such was the development of the nuclear weapon. Churchill followed up previous agreements with a promise by Roosevelt to maintain development in the U.S. as a joint enterprise. In return, Churchill abandoned any right to independent British use of the results after the war. This potentially placed Britain's long term strategic future in American hands, but in Churchill's view this merely reflected the realities of

power.[216] Relations with the Soviets were another matter. In fact, the issue now became acute enough to intrude on the discussions of the CCS.

The chronic difficulties of dealing with the Soviets, the mystery about their recent flirtations with Germans, and the advance of the Red Army meant two major questions now had to be faced. Would the Grand Alliance fall apart as soon as the war ended because of fundamental rivalry? Should Allied grand strategy take this prospect into account? QUADRANT provided no answers, but did expose some interesting trains of thought. The basic British assumptions were well known. The Soviets were essential partners in the war effort but a very uncertain post-war factor. The Allies should try to assuage Soviet concerns but had to stay in step when dealing with Moscow. Whitehall saw a fully equal British voice in this area as an overriding national interest. Unfortunately, the disparity of power which compelled the British to rely on the Soviets - much to Churchill's frustration - was well understood. As a timely reminder, it was made clear to the "rolling seminar" that the Germans had lost 12 men on the Eastern Front for every one lost due to Imperial activities.[217] The grand strategic aspects of this disparity were cause for concern. Should the Allies consider a Soviet advance westwards as a political aspect of their policy to defeat Germany? Or must they simply risk the consequences, in order to keep the Red Army on the march?

The issue was actually raised by Marshall, on 20 August. Marshall wondered about the risk of a separate peace and whether the British had any views on the Soviets with regard to the deployment of Allied forces. Brooke's reply was interesting. The British had "often considered" this issue and felt there was no danger of a separate peace; also, as long as they secured "concessions" on the border, the Soviets would be weak enough at war's end to need Allied goodwill.[218] This is the only record of formal CCS discussion of Soviet post-war policy as a factor in grand strategy before 1944. That certainly suggests the Germans were of greater concern. Brooke's reply indicated a desire for spheres of influence but suggested nothing about the impact of the problem on the COS thinking. In fact, the decision to attack Italy and not the Balkans suggests that operational factors still predominated. But it was clearly becoming more difficult to

compartmentalize the problem. The clearest indication of this came not from the British but from the Americans.

On 23 August the CCS approved the outline plans for RANKIN. When the plan was submitted later that day to Churchill and Roosevelt, the latter insisted that whatever happened the Allies must be prepared "to get to Berlin as soon as did the Russians." This was the opposite of pristine naivete. In fact, it seems that the Americans were now far along in sorting out a comprehensive national war policy and grand strategy designed to ensure their leadership of post-war reorganization. The concept involved relating the idea of a concentration of force to project preponderant power into the most critical area with future relations with the Soviets. Marshall's query was a probe. The Americans had already rejected the spectre of a separate peace and expected an independent and ambitious Soviet posture. They had also developed a program to meet all their needs, based on the launching of a "Second Front" in northwest Europe. This seemed likely to please the Soviets, and even if relations subsequently worsened this would place far more Allied - especially American - forces on the Continent, at the critical time, than any other plan.[219] This fundamental level was where the deepest motives were to be found. The British wanted "wear down" as now planned because it seemed best suited to relating their capabilities to their various interests. The Americans wanted OVERLORD for similar reasons, and their ideas were more concrete.

The remaining major issues also were handled in a manner that reflected current views of Allied prospects. The Atlantic situation now received only routine attention; the COS agreed to maintain the commitment to keep the U-Boats in check.[220] Now confident of their dominance west of Italy, the Allies agreed to stiffen pressure on Spain to assist the blockade. Similar stiffening was to be tried on Turkey, but as no major operations were to be mounted in that area the demand for Turkish intervention was to be soft-pedalled until the situation cleared. The French headache only worsened. Giraud and de Gaulle had formed a Committee of National Liberation in Algiers in June. The Allies hoped the latter would be harnessed by this arrangement, but it was already clear that the opposite was likely to be the case.[221] The French remained a very uncertain factor, as Allied plans involving their territory took shape.

With this comprehensive picture, an attempt can now be made to define some conclusions. The temptation to see the great Allied conferences as watersheds is strong. QUADRANT is no exception. In fact, it is at the eye of the hurricane that the literature on Allied grand strategy represents. Stoler saw QUADRANT as the height of mutual suspicion and the American stand on OVERLORD as a decisive victory. Morison insisted that this victory was diluted by the survival of what he saw as Brooke's desire to mount the major advance on Germany through Italy. Matloff, more convincingly, saw a completed synthesis, with two important exceptions: there was still no definitive outline for an offensive against Japan and British resolve in SEAC remained uncertain. From the British perspective, Parkinson saw the result as a sensible synthesis needlessly aggravated by American failure to grasp the main motives of the COS program. The Official Historians of British grand strategy considered QUADRANT so important that the volumes broke and resumed at this point. Howard, looking back, saw it as the sensible and unavoidable convergence of pursuing favourable lines in the Mediterranean and a timely and irreversible commitment to OVERLORD. Ehrman, looking ahead, saw the laying of the definitive blueprint for the grand strategic offensive in Europe and the embryo for the same against Japan. Both saw it as a satisfactory but temporary consensus. Some of these arguments are more equal than others.[222] The points to pursue are those raised by Morison and Matloff.

To describe QUADRANT as a total victory for one approach or the other is absurd. Matloff was right - the issue was not the facts of American preponderance and the primacy of OVERLORD but whether the British would accept either categorically. The essence of the British position was that they had no intention of doing so in either case. The operative factors were fundamental assumptions and the situation in the field. The British left QUADRANT as they entered it: quietly leaning in different directions regarding the eastern Mediterranean. By the end of the conference, events in Italy made the "opportunity" so keenly desired by Churchill and Wilson, and now ruled out by the COS, seem inevitable.[223] In fact, the fast moving situation in Italy pulled QUADRANT, to a large extent, along in its wake. Allied intelligence monitored ongoing German preparations to react in Italy, but continued to insist that the perhaps 20

divisions deployed would not make a determined stand below northern Italy. Meanwhile, secret talks were conducted with emissaries of the new Badoglio government. By the end of the conference, it seemed certain that the Italian government would surrender and its forces would help the Allies seize Rome before the Germans could react. The euphoria of the situation had its effect. The conference directed the Allied commanders to attack Italy and drive north as fast and as far as possible.[224] AFHQ sorted out and altered its plans, settling on a dual stroke: BAYTOWN, a bound across the Straits of Messina by Eighth Army in very early September, and AVALANCHE, an invasion near Naples by Fifth Allied Army days later, aimed to link up with airborne forces dropped to seize Rome. Morison's charge that this fulfilled a deep laid specific plan falls down on one startling point: the Allies decided to return to the Continent with no clear idea of what might happen or what the precise objective should be for the forces involved.

The evidence is overwhelming. Eisenhower later noted that the final decision came only after HUSKY was completed. The JCS were surprised to learn on 20 August that AVALANCHE had not yet been authorized. Montgomery complained on 19 August that he had been given no objective. Alexander gave him a terse handwritten directive the next day - follow the Germans up the "toe" and attempt to engage them **there** in order to assist AVALANCHE. Eisenhower was directed to seize Rome, secure air bases, and then "maintain unremitting pressure on the German forces in **northern** Italy," to create the necessary conditions for OVERLORD.[225] The conclusion is obvious: AFHQ had a grand strategic objective, but no clear **campaign strategy**.

Obvious or not the problem continues to be an issue for debate. Tuvia Ben-Moshe agreed that the COS only decided to send ground forces into Italy because they did not expect the Germans to fight for Rome, but implied that for that very reason the argument that the aim was to assist OVERLORD by straining the Germans was at best incoherent. This analysis is too narrow. Eliot Cohen came closer: the Germans would have to hold somewhere, even at the Brenner, and more importantly they would have to react in the Balkans and the Aegean. But even this must now be fleshed out. "Wear down" was at a dead end; for operational and status concerns, it could not be allowed to falter. Together, all these factors shaped an impulsive decision, a point so important

that it will be taken up at length below. For now, it must be noted that the problem of imprecise objectives was brought to the attention of QUADRANT. AFHQ warned that even though only four German divisions were expected to delay the Allied advance south of Pisa, it required 16 divisions to hold a secure line north of Rome. As the lines of supply would be overstrained, only 12 were expected to be in place by late November.[226] The Allies had, in practice, decided to base their campaign strategy on the assumption that the Germans would retreat and allow them to organize. There was no deliberate deceit, but neither was there a "master plan"; of several factors, those immediately dominant were uncertainty and the desire for action for its own sake.

The real impact of QUADRANT was that its decisions and how they were made reflected the consequences of parallel convergence and divergence. Convergence brought OVERLORD to the fore but pushed Allied armies into Italy. Divergence divided the Allies over how to make the transition from one thrust to the other. The Americans gambled that progress in Italy would enable the transition to proceed without dissent. The British gambled that the same result would lead to the clear success of "wear down." The Americans felt their preponderance would serve as a guarantee. The British felt interdependence would fill the same function. The weak hand was held by the British. Opportunism and circumstances, not calculation, brought them to the point where the only realistic way to extend "wear down" was a half defined surge into Italy. Also, interdependence set narrower limits on the British; they could do very little without American participation. There was not, at this point, any trace of a desire to drive north through the Alps into Germany. But in its place were two more serious factors. Churchill and the COS gambled, recklessly, that they could launch a major British led ground campaign and later **bring it to a halt**, successful **or not**, if necessary. They did this without probing the point closely because they sincerely felt that "wear down" had to succeed before OVERLORD could go and there now seemed no other way.

Yet the QUADRANT decision did mark a transition, one based on events and decisions since TORCH but also a clear break from the prevailing pattern. OVERLORD would go in 1944. The British now had to work around that.[227] QUADRANT

marked, in practice, the end of their equal imprint on grand strategy. Nevertheless, this was neither a clear nor a clean break. The period from after Casablanca to QUADRANT was a distinct phase, part of a longer continuum but one which built up to a break. Allied fortunes shifted decisively. Whereas in February the British wondered whether they would have enough ships to survive, in August the great concern was whether there would be enough landing craft to mount all the desired operations. However, this decisive shift developed in a strongly qualified manner. Allied combat power, especially at sea and in the air, became truly formidable; but logistic strain and a weakness in quality on land continued to restrict the scope of its use. The Allies realized that despite their real contribution, the bulk of German combat power remained absorbed by the Soviets. The British, more conscious of relative weakness, saw the shift of power within the coalition outpace the success of its grand strategy. Their reaction only aggravated American suspicions. That twice forced the Allies to confer in an attempt to restore consensus, but their success was incomplete. The Americans pressed OVERLORD, in order to seize control of grand strategy and impose their policy of seeking a decisive clash with the German Army in the field and commanding the scene at the end of the day. But the fact of interdependence forced them to allow current efforts to proceed. The British tried to exploit this, not to kill OVERLORD, but to make it what they had always envisaged - the decisive but final stroke against a battered Germany, worn down wherever feasible by a process which preserved British power and status.

The two concepts might have merged smoothly at QUADRANT, but in fact did not. The Americans would not make the adjustments required to ease the bottleneck that artificially crowded OVERLORD and Italy. Why? Because they did not believe the British were moved primarily by perceived relative military weakness. Washington equated the phantom - so far - desire to push large armies into the Balkans ahead of the Soviets with the genuine desire to preserve activity in a theatre which lent influence to the British voice in Allied policy. The COS convinced the Americans that an attack on Italy would be as useful in preparing OVERLORD as was POINTBLANK; therefore, AVALANCHE went ahead. They failed to convince them that the British hesitation

regarding OVERLORD was a matter of emphasis rather than principle.[228] Therefore, the Americans used their leverage to push the British to a point of desperation. In that mood, the British formally agreed to a change but reserved the right to act, if necessary, as if it was not yet definitive. This was the result of a clash of ultimate policies: one seeking to bring about decisive battle, the other to make it a safe finale. "Wear down" had been superseded, but the British felt unable to let it go. Therefore, while this period produced a break, it left open the questions of when and how British policy would conform.

Endnotes to Chapter 8

1. Dunn, passim; Grigg, J. 1943: The Victory that Never Was, London, 1980, passim. See also below, Chapters 9 and 11, Conclusion.

2. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 14/38, Dill to Brooke, 9/2/43; UW, JCS Papers, Pacific, Reel 12, Memorandum for Information #44, 22/2/43; PRO, CAB80/67, COS(43)78(0), 24/2/43; CAB88/2, CCS minutes, 19/2/43.

3. PT, vol.2, Wavell-COS, 15/2, 3/3, Wavell-Brooke, 16/3, 22/3/43; CCA, Somerville Papers, 8/1, Somerville to Pound, 11/3/43.

4. PRO, CAB79/26, COS minutes, 19/3/43; PT, vol.2, Wavell-COS, 15/2, 3/3, Wavell-WO,23/2, Wavell-Brooke, 31/3, COS(I)48, 9/4/43; CCA, Somerville Papers, Somerville to Admiralty, 11/4/43.

5. PRO, CAB79/60, COS minutes, 10/4, 13/4, 28/4/43; 79/88, Secretary's Standard File, 19/4/43.

6. UW, JCS Papers, Pacific, Reel 3, JIC80/1, 5/3, JCS260, 12/4/43; Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 19/3, 21/3, 6/4/43; PT, vol.2, Wavell-Churchill, 9/3, Wavell-COS, 10/4/43; PRO, CAB88/2, CCS minutes, 16/4, 30/4/43.

7. PRO, CAB65/34, War Cabinet minutes, 14/4/43; CAB79/60, COS minutes, 8/4, 9/4/43; PT, vol.2, Wavell-COS, 3/5/43; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 682-683, noted that it was necessary to convince the Americans of British resolve regarding Burma in order to help "all our great business"; Callahan, Burma, 1942-1945, 57-53; Allen, 148.

8. PT, vol.4, Churchill-Wilson, 12/2/43.

9. Howe, Appendix B; Keegan, J. The Second World War, New York, 1990, 236, 341-343.

10. PT, vol.7, Eisenhower-CCS, NAF149, 15/2, 19/2, 25/2, Alexander-Brooke, 7/3/43; IWM, Montgomery Papers, 49, Montgomery to Brooke, 6/3, 8/3/43. Montgomery typically glossed over the role of intelligence in his own success here. Hinsley, vol.2, 595. For a lively debate over whether Allied headquarters should reasonably have been prepared for the Kasserine attack see: Hinsley, vol.2, Appendix 21, and Bennett, 376.

11. PT, vol.7, Alexander-Brooke, 19/2, 21/2, 22/2, Alexander-Churchill, 27/2/43; IWM, Montgomery Papers, 49, Montgomery to Brooke, 16/2, 23/2/43. Alexander and Montgomery were also critical of Anderson's handling of First

Army. CCCA, Portal Papers, 4/17, Portal-Churchill correspondence, 24-28/2/43; PRO, CAB80/67, COS(43)72/(0), 20/2/43.

12. PT, vol.7, Eisenhower-CCS, 15/2, 23/3, NAF 202 5/4, Montgomery-Churchill, 26/3, Montgomery-Brooke, 28/3, Alexander-Churchill, 12/4, 28/4, 30/4/43; PRO, CAB79/59, COS minutes, 17/2, 23/2/43; IWM, Montgomery Papers, 49, Montgomery to Brooke, 17/3, 4/4, 15/4, 30/4/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 14/63, Alexander to Brooke, 3/4/43.

13. PRO, CAB88/2, CCS minutes, 12/2/43; CAB79/59, COS minutes, 15/2, 16/2, 17/2, 20/2/43; 79/60, 24/3/43.

14. PRO, CAB79/26, JIC(43)101(0), COS minutes, 15/3/43; 79/60, 2/4, 3/4, JIC (43)150(0), 6/4/43; PT, vol.7, Eisenhower-CCS, NAF 192, 27/3, COS (W)566, 7/4/43.

15. A tedious and familiar episode, with practical consequences noted below, p.557, and traceable in IWM, Montgomery Papers, 4/9, Montgomery-Brooke correspondence, 17/3-30/4/43, and BL, Cunningham Papers, 52561, Cunningham to Pound, 28/4, 8/5/43.

16. IWM, Montgomery papers, 49, Montgomery to Brooke, 23/2, 15/4/43, underlined as usual the need to concentrate great force; PRO, CAB80/67, COS(43)75(0), 23/2/43; CAB79/59, COS minutes, 22/2, 26/2/43; 79/60, 29/3, 2/4, 8/4, 10/4/43; CAB69/5, DO(43), 7, 13/4/43; D'Este, Bitter Victory, 62-68; Howard, vol.IV, 351, 369.

17. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 23/3 Supplementary, 6/4/43; Kimball, vol.2, R-270, 11/4/43.

18. PRO, CAB88/2, CCS minutes, 16/4/43; CAB79/60, COS minutes, 10/4, 22/4/43; CAB80/60, COS(43)210(O), 24/4/43; it would also be fair to suggest this plan flew against the grain of British caution and respect for German combat power, i.e. BL, Cunningham Papers, 52561, Pound to Cunningham, 24/4/43, and LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VIII, 17/4/43 diary entry; PT, vol.6, Dill-COS, 19/4/43. Dill also seconded Whitehall's view that a rift might open in this issue between Roosevelt and the JCS.

19. PRO, CAB79/59, COS minutes, 26/2/43; 79/60, 3/4, 4/4, 12/4, 13/4/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-279, 5/4/43.

20. PRO, CAB79/60, COS minutes, 8/4, 12/4, JIC(43)160(O), 13/4, 14/4, 15/4, 20/4/43. This evidence cannot support the argument that a specific Mediterranean campaign plan was prearranged; but, the original idea of "knocking out" Italy was clearly a constant factor from 1940.

21. PT, vol.4, MEDC-COS, 22/2, 18/3, C's in C-COS, 22/2, Douglas-Portal, 18/3/43; PRO, CAB80/67, COS(43)70(O), 2/3, COS(43)94(60), 2/3/43; 80/39, COS(43)89, 22/3/43; CAB79/25, COS minutes, JIC(43)52(O), 11/2/43; 79/59, 4/3/43; CCA, Knatchbull Hugessen papers, 1/14, 3/3, 17/4/43 diary entries; CCCA Portal Papers, 12/12, Douglas to Portal, 20/3/43.

22. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VIII, 29/4/43 diary entry; PRO, CAB80/60, COS(43)168(O), 30/3/43.

23. PT, vol.4, Wilson-Brooke, 10/4, 18/4, COS(ME)374, 29/4/43; PRO, PREM 3/3/6, Eden to Churchill, 9/4 reply, 10/4, Ismay to Churchill, 20/4/43; CCCA, Portal Papers, 12/12, Portal to Douglas, 6/4/43.

24. PRO, CAB79/60, COS minutes, 22/4, 29/4/43; IWM, Montgomery Papers, 64, Memorandum to 18th Army Group, 26/4/43, regarding HUSKY.

25. UW, JCS Papers, Europe, Reel 10, JIC 91/1, 21/4/43.

26. PRO, CAB79/59, COS minutes, 26/2, 12/3/43; 79/26, 6/3/43; CAB80/67, COS(43)99(O), 4/3/43. The crucial shipping issue is dealt with below.

27. PRO, CAB88/2, CCS minutes, 26/2, 5/3/43; CAB79/27, COS minutes, 6/3, 8/3, 10/3, 12/4/43; 79/60, 25/3, 1/4/43; CAB80/68, COS(43)170(O), 1/41, COS(43)115(O), 11/3/43; PT, vol.6, COS(W)526, 12/3; JSM 815, 16/3, COS(W)564, COS(W)565, 6/4/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 13/4, 20/4/43, wherein Marshall accepted the compromise as favourable.

28. PRO, CAB80/68, COS(43)148(O), 23/3/43.

29. PRO, CAB79/26, COS minutes, 6/3/43; 79/60, 26/3/43; CAB80/68, COS(43)125(O), 14/3/43; CAB88/2, CCS minutes, 16/4, 23/4/43.

30. PRO, CAB79/59, COS minutes, 19/2, 20/2/43; 79/60, 1/5/43; CAB80/68, COS(43)186(O), 12/4/43; 80/69, COS(43)224(O), 29/4, COS(43)247(O), 10/5, COS(43)248(O), 10/5/43; CCCA Portal Papers, 7/2, Leigh-Mallory to Portal, 24/2, 15/4/43.

31. PRO, CAB80/60, COS(43)148(O), 23/3, COS(43)149(O), 23/3, COS(43)150(O), 23/2/43; PREM 3/333/13, Grigg to Churchill, 12/4/43; CAB79/60, COS minutes, 30/3/43.

32. PRO, CAB79/60, COS minutes, 23/4, 27/4/43; Howard, British Intelligence, vol.5, 72-75.

33. PRO, CAB79/59, COS minutes, 17/2, 20/2/43; CAB80/68, COS(43)194(O), 13/4, COS(43)202(O), 18/4, COS(43)219(O), 29/4/43.

34. PRO, PREM 3/333/12, Pile to Churchill, 23/3/43, for a dissenting British voice; Howard, Vol. IV, 362; Hinsley, vol.3, 3-8.

35. PRO, CAB69/5, DO(43)3, 23/2/43; CAB80/60, COS(43)152(O), 24/3/43; CAB79/60, COS minutes, 29/3/43; IWM, Montgomery Papers, 49, Montgomery to Brooke, 16/2/43, recorded a commonly held view at the time: it would take all of 1943 to "give a Italy a proper bang," but then in 1944 a move into France would be necessary (preferably led by Montgomery himself); Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 648-653; Howard, vol. IV, 329-330; Taylor, Beaverbrook, 542.

36. PR0, CAB79/25, COS minutes, JIC(43)53(O), 15/2/43; CAB66/34, WP(43)82, 23/2, WP(43)154, 14/4/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, G65, Day to Cherwell, 12/2/43; Hinsley, vol.2, 129, 136-138, 144-145, 151-153, 157-159, 517.

37. PRO, CAB80/68, COS(43)185(O), 12/4/43; PREM3/29/4, RAF Order of Battle, U.K. Commands, 5/3/43; NCA, Cherwell papers, G197, Cherwell to Churchill, 29/1, 26/3, 29/4/43; G65, "Forecast Expansion RAF and USAAF in U.K.," 12/2/43. In February the tonnage of bombs dropped on Germany surpassed the peak total dropped on the U.K., in September 1940, for the first time. Hinsley, vol.2, 515; Frankland & Webster, vol.2, 3. See also Appendix D.

38. PRO, CAB88/2, CCS minutes, 19/2, 26/3/43.

39. PRO, CAB79/59, COS minutes, 19/2/43; 79/26, JIC(43)78, 1/3, JIC(43)99, 12/3/43; 79/60, JIC(43)171, 22/4/43.

40. PRO, CAB79/60, COS minutes, JIC(43)171, 22/4, 27/4, 29/4/43; CAB66/34, Map Room Weekly Report, 25/2/43; Hinsley, vol.2, 616; Howarth, 165.

41. PRO, CAB80/67, COS(43)97(O), 4/3/43; CAB79/26, COS minutes, 5/3/43.

42. PRO, CAB79/60, COS minutes, 20/3/43; PREM 3/333/12, Pile to Churchill, 23/3/43, CAB80/68, COS(43)195(O), 18/4/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F177, Cherwell to Churchill, 28/4/43.

43. CCA, Portal Papers, 4/24, Tedder to Churchill, 30/1, Churchill to Portal, 13/3, reply, 14/3/43; 10/25, Harris to Portal, 9/4/43. Harris' uncritical argument claimed that the Ruhr position population was a good test case as it was "less Nazi" than other areas. Frankland & Webster, vol.2, 15.

44. UW, JCS Papers, Europe, Reel 9, JCS277, 29/4/43; Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 29/4, 4/5/43 Supplementary; PRO, CAB80/40, COS(43)144, 30/4/43; Frankland & Webster, vol.2, 17; Matloff, 71.

45. CCA, Hankey Papers, 4/35, Hankey to Simon, 5/2/43; PRO, CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 24/2, 3/3, 10/3, 7/4/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, G128, Butt-Cherwell correspondence, 3/43; Roskill, vol.2, 366-368; Keegan, J., The Price of Admiralty, New York, 1989, 263; Costello & Hughes, 279; Hinsley, vol.2, 556; Beesley, 180-184.

46. Howard, vol.IV, 316.

47. PRO, CAB80/107, Graphic Summary of the War, Charts 16-18; CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 24/2, 3/3, 10/3, 21/4/43; PREM 3/387/3, Escort Returns, "Avenge Effectives," 7/2, 7/3, 4/4/43.

48. PRO, CAB79/25, COS minutes, 11/2/43; CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 17/2/43; CCA, Hankey Papers, 13/4, passim; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 20/4/43; Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 8, JCS 268, 19/4, JCS 268/1, 3/5, 7/5/43; Roskill, vol.2, 358, 362; Van Der Vat, 317-318, 325-327; Milner, 214-240.

49. PRO, CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 17/2, 3/3, AUB(43)68, 10/3/43; CCA, Pound Papers, McLachlan-Moore interview, 28/10/67; NCA, Cherwell Papers, G126, Butt to Cherwell, 13/1, 19/1, 6/2/43; G127, 22/1, 8/2/43; Roskill, vol.2, 362.

50. PRO, CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 10/3, 17/3, 24/3/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, G128, Butt-Cherwell correspondence, 3/43, Portal to Cherwell, 27/3/43; Roskill, vol.2, 362.

51. PRO, CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 17/3-12/5/43; CAB88/2, CCS minutes, 19/3-30/4/43; CAB80/68, COS(43)196(O), 16/4/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes 16/3, 23/3, 29/3/43; PT, vol.5, JSM 817, 17/3, COS(W)538, 19/3/43; CCA, Portal Papers, 4/27, Evill to Portal, 26/3/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, G137, ? to Cherwell, 13/4/43; F176, Cherwell to Churchill, 13/4/43; Roskill, vol.2, 369-371; Costello & Hughes, 261.

52. PRO, CAB79/25, COS minutes, 13/2/43; CAB69/2, DC(O) minutes, 23/2/43; CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 17/2, 3/3, 10/3/43; CCCA, Portal Papers, 10/23, Harris-Portal correspondence, 30/3-27/4/43.

53. PRO, CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 31/3, 14/4/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F176, Cherwell to Churchill, 15/4, 19/4/43.

54. CCA, Robinson papers, 2/2/3, "Comparative Axis-UN Production," 3/8/43.

55. PRO, CAB80/67, COS(43)73(O), 22/3/43; CAB79/59, COS minutes, 24/2/43; 79/60, 22/3, 27/3, 9/4, 4/5/43.

56. PRO, CAB79/59, COS minutes, 15/3, 17/3, 20/3/43; CAB69/5, DC(O) minutes, 16/3/43; CAB65/38, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 5/4/43. See also below, note 150.

57. Behrens, 332-335; Leighton & Coakley, 688-705; Leighton, R.M., "US Merchant Shipping and the British Import Crisis," in Greenfield, Command Decisions, 205-222.

58. PRO, CAB66/34, WP(43)60, 10/2/43.

59. PRO, CAB79/59, COS minutes, 18/2, 9/3/43; CAB65/33, War Cabinet minutes, 18/2/43; CAB80/68, COS(43)126(O), 14/3/43; PT, vol.2, Wavell-COS, 8/3/43.

60. PRO, CAB79/26, COS minutes, 27/2, 4/3/43; 79/59, 1/3/43; CAB80/67, COS(43)101(O), 4/3, COS(43)107(O), 7/3/43.

61. PRO, CAB79/59, COS minutes, 26/2, 7/3, 9/3/43; 79/60, 23/3/43; CAB66/35, WP(43)105, 10/3, WP(43)106, 11/3/43.

62. NCA, Cherwell Papers, F171, Cherwell to Churchill 12/2, 17/2/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VIII, 25/2/43, diary entry; PRO, CAB79/59, COS minutes, 24/2/43; PT, vol.6, COS(W)492, 24/2/43; Leighton & Coakley, 688-690.

63. PT, vol.6, JSM 759, 25/2, JSM 775, 3/3/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 2/3/43; PRO, CAB88/2, CCS minutes, 26/2/43; Leighton & Coakley, 688-691.

64. PRO, CAB88/2, CCS minutes, 5/3, 12/3, 19/3/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 9/3/43.

65. PRO, CAB88/2, CCS minutes, 19/3/43; CAB80/68, COS(43)147(O), 22/3/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 23/3/43; PT, vol.6, JSM 818, 18/3/43; Leighton & Coakley, 691-699.

66. Kimball, vol.2, C-273/1, 24/3/43.

67. UW, JCS Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 7, JCS 251/2, 10/4/43; PRO, CAB79/60, COS minutes, 1/4/43; CAB71/11, LPC minutes, 7/4/43; PT, vol.6, JSM 850, 31/3/43; Leighton & Coakley, 697-701; the margin between British import capacity and need remained 7 million tons.

68. Kimball, vol.2, R-266, 29/3, R-268, 1/4, R-270, 11/4/43, 177.

69. PRO, CAB79/60, COS minutes, 31/3, 3/4, 9/4/43; PT, vol.6, JSM 875, 10/4/43; Matloff, 87-88.

70. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VIII, 15/4, 6/5/43, diary entries.

71. PRO, CAB65/38, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 29/4/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-291, 29/4, R-275, 2/5/43; CCA, Hickleton Papers, A4/410/4.15, Halifax to Eden, 14/4/43.

72. PRO, CAB65/38, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 13/4/43; 65/34, minutes, 27/4/43; CAB66/35, WP(43)136, 5/4, WP(43)143, 7/4/43; 66/36, WP(43)168, 21/4/43; Kimball, vol.2, R-275/1, 8/5/43, 208-209.

73. PRO, CAB65/37, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 29/3/43; 65/38, 13/4, 3/5/43; 65/34, minutes, 12/4, 19/4/43; Kimball, vol.2, 192-205.

74. PRO, CAB79/26, COS minutes, 4/3, 12/4/43; 79/59, 3/3, 19/3/43; CAB80/68, COS(43)142(O), 20/3, COS(43)157(O), 26/3, COS(43)175(O), 3/4/43. An increasingly clear picture of the role envisaged for resistance forces now emerged. Resistance Groups, small guerilla bands, would disrupt the enemy before Allied invasion. Patriot Forces, organized units, would directly assist the Allied advance. Compare this to the "igniter" vision of 1940-41.

75. Howard, vol.IV, 391.

76. Kimball, vol.2, C-268, 25/4/43; PRO, CAB65/34, War Cabinet minutes, 9/4, 14/4/43; CAB 79/60, COS minutes, 3/5, 6/5/43; CAB 80/69, COS(43)230(O), 1/5/43; CCA, Knatchbull-Hugessen papers, 1/14, 5/5, 6/5, 10/5/43 diary entries; PT, vol.4, Commanders-in-Chief-COS, 2/5, 6/5, COS(ME)375, 4/5/43; CCCA, Portal Papers, 12/13, Douglas to Portal, 4/5/43.

77. PRO, CAB79/60, COS minutes, 4/5/43.

78. PRO, CAB79/60, COS minutes, 4/5/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-286, 25/4/43.

79. Leighton & Coakley, 661; Leighton & Coakley, Global Logistics and Strategy 1943-1945, 23, 26-27; PRO, CAB80/39, COS(43)46, 12/2/43.

80. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 10/5/43.

81. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 30/3, 6/4, 27/4, 4/5, 8/5, 10/5/43; Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 13, JCS272, 26/4, JCS272/1, 5/5, JCS285, 6/5, JCS290/1, 8/5/43; Leighton & Coakley, 1940-1943, 651-654, felt Roosevelt was still not solidly behind the JCS; Matloff, 125, disagreed, and saw the 8 May decision as a turning point.

82. UW, JCS Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 13, JCS271, 24/4, JCS283/1, 3/5/43; JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 10/5/43; Stoler, 81-91; Matloff, 59-69, 121-125. See below, page 561, for the broader aspects of JCS thinking.

83. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 30/3/43; PRO, CAB79/60, COS minutes, 4/5/43; CAB80/69, COS(43)243(O), 6/5/43; PT, vol.6, JSM 860, 6/4, JSM 872, 10/4/43; Leighton and Coakley, 1943-1945, 6, 18, 24, 49-56, 61.

84. PRO, CAB88/10, CCS 199/1, 13/4, CCS 199/2, 23/4/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 14/38, Dill to Brooke, 24/4, Brooke to Churchill, 27/4, reply, 30/4/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes 27/4/43.

85. PRO, CAB88/2, CCS minutes, 23/4, 30/4/43; Kimball, vol.2, note R-274/2, 30/4, not sent, and R-275, 2/5/43.

86. PT, vol.6, JSM 915, 1/5/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 4/5/43.

87. PT, vol.7, Alexander-Churchill 30/4, 8/5/13/5/43; CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 12/5, 26/5, 9/6/43; CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, Plenary Session, 24/5/43; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 678, 681.

88. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, COS minutes, 6/5, 8/5/43; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 681-682.

89. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, COS minutes, 6/5, 9/5, 10/5/43; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 682-685.

90. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, COS minutes, 8/5, 9/5/43. This uncertainty as to a specific strategy and objective in Italy is a vital point, discussed at length below.

91. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, COS minutes, 6/5, 9/5, 10/5/43; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 682-685.

92. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, Plenary Session, 12/5/43.

93. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, CCS minutes, 13/5/43.

94. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, COS minutes, 13/5/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 14/5/43. Marshall felt the strategic bombing offensive would be worth "50 to 60 divisions," a clear substitute for the French Army.

95. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, CCS minutes, 14/5, 15/5/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 15/5/43.

96. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, CCS 232/1, CCS minutes, 17/5, 18/5/43.

97. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, CCS 234, CCS minutes, 18/5/43.

98. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VIII, 18/5/43, diary entry and retrospective; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 17/5, 18/5, 19/5/43; PRO, CAB99/22, COS minutes, 19/5/43.

99. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, CCS 235, CCS minutes, 19/5/43.

100. Howard, vol.IV, 427-430; PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, CCS 237/1, CCS minutes, 19/5/43.

101. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, Plenary Session, 19/5/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VIII, 19/5/43 diary entry. See Chapter 6 for Churchill's earlier view of the "Second Front."

102. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, CCS 219, CCS minutes, 14/5, COS minutes, 13/5, 21/5, Plenary Session, 14/5/43; CAB65/34, War Cabinet minutes, 20/5/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VIII, 14/5/43 diary entry and retrospective.

103. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, Plenary Session, 19/5, COS minutes, 20/5, CCS minutes, 20/5/43; Howard, vol.IV, 444; Matloff, 139-143.

104. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, CCS 220, COS minutes, 20/5, CCS 239, CCS minutes, 21/5, CCS 242/2, 24/5, Plenary Session, 25/5/43; CAB79/60, JIC(43)196, COS minutes, 4/5/43.

105. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, CCS minutes, 13/5, 14/5, 15/5, CCS 217, 18/5, Plenary Session, 21/5, CCS 244/1, 23/5/43.

106. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, CCS minutes, 22/5, CCS 241/3, CCS 241/4, 23/5/43; CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 26/5/43.

107. PRO, CAB80/69, COS(43)239(O), 4/5/43; CAB69/5, DC(O) minutes, 11/5/43; CAB79/61, COS minutes, 22/5/43; CAB65/38, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annexes, 21/5, 24/5/43; CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, CCS minutes, 17/5, 18/5, 23/5, Plenary Sessions, 19/5, 24/5/43; Howard, vol.IV, 455.

108. PRO, CAB80/69, COS(43)272(O), 25/5/43; CAB65/38, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annexes, 23/5/43; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 696.

109. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 20/5, 21/5/43; Kimball, vol.2, R-276/1, 28/5/43; Behrens, 374.

110. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, CCS 244/1, CCS minutes, 23/5, COS minutes, 23/5/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VIII, 23/5/43 diary entry; Behrens, 372-374; Leighton, "US Merchant Shipping and the British Import Crisis," in Greenfield, Command Decisions, 222.

111. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, CCS 244/1, CCS minutes 23/5, listed landing craft under "critical items" and as merely "available" for U.K. deployment, COS minutes, 23/5/43; CAB80/69, COS(43)273(O), 26/5/43.

112. PRO, CAB66/37, WP(43)233, 10/6/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-297/2, 28/5/43; CCA, Hickleton Papers, A4/410/4.15, Halifax to Eden, 28/5/43; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 696-701, 703.

113. PRO, CAB69/5, DC(O) minutes, 26/5, 28/5/53; CAB79/61, COS minutes, 28/5, 31/5/43.

114. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, Plenary Sessions, 21/5, 24/5, CCS 244/1, Annex II, CCS minutes, 23/5/43.

115. LHCMA, Brooke papers, 3/A/VIII, 24/5, 25/5/43 diary entries and retrospective; PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, COS minutes, 19/5, CCS minutes, 21/5/43; Howard, vol.IV, 431; Stoler, 94-96.

116. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, COS minutes, 14/5/43, a prescient Ultra based forecast of the Kursk offensive; Hinsley, vol.2, 626.

117. PRO, CAB79/61, JIC(43)219(O), COS minutes, 20/5/43; PREM3/3/10, Commanders-in-Chief-COS, 17/5/43; CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, CCS 234, CCS minutes, 19/5/43; PT, vol.4, Wilson-Brooke, 8/5, Nye-Wilson, 12/5, MEDC-COS, 10/5, Casey-Churchill, 29/5/43. The JIC had some grounds for their assessment. Hitler had, since 1941, been influenced in his strategic decisions by the desire to protect the resources in the Balkans, especially the Ploesti oil fields, from Allied attack. See Keegan, The Second World War, 146, 365-366.

118. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, COS minutes, 12/5/43; CAB79/60, COS minutes, 11/5/43; 79/61, 26/5/43; CAB80/69, COS(43)?(O), 13/5, COS(43)269(O), 23/5, COS(43)271(O), 25/5/43; 80/40, COS(43)153, 17/5/43.

119. Kimball, vol.2, 212.

120. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, Plenary Sessions, 24/5, 25/5/43; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 703-704.

121. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, CCS minutes, 25/5, CCS 242/6, 25/5/43.

122. Parkinson, A Day's March Nearer Home, 114; Howard, The Mediterranean Strategy, 37-38; Matloff, 144-145; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 86.

123. UW, JCS Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 13, JCS 235, 20/5/43; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 78, missed the main point, the ability of the JCS to shift balance.

124. Greenfield, American Strategy, 64, correctly noted the double motive of transferring seven veteran divisions: to ensure that what became OVERLORD came about, and to strengthen it. This was an obvious expression of American suspicions. CCS 244/1 and 242/6 reflected Allied acceptance of the consequences of prior dispersal. For 1943 into spring 1944, the global breakdown of U.S. divisions and British controlled divisions envisaged 36 in action in Europe, 37 against Japan.

125. PRO, CAB79/27, JIC(43)248(O), COS minutes, 22/6/43; CAB80/71, COS(43)?(O), 16/7/43.

126. CCA, Somerville Papers, 8/4, Somerville to Royle [CNS, RAN], 17/7/43; PRO, CAB80/71, COS(43)362(O), 6/7/43; CAB88/2, CCS minutes, 25/6/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-371, 19/7/43; Matloff, 184, 190-191; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 392.

127. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 29/6, 20/7/43 Supplementaries.

128. PRO, CAB80/40, COS(43)169, 9/6, COS(43)179, 23/6/43; 80/41, COS(43)201, 17/7, COS(43)210, 24/7/43; CAB69/5, DO(43)13, 28/6, DO(43)14, 28/6/43; CAB105/56, COS(W)682, 3/7/43; Roskill, vol.2, 425, vol.3, Part I, 219; Matloff, 201.

129. PRO, CAB80/70, COS(43)294(O), 7/6, COS(43)306,(O), 15/6/43; CAB79/61, COS minutes, 15/6/43; CAB65/38, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 15/6/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-320, 19/6/43; Wavell's appointment reaffirmed, after mild opposition, the policy of emphasizing the war effort.

130. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 13/7/43; PRO, CAB79/62, COS minutes, 2/7/, 3/7/43; Kimball, vol.2, R-293, 24/6, C-332, 28/6, R-298, 30/6, C-345, 6/7, R-310, 9/7/43; CCA, Somerville Papers, 8/4, Somerville to Royle, 17/7/43; Matloff, 201. Marshall considered Douglas anti-American. Amusingly he suggested Montgomery instead.

131. CCA, Somerville Papers, 8/4, Somerville to Royle, 17/7/43; PRO, CAB79/52, COS minutes, 8/7, 23/7/43; 79/63, 29/7/43; Callahan, Burma, 1942-1945, 75.

132. PRO, CAB69/5, DC(O) minutes, 28/7/43; Callahan, Burma 1942-1945, 80, underestimated the COS willingness to accept Auchinleck's pessimism; Howard, vol.IV, 548.

133. PT, vol.6, JSM 1063, 11/7, warned the COS that Marshall felt the theatre to be "working at only 10%"; Kimball, vol.2 R-311, 19/7/43.

134. Kimball, vol.2,C-296, 26/5/43.

135. Hinsley, vol.2, Appendix 1, 636, vol.3, 211-220, 223, PRO, CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 23/6, 15/7, 11/8/43; Beesly, 207.

136. PRO, CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 9/6, 23/6, 15/7, 11/8/43; CCCA, Portal Papers, 8/14, Slessor to Portal, 17/7, reply, 18/7/43; 4/13, Portal to Churchill, 21/7, 24/7/43; Roskill, vol.2, 371, vol.3, part I, 19, 29; Costello & Hughes, 287.

137. PRO, CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 9/6, 15/7/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F182, Cherwell to Churchill, 23/7, 28/7/43; F183, 3/8/43; Costello & Hughes, 284.

138. PRO, CAB79/61, COS minutes, 4/6, 7/6/43; CAB80/70, COS(43)284)O), 4/6, COS(43)293(O), 7/6, COS(43)308(O), 16/6/43; CAB65/38, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annexes, 10/6, 15/6/43.

139. Kimball, vol.2, R-299, 30/6/43, 294; PRO, CAB79/61, COS minutes, 21/6/43; 79/62, 2/7, 10/7/, 14/7, 23/7/43; 79/63, 26/7, 3/8/43; CAB105/56, COS(W)696, 10/7/43; 105/43, JSM 1034, 3/7, JSM 1126, 4/8/43; CAB69/5, DC(O) minutes, 2/8/43; Cabinet ultimately decided to accept Portuguese terms, but restrict offers to staff talks and air defence assistance.

140. CCCA, Portal Papers, 4/53, Portal to Churchill, 24/6/43; NCA, Cherwell papers, F179, Cherwell to Churchill, 18/6/43.

141. PRO, CAB88/2, CCS minutes, 18/6/43; PT, vol.6, COS(W)669, 28/6/43.

142. PRO, CAB70/61, COS minutes, 8/6, 11/6/43; CAB80/71, COS(43)334(O), 23/6/43; CCCA, Portal Papers, 10/34, Harris to Portal, 9/7, reply, 10/7/43.

143. Terraine, 542.

144. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 15/6/43; Howard, vol.IV, 318; Frankland & Webster, vol.2, 23, 29.

145. Jones, 389; Terraine, 515-517, 542. The exploits of 617 Squadron and the arrival of H2S were most often cited by those urging a change of tactics and strategy.

146. PRO, CAB80/69, COS(43)227(O), 1/5, COS(43)250(O), 12/5/43; CAB79/88, COS minutes, Secretary's Standard File, 23/6, 15/7/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F179, Cherwell to Churchill, 17/6/43; CCCA, Portal Papers, 4/1(2), Churchill-Portal correspondence, 24/6-4/7/43. The last objection to the use of WINDOW was that the Germans might use it in attacks on HUSKY forces.

147. Terraine, 547-548; Goebbels, 26/7, 28/7, 29/7/43 diary entries; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F180, Cherwell to Churchill, 24/6/43; Hinsley, vol.2, 523; Frankland & Webster, vol.2, 25; Speer, A. Inside the Third Reich, New York, 1970, 283-284.

148. PRO, CAB80/71, COS(43)394(O), 21/7/43; PREM3/29/4, RAF Order of Battle, 2/7/43; and below, Appendix D.

149. PRO, CAB79/63, JIC(43)294, COS minutes, 27/7/43; Hinsley, vol.2, 154-155, vol.3, 295-302; Terraine, 515-517, 537, 549-550. See below, Chapter 9, for the question of relative cost.

150. Kimball, vol.2, C-296, 26/5/43; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 706, credited Marshall for the final draft and declared that it made him aware of the full range of Marshall's qualities.

151. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 22.5.43; JCS Papers, Soviet Union, Reel 1, JCS 517/1, 14/10/43; PRO, CAB66/37, WP(43)235, 11/6/43; 66/41, WP(43)475, 25/10/43. The Second Protocol had pledged 4.4 million tons of supplies. 2.972 million were shipped, 1.517 via the Pacific, 1.068 via Iran, and only 344,200 tons via Murmansk. The Imperial contribution amounted to only 307,100 tons. Of the 5.1 million tons pledged for the Third Protocol, 2.7 were to be shipped via the Pacific.

152. Kimball, vol.2, C-309, 12/6, C-334, 28/6/43; Ross, 32; Kitchen, 155; Balfour, 360-361; Howarth, 179.

153. Kimball, vol.2, C-309, 12/6, C-310, 13/6, R-289, 14/6, 18/6, C-322, 20/6, C-328, R-297, 28/6, C-334, 28/6, C-336, 29/6/43; PRO, FO954/25B, Eden to Churchill, 12/7/43; CAB65/35, War Cabinet minutes, 5/7/43; PREM3/333/19, Seeds to Cadogan, 2/7, plus Churchill's marginal comments, 8/7/43, an indication of the pressure felt at this point.

154. PRO, CAB80/68, COS(43)184(O), 11/4, COS(43)189(O), 14/4/43; 80/69, COS(43)259(O), 17/5/43; CAB79/26, COS minutes, 12/4, 15/4, 19/4/43; 79/62, 13/7, 15/7/43; CAB69/5, DC(O) minutes, 29/6/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, G140, correspondence, 22/4-29/4/43; compare the accounts in Jones, 427-440, and Hinsley, vol.2, 360-371; Churchill, Closing the Ring, 194-199.

155. Churchill, Closing the Ring, 73, LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/IX, 15/6, 17/7/43 diary entries and retrospective; and see below note 203.

156. PRO, CAB80/71, COS(43)374(O), 12/7/43.

157. PRO, CAB80/70, COS(43)295(O), 9/6, COS(43)313(O), 18/6/43; 80/71, COS(43)344(O), 26/6, COS(43)375(O), 13/7/43; CAB105/56, COS(W)711, 19/7/43; Roskill, vol.3, part I, 13.

158. PRO, CAB80/70, COS(43)297(O), 9/6, COS(43)318(O), 18/6/43;80/71, COS(43)347(O), 28/6, COS(43)367(O), 7/7, COS(43)389(O), 29/7/43; CAB79/61, COS minutes, 16/6/43; Churchill, Closing the Ring, 62-65.

159. PRO, CAB79/61, COS minutes, 8/6, 15/6, 21/6/43; 79/62, 26/6/43; CAB80/71, COS(43)386(O), 18/7/43; 80/72, COS(43)445(O), 5/8/43; Howard, British Intelligence, vol.5, 75-79, an indispensable account, despite the author's weak defence of COCKADE based on undoubted impact on von Rundstedt. OKW's appreciation, and the fact that von Rundstedt's Order of battle dropped from 45 divisions in May to 35 in August, were weightier factors. See below page 553.

160. PRO, CAB79/61, COS minutes, 8/6, 19/6, 25/6/43. Churchill accepted the explanation.

161. PRO, CAB79/62, COS minutes, 24/6, 1/7, 16/7, 22/7/43; CAB80/71, COS(43)367(O), 7/7/43; Wilt,80. See below, page 577, for further discussion of RANKIN.

162. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, Algiers conference minutes, 29/5-3/6/43; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, 711-718, clearly outlined the most pressing "ulterior" motive - to keep the Imperial Army visibly at the forefront.

163. Kimball, vol.2, C-299, 4/6/43; PRO, CAB65/34, War Cabinet minutes, 5/6/43; BL, Cunningham Papers, 52561, Cunningham to Pound, 25/6, reply, 3/7/43; CAB80/71, COS(43)378(O), 13/7/43.

164. PRO, CAB80/71, COS(43)339(O), 25/6/43; CAB79/62, COS minutes, 28/6/43.

165. PRO, CAB79/61, JIC(43)251(O), COS minutes, 17/6/43; 79/62, JIC(43)270(O), 1/7, JIC(43)277(O), 8/7/43; Howard, British Intelligence, vol.5, 92.

166. PT, vol.7, Strong-DMI, 7/6, 8/6/43; PRO, CAB65/34, War Cabinet minutes, 7/6/43; IWM, Montgomery Papers, 3/7, notes on HUSKY, 9/7/43; D'Este, Bitter Victory, 67-68.

167. PRO, CAB65/39, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 13/7/43; PT, vol.4, MEDC-COS 8/6, COS(ME)387, 27/6/43; Wheeler, Britain and the War for Yugoslavia, 232; Bailey, "British Policy towards Gen. Draza Mihailovic," in Auty & Clogg, 79; Bennett, 221, 336-338, for a provocative analysis of the intelligence factor.

168. PRO, CAB79/62, COS minutes, 23/6/43; CAB80/72, COS(43)404(O), 25/7/43; CCCA, Portal Papers, 4/17(2), Portal to Churchill, 24/7/43; Sweet-Escott, "SOE in the Balkans," in Auty & Clogg, 17.

169. PRO, CAB80/71, COS(43)364(O), 5/7/43; PREM3/66/4, Churchill to Ismay, 11/7, 20/7, 1/8, Ismay to Churchill, 14/7/43; CCA, Knatchbull-Hugessen papers,1/14, 16/6, 11/7/43 diary entries; Weber, 172. Churchill hoped to convince Roosevelt the benefits of supporting the Yugoslav Partisans and other groups outweighed the costs. Detailed reports of Axis brutalities were included, to strike an emotional chord.

170. PRO, CAB99/25, QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 11/8/43. Losses, expected to average 50%, amounted to 6.25%.

171. PRO, CAB80/71, COS(43)379(O), 13/7/43; CAB79/62, COS minutes, 14/7, 15/7, 19/7/43. The records of two other COS meetings on 15/7/43, deposited in CAB79/88, were marked as "missing, 27/4/1950."

172. PRO, CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 16/7/43; CAB105/43, JSM 1073, 16/7/43; PREM3/228/5, Churchill to Smuts, 15/7, Churchill to Marshall, 17/7/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-366, 16/7, C-368, 16/7/43. Churchill's statement to Smuts that the British would attack Italy alone if necessary was impulsive bravado. His plea to Roosevelt that the decision be made before the next conference - and thus tie its hands - was more revealing.

173. PRO, PREM3/228/5, Smuts to Churchill, 17/7/43; CAB80/71, COS(43)390(O), 20/7/43; CAB79/62, COS minutes, 20/7/22/7/43; CAB105/56, COS(W)717, 21/7, COS (W)722, 22/7/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-370, 17/7, an edited version of Smuts' message, R-319, 19/7, R-322, 22/7/43.

174. UW, JCS Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 13, JCS 421, 23/7/43; PRO, CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 16/7, 23/7, 26/7/43; CAB104/43, JSM 1084, 28/7, JSM 1085, 21/7, JSM 1100, 23/7, JSM 1104, 26/7/43; CAB 105/56, COS(W)714, 19/7, COS(W)729, 24/7/43. Given the important role Allied bombing attacks on Italy had played in Mussolini's downfall - Beaumont, R. "The Bomber Offensive as a Second Front," JCH, vol.22, #1, 1/1987, 15 - the debate over whether it was necessary to send in Allied **ground** forces was from the start a **grand** strategic dilemma. They were not needed to finish off Italian resistance.

175. IWM, Montgomery Papers, 49, Montgomery to Brooke, 27/7/43; 39, notes on "the Second Phase," 12/8/43; PRO, CAB66/39, Map Room Weekly Reports, 15/7-29/7/43; D'Este, Bitter Victory, 332-417.

176. PRO, CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 26/7/43; CAB105/43, JSM 1104, 26/7/43; CAB105/56, COS(W)739, 28/7/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 26/7/43.

177. Kimball, vol.2, C-378, 25/7/43.

178. PRO, PREM3/245/4, Churchill-Eden, 2/9/43; Kimball, vol.2, various telegrams from 25/7 to 31/7/43, notes, 360, 362. This leaves no room for doubt about the Italian surrender policy. Churchill's attitude towards dealing with governments in battle zones became very familiar to the Americans.

179. Kimball, vol.2, C-383, 26/7/43; PRO, CAB66/39, WP(43)339, 26/7/43; CAB65/35, War Cabinet minutes 26/7/43; Cohen, in Kennedy, P. Grand Strategies in War and Peace, 63-64.

180. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 26/7/43; Matloff, 155-165; Stoler, 102.

181. PRO, CAB79/63, COS minutes, 28/7, 29/7, 31/743; CAB80/71, COS(43)378(O), 13/7/43; 80/72, COS(43)412(O), 27/7/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-344, 5/7/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 14/63, Alexander to Brooke, 22/7/43; Howard, vol. IV, 487-492.

182. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 26/7, 27/7 Supplementary, 6/8, 9/8/43; PRO, CAB105/43, JSM 1133, 7/8/43; Matloff, 205-210.

183. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 6/8/43; JCS Papers, Europe, Reel 1, JCS442/1, 6/8/43; Matloff, 172-173, was more convincing than Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 179-185.

184. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 27/7, 6/8, 7/8, 9/8 Supplementary, 10/8/43; Stoler, 111; Eisenhower, J. 359-360; Matloff, 174-177. Roosevelt's comment on Soviet intentions: "He did not believe that the Russians would desire to take over the Balkans. Their wish is to establish kinship with the other Slavic peoples..." [10/8/43] was either a calculated aspect of his delay policy or wilful naivete.

185. PRO, PREM3/232/10, correspondence, 20/6-10/8/43; CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 7/8, 8/8, 9/8/43; Churchill, Closing the Ring, 58.

186. PRO, CAB120/420, COSSAC(43)32(Final), 25/7/43.

187. PRO, CAB79/63, COS minutes, 4/8/43; CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 7/8/43.

188. PRO, CAB80/72, COS(43)438(o), 3/8/43; CAB79/63, COS minutes, 28/7/43; Matloff, 155. See Appendix D.

189. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 6/8, 9/8/43.

190. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 14/38, Brooke to Wilson, 7/8/43; PRO, CAB80/72, COS(43)445(O), 5/8/43; CAB79/88, COS minutes, Secretary's Standard File, 7/8/43.

191. PT, vol.4, Wilson-Brooke, 1/8/43; PRO, CAB69/5, DC(O) minutes, 2/8/43; CAB105/56, COS(W)752, 4/8/43; CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 7/8, 8/8, 9/8/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 14/38, Wilson to Brooke, 9//8/43. The COS definitely agreed to retain some landing craft with Wilson in order to enable him to seize any "sudden chance," and definitely favoured his doing so if possible. The problem was the difference of perspectives and priorities.

192. PRO, CAB105/56, COS(W)745, 31/7/43; 105/43, JSM/133, 7/8/43; CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 11/8/43.

193. PRO, CAB79/63, COS minutes, 27/7/43; CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 7/8/43; CAB65/39, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 11/8/43.

194. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/IX, 8/8/43 diary entry.

195. PRO, CAB79/27, JIC(43)340, COS minutes, 27/8/43; CAB66/40, WP(43)365, 9/8/43; Hinsley, vol.2, 141-142, 159. The intelligence authorities attributed their error to a failure to gauge German ability to exploit occupied areas; Werrell, K.P. "The Strategic Bombing of Germany in World War II," JAH, vol.73, 1986-1987, 710.

196. PRO, CAB79/63, JIC(43)324, COS minutes, 12/8/43, continued the dispute with Brooke over German capabilities and priorities; IWM, Montgomery Papers, 39, notes on "Second phase," 21/7-12/8/43 and 41, "notes for historical purposes," 22/8/43; Roskill, vol.3, part I, 151-152 and D'Este - aptly titled Bitter Victory, passim, - are representative of the argument over the course of HUSKY. See also, UW, JCS Papers, Europe, Reel 4, despatch on "Sicilian Campaign."

197. PRO, CAB79/63, COS minutes, 9/8/43; Leighton & Coakley,, 1943-1945, 190; CAB66/40, Map Room Weekly Reports, 12/8-26/8/43; Howard, vol. IV, 431.

198. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 11/8, CCS minutes, 14/8, 16/8/43.

199. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 13/8, CCS minutes, 14/8/43.

200. PRO, CAB99/23. QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 15/8, CCS minutes, 15/8/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 15/8/43.

201. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, CCS minutes, 15/8/43; Matloff, 221; Howard, vol. IV, 565-568.

202. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 16/8, CCS303/1, CCS minutes, 16/8, 17/8/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 16/8/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/IX, 16/8/43 diary entry.

203. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 19/8, Plenary Session, 19/8, CCS minutes, 19/8/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A//IX, 15/8/43 diary entry, recorded Brooke's sincere disappointment on being told the OVERLORD command would go to an American, also noted in Churchill, Closing the Ring, 73.

204. LHCMA, Brooke Papers , 3/A/IX, 17/8/43 diary entry; PRO, PREM3/333/15, Ismay to Churchill, 18/8/43.

205. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, Plenary Session, 23/8/43.

206. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, CCS 319/5, 24/8/43.

207. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 15/8, 19/8, Plenary Session, 19/8/43; CAB79/27, JIC(43)336(O), COS minutes, 19/8/43; 79/63, 17/8/43; PREM3/66/1, Churchill-Jacob correspondence, 20-21/8/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-412/2, 13/8/43, the long Ultra based report on the Balkans, submitted to Roosevelt with the disclaimer that it was not making the case for "employment of an Allied army in the Balkans." See above, page 554.

208. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, CCS 301, COS minutes, 14/8, 17/8, CCS 313, 30/8, Plenary Session, 23/8/43.

209. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 11/8/, 13/8, CCS minutes, 14/8, COS(Q)32, 18/8/43; CAB65/35, War Cabinet minutes, 4/8/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/IX, 14/8/43 diary entry.

210. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, CCS minutes, 17/8, 18/8, COS(Q)29, 17/8, COS minutes, 18/8, 19/8, Plenary Session, 19/8/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 16/8, 17/8, 18/8/43.

211. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/IX, 14/8, 19/8, 30/8/43 diary entries and retrospectives, a classic account of the clash of the irresistible force and the immovable object; PRO, CAB99/23 QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 19/8, 20/8, CCS minutes, 20/8, CCS 323, 21/8/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 20/8, 21/8/43.

212. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, COS(Q)40, COS minutes, 23/8, CCS minutes, 23/8, 24/8, Plenary Session, 23/8, CCS 319/5, 24/8/43; Matloff, 237-240. The directive of SEAC had to be settled in closed session. The Americans, now afraid that the Chinese might in practice abandon the war and thus upset their whole policy, put unprecedented pressure on the British to attack Burma. One result was the first proposal of operation BUCCANEER, the notorious plan to assault the Andaman Islands.

213. Churchill, Closing the Ring, 78-80; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 14/38, Dill to Brooke, 12/9/43; Howard, vol.IV, 578. The fiasco of SEAC's charter underlined the tangled web of interests involved. Mountbatten's air transport force, now likely to become a main part of any offensive, was not under his control. Nor did he have any control over the Eastern Fleet, which had "wider responsibilities." SEAC was to use but not control Chinese forces in China, yet exclude Chinese influence below Chinese borders. Mountbatten's prime military aim was to relieve China, his main political aim to regain Singapore. The whole mess was summed up in an exchange of puns: CBI for "Confused Beyond Imagination," SEAC for "Save England's Asian Colonies."

214. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, Plenary Session, 19/8, COS minutes, 24/8, COS minutes, 25/8, CCS329/2, 26/8/43; CAB65/39, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 30/8/43; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 217-220.

215. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 12/8, CCS minutes, 18/8, 19/8, CCS 329/2, 26/8/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 19/8, 21/8/43; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 197-212.

216. Gilbert, The Second World War, 452, Road to Victory, 470-471.

217. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/2/3, Blackett to Robinson, 21/8/43. This specific paper was written to support the resumption of the Murmansk run.

218. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, CCS minutes, 20/8/43.

219. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, CCS minutes, 23/8, Plenary Session, 23/8/43; UW, JCS Papers, Europe, Reel 10, JIC129, 20/8, Memorandum for Information #121, 22/8/43; Stoler, 116-119. This held true for RANKIN in two ways. The Germans would have to face the fact of categorical defeat by a coalition of powers that could not be divided; if the latter point proved optimistic,

massed American forces would be on the spot.

220. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 11/8, CCS minutes, 14/8,18/8/43. Some controversy arose over the American desire to share in the Azores bases, now to be occupied in October. See below Chapter 10.

221. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 20/8, 23/8, CCS minutes, 20/8, 23/8. CCS 319/5, 26/8/43; CAB66/38, WP(43)291, 2/7/43; CAB65/38, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 21/6/43; Churchill, Closing the Ring, 149-158.

222. Stoler, 114; Morison, Strategy and Compromise, 40-45; Matloff, 241-243; Parkinson, A Day's March Nearer Home, 161; Howard, vol.IV, 567-579; Ehrman, J., Grand Strategy, vol.V, London, 1956, xi, 8, 12.

223. PT, vol.4, Commanders-in-Chief-COS, 31/8/43; PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 18/8, 19/8, CCS minutes, 20/8, Plenary Session, 23/8/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 31/8/43; Hinsley, vol.2, 103, 116-117; Kimball, vol.2, C-413-1, 16/8/43.

224. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 16/8, Plenary Session, 23/8/43; CAB65/35, War Cabinet minutes, 9/8, 11/8/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-413/1, 16/8, R-349, 29/8/43.

225. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 20/8/43; Papers, Europe, Reel 4, despatch on "Sicilian Campaign"; IWM, Montgomery Papers, 39, notes on "Second Phase"; PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, Plenary Session, 23/8, CCS minutes, 24/8/43.

226. Ben-Moshe, 521-522; Cohen, in Kennedy, P. Grand Strategies in War and Peace, 63; PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, CCS minutes, 24/8, COS minutes, 25/8/43.

227. Compare LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/IX, 8/43 diary entries, and CCA, A.V. Alexander Papers, 5/8/31(a), Pound to Alexander, 25/8/43.

228. PRO, CAB79/62, COS minutes, 2/7/43, dismissed the idea of an Iberian Front in terms which mirrored Whitehall's objections to any all out advance through Italy - poor lines of communication, ideal terrain for defence, and the impossibility of using the Metropolitan Air Forces. But 79/63, 26/8/43, also noted that if OVERLORD proved impossible an Italian line would be easier to secure. These assumptions were clearly consistent with the tenets that underpinned the "wear down" consensus.

Chapter 9

Strategy Ebbing - The Reaction

"I hope you will realize that British loyalty to OVERLORD is the keystone arch of Anglo-American co-operation. Personally, I think enough forces exist for both hands to be played, and I believe this to be the right strategy."

- Churchill to Smuts, 9/9/43

On the surface, in autumn 1943 Allied grand strategy developed along the pattern prevalent since Casablanca. Allied campaigns continued to progress, with some difficulty. The course of events and the evolution of ideas again undermined a formal agreement and forced yet another review. However, for the British this was a period of uncertain and disturbing change. The QUADRANT agreement left them in a quandary. Given the strain on British resources, success in the field, the shift in power within the coalition, the continued strength of German combat power and the increasing urgency of long term issues, Whitehall remained convinced that the extension of "wear down" best matched British interests. But QUADRANT had entrenched OVERLORD - the concentration of force in the U.K. in order to seek decisive battle from May 1944 - as the fixed hub of Allied grand strategy. There could be no avoiding this. Although the Allied war effort remained interdependent, the balance of influence tilted steadily towards the Americans. This placed the "rolling seminar" in a new position. It now had to relate its own entrenched assumptions to a new policy only partly based on them, pressed by an ally with the power and the will to make it operative.

QUADRANT marked a definite ebb in British influence on Allied grand strategy. "Wear down" had been unavoidable and successful enough to alter American grand strategy, but Allied combat power had not been able to make it a clear success. At QUADRANT the British ceded an equal voice in grand strategy but reserved the right to reverse this decision. The central issue of autumn 1943 was British reaction to this development as the situation unfolded. In addition to the course of operations, perceived relative weakness, and the sense of finite resources, grave concern for British status and voice in coalition policy now became a major influence in British thinking. Now it was Whitehall, not Washington, that divided over conflicting pressures and questionable

ventures. Consensus was kept intact only at the comforting common ground of fundamental assumptions; but these no longer held sway in Allied councils. For British grand strategy, autumn 1943 marked an attempt to preserve influence by reworking stale ideas.

Churchill's immediate reaction to QUADRANT underlined the fact that in British eyes the key issue was left unsettled. Once again the prospect of fast moving events created a loose compromise and forced the Prime Minister to make sure he was in the right place at the right time. As the Allied armies invaded Italy in early September, that place was Washington. The British program of a vigorous extension of "wear down" over the next nine months depended on quick, clear and far reaching success in Italy. Churchill hoped that his presence plus success in the field would overcome American rigidity.[1] The Prime Minister's personal views and position were, at this time, more than usually reflective of the overall dilemma facing British grand strategists. Churchill's strategic vision was again caught in a tug-of-war. On the one hand, he acknowledged the objective facts of fundamental limits - finite resources, bottlenecks in critical items, and American insistence on OVERLORD. On the other hand, the desire to engage at maximum intensity, and a real concern that Britain's voice in great issues might decline if its visible share of the war effort declined, greatly influenced Churchill's judgement. These points emerged in an exchange of telegrams with Smuts which helped focus Churchill's thoughts. Smuts, concerned that the Soviets might see the QUADRANT outline as deliberately timid, called for an escalated assault on Italy and "a real attack" on the Balkans. Churchill set his old friend straight on plans for Italy and reassured him that overall plans were as aggressive as resources allowed. He then shared three insights: 1) the English speaking powers should seek a friendly post-war balance with the Soviets from a position of strength; 2) it would be a good idea to "move into the Balkans," but German moves would determine whether anything beyond "agents, Commandos and supplies" was possible; 3) regardless, he would be in Washington to influence decisions as the situation broke.[2]

The situation broke rapidly with the invasion of Italy. Allied armies returned to Europe when Eighth Army crossed the Straits of Messina on 3 September. It began a slow and, in Montgomery's eyes, aimless and barely contested advance up the "toe." However, German moves nearly aborted AVALANCHE. The Badoglio government had been unwilling, or unable, to disrupt any German moves and had to be compelled by Eisenhower to announce its surrender on 8 September. German forces swiftly and efficiently moved to take control of Italy and Italian held positions further east. The Badoglio government ran for its life and, for several days, Fifth Army's beachhead at Salerno was hard pressed. Nevertheless it survived, and the collapse of Italian forces threw the whole southern Axis flank into uncertainty. In this confusing, tense and exciting situation, Churchill presented to the Americans a paper which attempted to channel further action.

As usual, Churchill described the current situation and future prospects in sweeping and optimistic terms. Assuming the Allies could quickly drive north of Rome, great opportunities seemed imminent. The Eastern Fleet could at last be powerfully reinforced; en route, the fleet units could "show the flag" in the Pacific. Italian authorities and forces should "work their passage" and be used to help the Allied drive. "There can be no question of whittling down OVERLORD," but the Allies should drive north until they hit "the main German positions." Meanwhile, the Allies must exploit the turmoil in the Balkans caused by the Italian defection, perhaps by seizing ports to funnel supplies to resistance forces. This should be seen as part of the Italian campaign. Once the main line in Italy was reached, the Allies could consolidate and re-evaluate. Three options seemed likely: 1) a further advance in Italy; 2) consolidation, leaving strategic bombing as the main effort from Italy; 3) shifting some forces "to emphasize a movement north and northeastwards from the Dalmatian ports."[3]

The JCS were already aware that the British regarded the Mediterranean issue as open, and worried about the momentum of operations in Italy. They were willing to walk into a Balkan port but not to fight for one. Churchill's paper and his statements at a meeting in the White House on 9 September exacerbated their suspicions. Churchill reaffirmed his opposition to reinforcing the Mediterranean and his agreement to limit

Eisenhower's objective to establishing "a fortified line to seal off the north of Italy." But he laid greater emphasis on the need to seize the chance to exploit turmoil in the Balkans by pushing undetermined forces onto the Adriatic coast. Trouble at Salerno and overall logistic disarray in 15th Army Group intervened. By the last White House meeting on 11 September, the focus was on accelerating the buildup in Italy. Churchill now bluntly warned Smuts against pressing for a Balkan invasion.[4] However, there was now an element of ambivalence in British thinking.

Churchill accepted the need to concentrate on the main campaigns, but insisted on keeping other options open - "enough forces were available for both hands." The CCS agreed because, as before, they were convinced that events would favour their own emphasis.[5] But this time the worst debate was in British circles. Churchill's acceptance of rigid basic limits and his support of expansive exploitation were fundamentally incompatible. This could only have been resolved if his forecast had proven correct. It did not. This made the pressures on British grand strategy more acute. As a result the "rolling seminar" now found it difficult to agree on fundamentals. Ideas developed along the lines expressed by Churchill, but soon bogged down in confusion and consternation.

One area that escaped this confusion was the effort to control the Atlantic sea lanes. This is not without irony: in the early years, one of the major exceptions to Whitehall's ability to define and pursue overriding imperatives had been this supposedly "defensive" campaign. Success was a great tonic; the mood remained one of sober confidence. In October, the total tonnage lost since September 1939 was finally surpassed by the total tonnage of new construction. New tactics and equipment met shifts in German methods. By mid-November convoys were being deliberately used as bait to attract U-Boats. Doenitz was again forced to retreat from the mid-Atlantic and seek for a weakness.[6] There was none. The Azores bases were occupied in October. The COS cancelled plans to defend Portugal on the grounds "the scenario was so remote no further action was needed." Whitehall fell to arguing about remote issues. Even the introduction of new 3cm radar could no longer spark a debate over priorities for allocations. Slessor himself agreed that Bomber Command's need was more urgent. By

December the Allies were determined to smash the U-Boat threat once and for all and confident it could be done. This was not surprising. Three major U-Boat offensives had been defeated and the force dispersed. In the technology race the lead had been maintained. The intelligence conflict was in hand and the "air gap" had been closed. The British controlled shipping pool rose from 18.4 million tons in March to 20 million tons in December. Perhaps best of all, the Allies now realized that this determined commitment had to be maintained in all aspects.[7] Belatedly, the Allies had secured the Atlantic, the foundation for all their efforts and plans.

A similar situation had developed regarding the war against Japan, but this happened in spite of discord within and between Allies. American forces pressed on in the southwest Pacific, while American submarines reduced Japanese ability to maintain their overseas forces. This helped forge a new vision of the ultimate offensive. The emerging new concept involved avoiding major ground operations in China, strengthening the planned drive through the central Pacific, and launching a massive strategic bombing assault on Japan from both areas. Roosevelt's support for an enlarged B29 campaign pushed that concept forward. The central Pacific drive began in November with assaults on the Gilbert Islands. For the British, this made the problem of what their role would be, and the place of SEAC, more acute.

The directive of a theatre commander had now become a matter of great moment. As all Allied plans depended on overtaxed pools of landing craft, the actions of the man on the spot were now expected to play a greater role in determining the balance of effort. However, unlike Eisenhower, Mountbatten did not have the elements at hand necessary for early action. Mountbatten established a working accord with Stilwell, but personal jealousies and sincere confusion over priorities and responsibilities hurt his relations with Auchinleck and Somerville. His directive, finally approved on 23 October, asked the impossible. Mountbatten's forces were to engage and wear down the enemy, boost supplies to China as a "second but equal"[!] task, and plan large amphibious operations based on a balanced fleet and "amphibious circus," both to be filled out at an unspecified date.[8] The new machinery only entrenched chronic confusion and cross purposes.

The already vexed question of sorting out responsibilities in India, and improving its Army and logistic infrastructure, was now seriously aggravated by the outbreak of a major famine in Bengal. After much acrimony about its cause, Cabinet was forced to divert supplies after the COS warned the famine could threaten efforts to build up the strategic bastion. In response, Churchill put his foot down. Auchinleck was directed to focus on maintaining order in India, restructuring the Indian Army, and building up base facilities for SEAC. Wavell would focus on the conduct of the war as first priority.[9] This helped clarify British policy, but led to a serious dispute with the Americans when Auchinleck diverted engineer units from airfield work to help expand the lines of supply in Assam. A terrific argument ensued in the CCS. Faced with the British position that QUADRANT gave priority to ground operations, Washington sent Somervell to investigate. His visit led to some clarification. The British position stood, but to minimize the ripple effects, the Americans would send further resources and assume control of the railways. This settled immediate problems, but did not ease suspicions over mutual priorities and resolve.[10]

This certainly helped the familiar pattern emerge, as plans were eroded and transformed. But this time the intensity of the pressures for action, especially Churchill's desire to attack Sumatra, forced the COS to great lengths in order to preserve their position. One of the smoothest Whitehall manoeuvres of the war was launched against CULVERIN. Cautious proposals submitted by Auchinleck were noisily criticized. Orders were issued to prepare India as a base for an ultimate offensive, to maintain 22 divisions and 154 squadrons. Then, the JPS on 30 September duly advised that BUCCANEER could isolate Burma as effectively as CULVERIN without requiring any forces beyond those now available.[11] Anything beyond BUCCANEER would require American assistance, which meant more American influence. Before a strong enemy, dug into appalling terrain, could be attacked, British forces in all elements needed enough reserves to sustain a major effort. Churchill accepted the case on 19 October: CULVERIN was desirable but BUCCANEER seemed less likely to hinder other plans or expand American leverage.[12] In the ensuing debate in Washington the COS took a tough stand, confident that Mountbatten's report would support them. When it arrived

on 10 November, it did just that. For 1943-1944, SEAC proposed successive advances by Chinese forces, by British IV Corps - preceded by large LRPG sorties and both supplied heavily by air - a possible attack in Arakan, and BUCCANEER.[13] This left the British with a firm plan, based on a promising new strategy and pressed by an Allied command. But it did not resolve the loose ends. The COS position was based on the need to retain forces in Europe supported by concerns for British influence; Churchill's priority was the reverse. Limited means were still seen as the governing factor, but the expanding pressures over diplomatic and strategic priorities meant that trouble was only postponed.[14]

Trouble could no longer be postponed regarding POINTBLANK, the ostensibly "Combined" strategic bombing offensive against Germany. As the Allies kept up parallel campaigns, German defences grew stronger. Eighth Air Force losses rose to over 7%, and an attack on Schweinfurt on 14 October was so costly it forced the Americans to curtail their efforts. This set off an intense debate. The Americans called for long range fighters to battle the defenders, more co-ordination with Bomber Command, and some efforts to stretch the defences. The British proved of little help. Portal had long abandoned serious work on long range fighters. Harris was only willing to co-ordinate on his terms. The Americans fell back on their own devices.[15] Portal continued to shield Bomber Command from pressures to shift its focus and policies. However, by mid-October the Air Staff showed signs of unease. The crux of the issue was clear. If Harris was right and evasion and "area" bombing were working, success should be reinforced. If he was wrong, would the Germans become strong enough to defeat the Allied forces in detail? Portal put up a guarded front to Churchill, but issued a blunt warning to Harris on 7 October. POINTBLANK, for many reasons, had "fallen far short of what we had hoped to accomplish." Might it not be time to concentrate against the German air defence infrastructure?[16]

The ultimate issue was simple: if OVERLORD was cast in stone, POINTBLANK **had** to shatter the German Air Force by spring 1944. However, it was not certain whether the Germans could regain the initiative. British authorities realized that German output of fighter aircraft was pacing wastage, and that a new threat, a jet propelled

aircraft, was being developed. Opinions were mixed as to whether the momentum of Allied efforts was irresistible; even Harris confessed to some problems at maintaining intense operations. But Harris also continued to regard "area" bombing as the most effective strategy and as the most certain way to "wear down" enemy power. Harris' confidence in his growing Command and the momentum behind its campaign were both evident in his notorious stand on 3 November:

> "We can wreck Berlin from end to end if the USAAF will come in on it. It will cost us between 400-500 aircraft. It will cost Germany the war."[17]

For the first time, a wedge began to emerge between Harris and the Air Staff over grand strategy. The Air Staff now feared that 8th Air Force might be defeated, which would mean disaster for OVERLORD. Harris was concerned that preparations for OVERLORD would prevent his force from delivering the "knock-out blow."[18] The crucial issue of how to relate air force efforts to OVERLORD encompassed two extremes: ignore OVERLORD and carry on, or tie in the heavy bombers as an integral force. Two question were now paramount. How should the heavy bombers be controlled, and by whom? When, if ever, should they be targeted in direct support of invasion preparations? These questions ran into deeply entrenched interests and assumptions. Despite its qualms about "area" bombing, the Air Staff did not intend to let the force that constituted the bulk of RAF striking power be relegated to a "subordinate" role under another authority. This led to a debate which reflected on a grander scale the now settled question of machinery for ground-air co-operation.

The immediate issue was a directive for Leigh-Mallory, nominated Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief for OVERLORD. The COS position was clear. Leigh-Mallory should directly control only the TAF and the 9th U.S. Air Force. The heavy bombers should remain controlled by their own headquarters, directed as required to assist OVERLORD by the CCS. However, on 22 October Morgan told the COS that further progress on preparations depended on executive authority. The Americans suggested that part of this problem could now be solved. In their view, a Supreme Commander should receive a broad directive and be allowed a larger say in defining its execution. As POINTBLANK was a direct preliminary to OVERLORD, the Supreme Commander

should simply assume direct supervision of the heavy bombers whenever the CCS decided the time was ripe. None of this was acceptable to the British. They argued that the heavy bombers had a wider role, "the general weakening of the enemy," which went beyond OVERLORD. Only the CCS could properly decide when and how they should attempt to balance their focus between "particular objectives re OVERLORD" and the wider mandate. Also, if Bomber Command was severed from the infrastructure and channels set up to direct it, it could not be fully effective.[19] These positions were valid to an extent; but they also reflected a determination not to suffer a further decline in British influence in grand strategy.

The initial issue was resolved by a compromise. Leigh-Mallory was to assume control of the tactical air forces, plus the Air Defence of Great Britain, and commence operations. The JCS pressed for a pledge to reallocate the heavy bombers, by a method to be settled by the CCS, at a later date. The British agreed to discuss the issue, but their sensitivity was obvious. A Supreme Commander with wide latitude meant another vested American interest in the central direction of the war. That was undesirable in principle and unacceptable if it meant relinquishing control of the campaign which remained at the centre of national war policy. Naturally, valid strategic points were also at issue. If Bomber Command switched targets from German cities to French railroads, would that increase the "wearing down" of German power? But the issue fused strategy and status, unavoidably. The Air Staff refused to do more than direct Bomber Command to support OVERLORD "as the situation demanded." Churchill saw the force as an integral part of OVERLORD, but was not prepared to abdicate control. The British should "only concede...when we are generally satisfied on the whole policy."[20] The British wanted OVERLORD, but on their own terms and with a full share in its control.

The issue of the Supreme Commander and his mandate took a twist which only aggravated the situation. Churchill felt a bargain had been struck - an American for OVERLORD, Britons for Italy and SEAC. Speculation and sniping in the press, plus substantial concerns about preparations, led Churchill in October to press Roosevelt to settle the matter. Marshall was widely expected to receive the nod. But this prospect sparked public controversy in the U.S. based on old political feuds. Roosevelt decided

that a new arrangement would be required, which would be seen as clear promotion for Marshall. This coincided with a feeling in the JCS that the British were trying to stack the machinery in their favour. Out of the matrix emerged a concept designed to solve Roosevelt's problems, check British manoeuvres, and retain Marshall's influence in the central direction of the war. The White House, with some support from JCS quarters, proposed to name Marshall Supreme Commander of **all** Allied forces and campaigns in the European Theatre of Operations. The proposal was strongly resisted in London, which added to an already tense and complex situation. Throughout, COSSAC made one point monotonously clear: to launch OVERLORD in May, a Supreme Commander had to be named by December.[21]

Morgan's warnings were underlined by the continued progress of preparations for OVERLORD. The Americans remained convinced that the British shaped their grand strategy with post-war political objectives paramount, and would seek to evade OVERLORD. In fact, a triangle of pressures shaped British behaviour: the hope of preserving a "wear down" approach, the desire to strengthen OVERLORD, and the realization it could not be evaded. The belated but real growth in BOLERO was the most visible new fact. With the U-Boats under control and priorities settled, the movement began to assume the predictable shape so long desired by the War Department. The 59,000 American troops in the U.K. in June swelled to 768,274 personnel by December. Firm targets were set at last: 1.4 million personnel to be deployed by D-Day, 2.5 million upon completion. The flow of this host made the American presence, and OVERLORD, a highly visible factor in the U.K. by late autumn.[22] This injected a new dimension of urgency into OVERLORD preparations.

The progress of COCKADE also reflected the changing situation. The feints themselves only pinned some forces on quiet fronts and increased arguments in the German high command; but they also helped crystallize ideas on how deception could best assist OVERLORD. It was realized that the invasion of Italy made it clear to the Germans that an invasion of France would now be delayed. But it was also clear that the deception efforts had over many months inflated Berlin's estimate of the Allied Order of Battle. If this could be fostered, it might be possible to keep the Germans off balance

in 1944 by a comprehensive effort to cover OVERLORD and all other campaigns.[23] This new confidence was bolstered by a belated but real abandonment of any real concern about a German riposte. However, this confidence was tinged with caution. After the JIC reported on 20 September that the Germans could not regain the initiative in any theatre, it took the COS a month to agree the threat of invasion could be virtually disregarded. Also, Morgan was ordered to assume that the least optimistic RANKIN scenario - "Case A," a relatively orderly German withdrawal to deal with internal disruption - was the most likely.[24] The British waded into the OVERLORD pool, but started at the shallow end.

The COS attitude emerged clearly in the initial exchanges over a draft directive for the future Supreme Commander. The Americans insisted that a broad directive form the basis for discussion. They then tested London by calling for the naming of a British Deputy and forwarding a draft directive listing the prime mission as "the destruction of the German Army." The COS recoiled at this bland statement of the central grand strategic issue. They insisted that the campaign settled at QUADRANT did **not** constitute an attempt to decide the issue on the ground. Rather, the aim of OVERLORD was to secure a bridgehead from which the power to press the final blow could be marshalled and projected.[25] In other words, OVERLORD should not supersede but rather **fit into** "wear down." This left matters in a state of flux. The role of the heavy bombers was uncertain. Washington was not convinced that OVERLORD was on the British agenda. London was convinced that the termination of its grand strategy and the reduction of its influence was on the American agenda. In fact, OVERLORD had become part of a triangle of pressures that were so interlocked and interactive that they must be analyzed as such. Throughout, equal concern for strategic soundness and British status shaped Whitehall's ultimate decisions.

The connection between grand strategy and post-war prospects had never been unclear to the "rolling seminar." However, only now did it take a crucial question seriously when considering grand strategy: what would be the nature of post-war relations with the Soviets? The COS took formal notice of this problem on 22 September, ordering the JPS to "undertake the full appreciation of our position vis-a-vis

Russia in the post-war world." This secret study was to assume that British policy would be to maintain the alliance. But it could not be that straightforward. Who could tell whether wartime solidarity, or sheer economic need, would weigh more heavily than traditional rivalry and fundamental political antipathy? There were two periods of concern. In the state of transition as the war ended, the condition and deployment of forces would greatly influence who approached whom from a position of strength. This would inevitably influence the shape of long term international reorganization. Now, but only now, Whitehall began to consider the "long view" as a central factor in its grand strategy.[26]

By necessity, the main burden of engaging German power had been left to the Soviets. Their success left Moscow in an increasingly favourable overall position. In recognition, Washington coupled its comprehensive "Second Front" policy with assurances to Moscow that Allied operations in the Balkans "have no political significance."[27] Whitehall eschewed such transparent posturing in favour of a concrete effort to elicit Soviet views on both Allied plans and political questions. The answer was clear: the Soviets made encouraging noises about Allied activity in the Balkans, and co-operation as opposed to spheres of influence, but insisted on an early and massive "Second Front" and a punitive settlement with Germany.[28] The British found to their chagrin that their steady eclipse in terms of relative power was seriously constricting their options.

A case in point arose over the issue of resuming the Murmansk convoys. In September, a combination of factors revived the issue. The Atlantic battle was in hand and the ships were available. Also, **Tirpitz** was badly damaged in an attack by midget submarines. This naturally altered the situation. On 28 September, the DC(O) decided to resume the convoys; the Admiralty now hoped to use them to launch a maritime offensive in the area. This decision was almost overturned when chronic Soviet harassment of British personnel in Murmansk set off one of the most heated exchanges in the entire Churchill-Stalin correspondence. Nevertheless the decision stood, because the British had little real choice. The Americans considered supplying the Soviets to be an imperative coalition effort, and they carried over 90% of the burden. This led to the

ugly accusation in American political circles that the British share was, in fact, recycled Lend-Lease material. Cabinet was stung to reply that bulk comparisons were irrelevant given the "common pool" principle and the true test of the intensity of national mobilization. This was a valid point, but it did not conceal the fact that the British share of a major Allied effort amounted to an exercise in "cooking the books." Roosevelt drove home the point by sending a new team to Moscow - Harriman as Ambassador, Brig. J.R. Deane, Secretary to the JCS, as Head of the Military Mission - to help foster the direct rapport so central to his style and ambitions.[29]

Nothing was more unwelcome to Whitehall than the spectre of a Soviet-American working relationship established by shunting the British aside. Yet that came to appear to be what even Roosevelt had in mind. The Americans remained lukewarm to British efforts to define the tripartite machinery to handle emerging political issues, and to convene a conference in London. The Soviets demanded a voice on the Allied machinery set up to control "liberated" areas in Italy. The British still hoped to use diplomatic leverage to elicit favourable agreements on specific problems. The Americans were more concerned with establishing whether the Soviets would accept broad principles for universal co-operation and reorganization. The Allies shaped these respective positions as proposed agendas for a conference of foreign ministers scheduled for Moscow in late October. The Soviets listed only one item: "Measures to Shorten the War." On that pointed note, Eden was sent to Moscow with a clear mission: gain Soviet and American approval for standing tripartite diplomatic machinery in London, discover their views on every specific issue, but avoid any commitments on any such issue. "Uneasiness" may overstate the case, but Whitehall was now certainly concerned about having to rely so heavily on diplomatic leverage.[30]

For the British the results of the Moscow conference were mixed. The blaze of publicity cheered Allied public opinion and offset determined German efforts to stir up fears about Soviet intentions. A pointed answer came in a declaration that the Allies would hold enemy leaders personally responsible for as yet undefined "war crimes." However, the joviality of the communiques concealed the hard bargaining that preceded them. The British failed to persuade the Soviets to accept a statement rejecting sphere

of influence or refrain from pursuing political arrangements in overrun areas. The Allies did agree to establish a standing body, the European Advisory Commission (EAC), in London. However, the Americans insisted on restricting its mandate to specific issues arising from enemy surrender. This provided only a potential basis for the study of political issues under British auspices, and the specific territorial issues that the British hoped to discuss were largely sidestepped.[31]

Whitehall viewed the post-war agenda pragmatically. Allied forces were unlikely to reach politically contentious areas before Soviet forces. German defeat would leave a political vacuum in much of Europe. Possession was nine-tenths of the law. Co-operation could best be built from a position of strength on an issue by issue basis. The Americans adopted the reverse position: settle the broad principles and the details could be sorted out. This reflected American tradition and character, a sense of rising power, Roosevelt's "delay" policy, and his concern to overcome isolationist sentiment. Hull saw the conference as a triumph because the Soviets signed his cherished Four Power Declaration. This recognized China as a Great Power and pledged the four leading Allies to establish, based on liberal principles, a universal international organization to reorganize and then maintain international order. The old Wilsonian's naive remarks about the death of the "old diplomacy" only reflected the widespread belief in the U.S. that American economic and military leverage could induce the other powers to follow the American lead. No such delusions of grandeur affected British thinking. The weaker partner, and predisposed to focus more closely on European issues, the British more accurately assessed Soviet behaviour as meaning two things: 1) vague principles of international organization were important, but did not override specific territorial issues; 2) the Soviets were now directly involved in the very centre of Allied grand strategic debate. The conference only increased Whitehall's desperate sense that British influence was declining.[32]

The debate in which the Soviets now became involved was essentially simple; its essence was an American attempt to strengthen their interpretation of QUADRANT against a British attempt to preserve theirs. The problem emerged in two rough phases.

From early September to mid-October, the British tried to expand on apparent success in the Mediterranean. But from then to mid-November they found themselves forced to reopen the central question, in an attempt to salvage their position. Whitehall was forced to consider whether a further revision of "wear down" best suited British interests. It found that this dialogue now revolved around a commitment to a shift in grand strategy which could not be retracted.

At first there was little apparent confusion, because the primary effort in Italy moved along fairly well. There was no fixed equation regarding the influence of daily events on grand strategy, but there was a general pattern: the more optimism in Whitehall about the progress of a major ground campaign, the more elastic the basic consensus became. The euphoria in September over progress in Italy was a classic case. Fierce resistance from half a dozen German divisions, and snarled supply lines, held up the pace somewhat; but by the end of the month, Naples and the major air base complex near Foggia were in Allied hands. Some insiders felt the Allies might reach the Po by Christmas. On 25 September the JIC, enjoying an unprecedented flow of timely Ultra, advised that the 18 German divisions in Italy still intended to retreat north. Only one position south of Rome had been prepared for a delaying action. The strategy remained improvised: "push ahead and see what happened next."[33]

This optimism moved the JIC to report in mid-September on the probability - not possibility - of a German collapse in 1943. They compared the prevailing situation to that in summer 1918 - badly. Germany was militarily potent but suffering from "fundamental weaknesses." In any case, "the war will not be decided by purely military factors." The Nazi regime remained in firm control, but the Allies should continue to knock away the props, to try to force "some sudden change of regime to prepare the way for an armistice." In other words, if it worked in Italy, it should work in Germany. This ignored the contradiction between the strategy of "wear down" and the policy of unconditional surrender and overlooked the shunning of German resistance groups. Most of all, it reflected the optimism of the moment and the power of conventional wisdom. The COS accepted it without debate.[34] Bluntly, Whitehall's vested interest in letting events take their course reinforced the tendency to assume "so far so good."

This optimism also prevented Whitehall from overhauling any of its prevailing assumptions. The fundamentals still seemed as clear as ever. Churchill pointedly noted to Roosevelt that the tough fight at Salerno "shows how hard we shall have to fight in OVERLORD." The COS stood by the agreement to press in Italy but prepare for OVERLORD. They protested the transfer of 18 LST from Italy to India, but agreed those designated for OVERLORD should leave in November as planned. The possibility of a "long hard advance" in Italy was considered; Churchill was reminded that no large forces could be spared for the Balkans.[35] But the COS now expected early success. This affected their reaction to the consequences of the attack on Italy. Specifically, the COS made no special effort to ensure that Churchill did not overreact to the admittedly fluid situation east of Italy.

From HUSKY on, German reinforcements were sent in to prop up the Italian held positions in the Balkans. The Yugoslav Partisans rapidly occupied large stretches of coastline as the Italians collapsed. These developments forced Whitehall to try to define precisely what it hoped to achieve in the area. Suggestions were wide ranging, but one fact was clear: incredibly, despite intending for two years to stir up trouble in the area, the "rolling seminar" had still not decided whether it wanted to attract German forces or push them out. Under pressure from Cairo, the COS decided it was best to try to attract and contain as many German forces as possible. This raised two problems. How exactly could this be done? Additionally, was it agreed that, as the COS suggested, the strategic gains "will more than counter any political troubles which may be imposed upon us"?[36] It was SOE Cairo's task to stir up and direct resistance forces, but the organization was mired in a power struggle over who would direct it. The COS failed to split the group from MEW, but did retain control of its resources and secured agreement that its operations would be designed to complement the campaign in Italy. That limited, for the moment, Churchill's vision of an "emphasized movement." Now, in addition to operational problems, the hornet's nest of current and potential political problems in the area had to be addressed.[37]

The problem was familiar: what if it turned out that the resistance groups of greatest military value were those most repugnant to the legitimate governments in exile,

the legal allies? First hand information finally began to reach London, but it only reinforced the debate. The Foreign Office felt that any move by Communist forces to seize power after a German withdrawal would be a threat to British interests. They insisted that British forces must be prepared to prevent this, a definite expression of the desire to preserve British interests and check Soviet influence. The COS were equally blunt: the problem of defeating the Germans must come first, even if it meant running political risks. By mid-October as civil war erupted in Greece, the Foreign Office was trying to press for an effort to reconcile Tito with the legitimate government, and the question of policy remained anything but clear. Whitehall redoubled its efforts to gauge the situation on the ground.[38]

An altogether different situation erupted in the Aegean. In fact, the British reaction here to the fluid situation after the Italian surrender most clearly underlined the fact that there was no carefully crafted long term detailed program. Several factors created the potential for trouble. The "freeze" order was cancelled during QUADRANT, and Middle East Command lost its LST to India. The 8th Indian Division, its only fully amphibiously trained formation, was transferred to Eisenhower. That made a rapid yet deliberate assault impossible. But Churchill and the theatre commanders anticipated that the major islands, especially Rhodes, could now be seized, with the help of their Italian garrisons, before the Germans would react. The Italian surrender set off a piecemeal flow of small forces into the Aegean to stir up the desired reaction. The COS did not intervene because no danger was apprehended. That situation changed rapidly. The well prepared Germans seized Rhodes on 11 September. This gave them the dominant position in the area. From its air bases, German forces could intercept all Allied attempts to move north into the Aegean. Allied positions to the north could be isolated and defeated in detail unless Rhodes was retaken. Nevertheless, Wilson decided on 12 September to retain and even reinforce positions seized on other islands, especially Kos and Leros, in the hope of rallying Italian forces and decreasing the strength of German positions.[39]

Like many similar decisions, this one stemmed from a mixture of distant and immediate causes. There are two key issues: why was the decision taken, and could its

consequences reasonably have been foreseen? The general causes included the decision in 1942 to split the Mediterranean into separate commands, the shift of forces to the west, the increased interest in activity in the area and the excitement of early September. Intelligence kept Whitehall and Cairo well informed of German movements, but they failed to appreciate accurately the full depth of German intentions and capabilities. The Allies also contributed to their own problems by raising German concerns for the area by the deception ploys to cover HUSKY and AVALANCHE. Hitler saw the Aegean as the "Iron Ring," which had to be held to keep Allied forces away from the Balkans and keep Turkey quiet.[40] But the root of disaster was the decision to risk an improvised commitment without really being prepared to take the consequences. This problem was as vast as the overall British position and as specific as the state of mind in the "rolling seminar."

The most direct cause can be summed up succinctly. Whenever the COS were distracted or divided, Churchill enjoyed greater latitude to pressure theatre commanders. In this case they were both, and Churchill and Cairo were excited by the apparent prospects. Churchill was also determined not to let a British controlled theatre sit idly by while Allied campaigns gained laurels elsewhere. Snatching positions in the Aegean would bring real benefits. The air threat to Egypt would be reversed; the RAF could move north and attack the Balkans; the Turks would be impressed. This might open up a supply line to the Soviets, and British victories would help preserve Britain's place in the "Big Three." Churchill and Cairo believed what they wanted to believe: the fluid situation gave British forces a chance to act independently, on a small scale but for high stakes at little risk. Together, they decided to forge ahead without Rhodes and reinforce the other positions. This was Churchill at his worst: unchecked, impulsive, grasping for prestige and blinded by romanticism. On 9 September he urged: "Good. This is a time to play high. Improvise and dare." On 13 September he implored Wilson to try to "snatch" Rhodes: "This is a time to think of Clive and Peterborough and of Rooke's men taking Gibraltar." In general, "this is the time to take risks."[41]

The image of a sensible COS restraining a reckless Prime Minister was not always fair. Often - the dispatch of armour to Egypt, TORCH, support for the Soviets -

Churchill's broadness of vision and sheer vigour were real assets, but his chronic reluctance to accept the objective parameters of "wear down" was also important. With the Allies on the move, and British status at issue, only a vigilant watch would have kept Churchill's behaviour in line with the basic priorities. No such watch was kept. By late September over a brigade of troops was scattered around several islands, supported only by light naval forces and one Spitfire squadron on Kos. Traces of German air force reinforcements plus attacks on Kos forced Cairo, belatedly, to reassess the situation. Wilson finally declared on 22 September that unless Rhodes were taken the area could not now be held. On 24 September Hitler ordered a determined effort to drive the British from their new positions. Wilson warned that he could not take Rhodes by anything less than a deliberate assault, for which he required air reinforcements and two LST.[42]

The new positions had been reinforced in spite of the facts, all known to the British, that Rhodes could not be attacked before late October, the only large air bases in the area were Turkish and unavailable, and the long range fighters that might have offset this were under Eisenhower's control.[43] One gamble succeeded another: the Germans could not respond in strength; when they did, forces could be spared from Italy to restore the position. Churchill did not seem unaware of the potential for disaster. On 25 September he told Eisenhower that the loan of only 10% of his air and amphibious forces would "win great results" and avert failure. The COS were finally pulled back into the debate when it became clear that Wilson was unlikely to receive any LST. This sparked a debate in the COS on 30 September which underlined the disarray in the "rolling seminar." Brooke and the JPS objected to any "diversions" from the main campaign, especially as they might lead to the need to secure one position after another. Churchill and Portal disagreed. No reverses could be accepted. The Germans had concentrated 350 aircraft in the area and must be challenged. They won the argument. The CCS were told that Rhodes must be attacked, and Wilson was directed to assume his requirements would be supplied. The direct spark for this decision was likely the now intense German pressure on Kos - the island was, in fact, overrun on 3-4 October.[44] But the deeper reasons were more important.

The essential British approach - to press ahead and see what happened - aggravated an inherent contradiction in their grand strategic posture. On the one hand, agreement on fundamentals kept forces concentrated; hence the drain on Wilson's strength. On the other hand, no specific objectives had, or could have been, set because the idea remained the general "wearing down" of German power. The objections to Aegean operations made this clear. In order to preserve their influence on Allied policy, and their own agreement on fundamentals, the British set off a chain reaction in the Mediterranean with no set program for dealing with its consequences. Now, however, the German reaction in the Aegean helped dispel some illusions. The Allies could not yet take liberties with German forces. Worse, it now seemed unlikely that operations could be halted if required by Allied agreements or if things went wrong. The strength of concerns about waning British status suggested that any campaign led by Imperial forces would not be allowed to be seen to fail.[45] This was not new, but could no longer be avoided. Far from being caught in its own conspiracy to abort OVERLORD, the small but reckless move into the Aegean forced Whitehall to confront the consequences of its own wishful thinking. The loss of around 2,000 troops on Kos set off a chain reaction which led to a major crisis in Allied relations.

The direct spark of the crisis was the one factor upon which the whole of British grand strategy precariously rested: the German reaction to Allied thrusts. Stubborn German resistance and new intelligence indicated as early as 4 October, the day Kos was lost, that the Germans might try to stand south of Rome. That prompted Eisenhower's staff to warn that they required all their assets to deal with any new situation. That especially included the six squadrons of long range fighters which, on loan to Wilson, had helped greatly to ease the pressure in the Aegean.[46] The initial Allied rush forward seemed to have stalled. This forced Whitehall to take stock. The essence of the situation was clear. The Germans had run the risk of reinforcing and contesting every area. Therefore, given the prevailing perception of relative combat power, efforts must again be concentrated on the priority campaign. Brooke was especially adamant that as long as the Italian situation was unclear no other serious effort could be pressed. Wilson admitted that the German moves made the Allies look "ponderous." But the fog of war

and the strength of conflicting pressures made the issue difficult to resolve. While intelligence authorities tried to determine German intentions in Italy, Churchill and Portal resisted Brooke's call to "cut their losses in the eastern Mediterranean." Churchill pleaded directly to Roosevelt on 7 and 8 October. There was no intention to open another major campaign, but the enemy must not be allowed to exploit Allied divisions. The Mediterranean was an interlocked theatre and must be treated accordingly. Given that the early capture of Rome still seemed likely, provision could and must be made to take Rhodes and secure the Aegean.[47]

This convinced Washington that recent British activities were designed to pull the Allies into the Balkans step by step - a reasonable appreciation of results, if not intentions, as Brooke and the JPS had already noted. In progressively sterner telegrams, Roosevelt emphasized this point and demanded an explanation as to how other campaigns would not affected. The JCS insisted that the decision on what could be done be left to Eisenhower, the man on the spot. This was both a proven ploy to deflect British pressure and a request Churchill could not refuse. A conference of area commanders at Eisenhower's headquarters was called for 9 October. Churchill went to extraordinary lengths to press for a decision to support an attack on Rhodes.[48] Yet once again the Germans settled the issue. Ultra intercepts revealed their decision to hold the Allied Armies south of Rome. The report from Eisenhower's conference was unanimous. Rhodes must be taken to hold the Aegean, but that could only be done with forces now urgently required to prevent a premature stall in Italy. Unless the Allies drove north of Rome, they could not be sure of developing a strong enough position to hold the initiative. Rome must come first, so Rhodes was off.[49]

The German decision to stand south of Rome changed everything. No one disputed that for strategic, tactical and political reasons, the Allies had to do whatever was necessary to drive north of Rome before 1944. But the damage had already been done, in three areas: in the Aegean itself, in Allied relations, and in Whitehall's unity and self-confidence. The blunder in the Aegean was compounded. Churchill first threatened to hold an inquiry into the loss of Kos, then supported Cairo's decision to hold Leros "through thick and thin." That decision was not rescinded after Eisenhower's

conference despite the now unmistakeable evidence of an intended German attack. Churchill told Wilson on 10 October: "Cling on if you possibly can...if forced to leave will support but victory is the prize." The prize was not merely a small isolated island held by a feebly supported battalion. It was to keep the whole campaign alive. The reasons for this extraordinary decision are important and obvious. Failure in Greece in 1941, alone and on the defensive, was noble. Failure in 1943, striving to keep up in an overall offensive, was intolerable. Churchill called the loss of Kos a "vexatious setback." Although Italy came first, a "cardinal strategic decision was now at issue." That decision - even after the new German stance in Italy emerged - was whether the Allies would accept "reasonable latitude in the handling of our joint affairs," in order to prevent British operations from ending in failure. Here was the real issue: could the British no longer attempt anything, no matter how small, by themselves? Churchill bowed to priorities, weakness and force majeure, but rashly declined to accept the full consequences. The decision to hold Leros after the rejection of an assault on Rhodes raised the prospect of defeat. Churchill knew this, and did not mince words to Roosevelt: "I will not waste words in explaining how painful this decision is to me."[50]

The fate of this small campaign brought out the deepest suspicions because of where it took place. Washington, convinced that London's objective was to derail OVERLORD, curtly ordered Eisenhower to retrieve the indispensable fighter squadrons. Churchill, convinced that the Americans intended to cut the British out of the most central decisions, encouraged strategic folly for mainly political ends. However, the problem also went beyond impulsiveness. The British based their grand strategy on the hope that the Germans would stretch their forces to hold the southern flank. When they did just that, the fatal contradiction inherent in an approach based on perceived relative weakness was again exposed: the strength of the German reaction threatened the Allied campaigns themselves. Worse, the British desperately needed campaigns led by their forces to succeed, but were hampered by the "ponderousness" of those forces and their dependence on American assistance.[51] Whitehall's reaction to the display of German resolve and power was severe.

Four areas already seemed to require further review: fundamental grand strategic approach, command machinery and policy for the whole Mediterranean, the connection between grand strategy and strategy in Italy, and the scope for and importance of operations further east. These problems produced by mid-October an unusually serious malaise in Whitehall thinking. The issue of reorganized command machinery arose from a superficially correct argument about why Allied efforts east of Italy had been so feeble. Allied forces were hampered by an artificial division of command. The Allies had launched a plan aimed to set off turmoil over a broad area, but when this happened, Wilson had the opportunities but Eisenhower had the forces. The solution seemed simple: place the area from the Aegean to Italy under one commander, who would then feel obliged to ensure that no operations anywhere in his command went awry.

As early as September the COS raised the issue of unifying commands in the Mediterranean,[52] but it took the loss of Kos and the decision of the Eisenhower conference to move the issue to the top of the Whitehall agenda. Eisenhower's decision spoiled hopes that he would feel some responsibility for operations on his flank, or that his British subordinates would press the case. Whitehall felt that something had to be done to synchronize the balance of forces with the fact that the theatre from Rome to Rhodes was one interlocked problem.[53] This issue acted like a tonic to the "rolling seminar." Here was a way to blame unreadiness in the Balkans and failure in the Aegean on something other than British weakness or errors. The COS formally absolved SOE on 15 October and tied its problems to the machinery issue. It told the COS that 230,000 guerillas, tying down 17 German divisions, were being starved of supplies because Wilson had the responsibility but not the resources. London's proposed remedy was based on the surface logic of artificial division, but reflected the deeper dilemma of the British position. To solve the problem of delays in shifting forces to critical points, Eisenhower should assume authority over operations from Rhodes to Italy. However, a solely British command would continue to control the area below the Aegean "where British strategic and political interests are paramount." This would make it possible to "seize fleeting opportunities" by removing the coalition imposed obstacle to activity east of Italy.[54]

Whitehall wanted the best of both worlds, but it had created the problem in the first place. It had insisted that a separate command be retained east of Italy, then it had shifted British striking power westwards. Finally, the gamble on an improvised move in the Aegean had been a British decision. The second decision took sensible account of power and priorities. The third, based on misused intelligence and pursued primarily for prestige, flouted them. It seems clear that this proposal to reorganize command machinery was a British attempt to circumvent the limits posed by their own relative weakness.

This confusion over plans and priorities strengthens the arguments that Whitehall acted more by improvisation than calculation and that Allied plans were upset by German actions rather than British ambitions. To that might be added capricious planning and ponderous performance. The reaction to the new situation in Italy underlined all these points. Alexander felt that the German decision to stand and fight marked "the true moment of birth of the Italy campaign." Montgomery also switched from complaining to discussing precise objectives. In a letter on 14 October, apparently designed to play on Brooke's views, Montgomery isolated the heart of the matter. The Allies must decide now whether they wanted to advance on Germany through Italy or merely pin German forces and establish a bastion for other efforts. Regardless, the Allies had to press north of Rome in order to reach a line that could be safely held by adequate forces. A precise strategy was now imperative.[55]

Here indeed was the crux. The idea was to force the Germans to mount a more costly effort than the Allies in a secondary theatre. But was this now possible with the forces allotted? Hitherto, the COS tried to balance immediate support for Italy with efforts to bolster OVERLORD. Another example was the decision to replace the personnel of one of the veteran divisions slated for transfer, the 7th Armoured Division, with the men of the 5th Canadian Armoured Division. That would bolster OVERLORD without undue harm to Eighth Army and meet Canadian desires for more contact. But as this decision was confirmed on 12 October,[56] this policy of balance was already obsolete. The easily defensible terrain of central Italy allowed the Germans to mount the relatively less expensive effort. The only hope was to advance fast enough to prevent

them from consolidating. The COS duly shifted priorities, and now insisted that Eisenhower had to be left the capability to outflank the German line by amphibious assaults. That again made the OVERLORD schedule a pointed issue, and as far as London was concerned active operations always came first.[57]

Alexander's comment clearly held true in broad strategic terms as well. Before the Germans upset the apple-cart, neither Ally had thought very clearly beyond "push ahead." But now the British felt that something must be done about Italy, whereas the Americans felt that Eisenhower's forces were still adequate to reach the Po. Washington instead focused on one of the avowed objectives of AVALANCHE - the early establishment of reinforcement forces for POINTBLANK. Spurred by the Schweinfurt fiasco, the JCS agreed to establish the 15th U.S. Air Force in Italy as soon as possible, to participate not in the local campaign but in POINTBLANK. This was much too fast for the British. Portal had recently confessed that no strategic bombing could commence from Italy before 1944, and now felt that bases near Ravenna would be the most suitable.[58] The COS focused on the logistic bottleneck and the needs of the moment. Clearly, the German stand in Italy had set Allied thoughts on divergent courses once again.

This divergence was already apparent regarding operations east of Italy. The JCS agreed that if it could be shown to assist his campaign, Eisenhower might consider boosting supplies to resistance forces in Yugoslavia. However, their decision rested on the belief that as the margin in Italy was now so slim - 11 Allied divisions faced nine German - Eisenhower would be unwilling to spare any assets. The CCS confirmed this decision on 15 October.[59] Two days later, Churchill suggested reviving the deliberate assault on Rhodes for early 1944. Impulse had become obsession. Cairo now decided to hold and even reinforce Leros, on the grounds that it would be too costly to evacuate. This decision was taken in spite of the fact that Wilson admitted German capabilities and intentions had so far been misinterpreted. It was accepted despite the realization that there was little chance of aid from Eisenhower or the Turks.[60] It was, in fact, compounded folly.

These developments in the Mediterranean, despite their complexity, had a clear connection, viewed from the centre. They amounted to an intense reaction in Whitehall to the failure of the "British" stage of the QUADRANT outline. The Allies had not been able to rend the German southern flank and now faced a determined enemy reaction. This made the issue of overall grand strategic approach acute once again, because the fate of British influence in grand strategy rested on rapid progress in the Mediterranean. This time, the issue caught the Royal eye.

By mid-October a familiar question was being raised in official circles: could the success of current efforts not be developed into a full scale campaign in the Balkans, of safer and earlier effect than OVERLORD? King George VI himself put the query to Churchill on 14 October. The reply is noteworthy. It expressed a real sense of the limit to British latitude, but a determination to press that latitude to that limit:

> "There is no possibility of our going back on what is agreed. Both the U.S. Staff and Stalin violently disagree with us. It must be remembered that this country is the only base from which our Metropolitan Air Force can make its weight tell. I think there are resources for both theatres..."

Yet five days later, Churchill suggested the COS review "in a most secret manner" the feasibility of adjusting future plans. The problem was the rigid commitment to OVERLORD. If it drained so many forces so soon that current campaigns floundered, the Allies risked offering two weakened thrusts for grand strategic defeat in detail. That was especially true for OVERLORD; as it would give the Germans an opportunity to concentrate, it risked becoming "a military disaster greater than Dunkirk." The COS, and Smuts - again visiting the U.K.- were unanimous: the arbitrary commitment to shift forces to the U.K. regardless of the prevailing situation seemed dangerous, now that it was clear German flexibility had been underestimated. As the aim of Mediterranean operations was to make OVERLORD possible, the Allies risked falling between two stools. Churchill summed up: if it was up to the British, Italy would be reinforced, the Aegeans "held," the Balkans "entered," and BOLERO would continue but OVERLORD would be delayed if necessary. As it was **not** "up to the British," the COS should review the issues, assuming changes **could** be made if required. While "it may well be that we need not recant on OVERLORD except as regards emphasis and the balance of effort,"

if adjustments were required the matter should be settled at another CCS conference.[61]

Some authors have argued that this decision to reopen the debate about Allied grand strategy was a reaction to events in Italy and Eisenhower's stance. There is certainly some truth to this, but the discussion also reflected several entrenched assumptions of the "rolling seminar," including perceived relative weakness and a sincere belief that the American program misjudged the operational situation. The British definitely resented their decline in leverage and the apparently arbitrary American attitude.[62] But there was both more and less to it. The element of frustration was the key. Churchill and the COS hoped to delay OVERLORD until its prerequisites were achieved. They did not conspire to replace it by a pre-planned alternative main thrust. This point had been emphasized to the King himself. The COS new project reflected frustration over setbacks, not delight over matters going according to plan. It was an emotional reaction to the prospect of being superseded as the "leader" in Allied policy.

This contention is supported by another letter to Churchill on 14 October, from a less au ust but even better informed source. Hollis, from his unequalled central vantage point, warned his Minister in "Most Secret" terms of a "feeling of uneasiness throughout the Staffs." This feeling was based on the view that the cause of current troubles was the series of arbitrary CCS agreements, which had prevented the full and timely exploitation of the effects of AVALANCHE. This situation was likely to worsen if the decline in British influence meant that arbitrary American decisions would strip the Allies of the ability to respond flexibly to changing situations. In plain English, the Americans seemed determined to foreclose the British dominated campaigns in the Mediterranean, convinced this would not hurt OVERLORD. Even though reopening the QUADRANT accord would infuriate the Americans:

> "an instruction from you to the COS to examine the situation in the Mediterranean and the Balkans in the light of the daily changing scene, assuming for the sake of argument that we were masters of our own destiny and not beholden to concert at all points our strategy with the Americans, would be received not without satisfaction."

Beneath the Whitehallese, Hollis' draft was a prescription for catharsis. As such, it underpinned Churchill's instructions to the COS.[63]

The connection cannot be ignored. The British agreed at QUADRANT to settle for one last phase of "wear down," but reserved the right to ensure that it succeeded. By mid-October consensus in Whitehall had given way to confusion, success was clearly in doubt, and the decline in British influence was obvious. Hollis' plan called for a comprehensive and unrestricted review of options, to help dispel confusion in the "rolling seminar" and restore its morale and determination. Churchill agreed. Whitehall therefore exercised its option to question whether events since QUADRANT warranted pressing forward as planned or called for steps to retrieve a fluid situation. The decision was taken with a clear idea of the likely American reaction. Nevertheless Brooke supported it, sincerely believing that the issues of timing and balance were interlocked.[64] The opportunistic lunge from one safe campaign to the other was at a dead end. By force of circumstance, "wear down" was now a Mediterranean pathfinder for OVERLORD. If this campaign stalled, the British genuinely feared that their last mass of power would be risked in a premature OVERLORD. At best they faced a serious loss of power and influence, unless the current campaigns - in which British controlled forces still predominated - forged ahead and visibly reduced German power. The reaction in Washington to the new situation was also intense. Elastic compromises no longer seemed possible. The JCS felt that the new British attitude involved "a complete change in our European policy." They decided, also on 19 October, to rethink the problem of precise objectives in Italy and the connection to OVERLORD.[65] The apparent stall of "wear down" had placed it on the block.

The effort to reopen the fundamental issue of grand strategic approach took nearly a month. In the end the British secured the desired conference. But meanwhile the course of events in the Mediterranean and the tensions in Allied dialogue underlined the constraints on British decisions. The only real way for the British to carry the fundamental argument was to define exactly what constituted success in the Mediterranean and how it could be achieved. This would clear a path to OVERLORD that all could accept. The connection between the Mediterranean and OVERLORD, plus Soviet intervention, proved the decisive factors. Ultimately, the "rolling seminar" was

well satisfied with what was very clearly a collectively written formula to resolve an increasingly impossible conflict of imperatives.

That collective authorship was set to the task on 20 October, when the COS briefed the JPS on the desired review of grand strategy. Grand strategy was to be considered "purely in the light of the existing situation." It was to be assumed that OVERLORD could be postponed, or regarded as a "residuary legatee." Three main questions needed answers. First, assuming the objective in Italy was to advance beyond the Pisa-Rimini line, what did this entail regarding transfers of forces? Second, how could that campaign best be assisted by activity in the Balkans, including the use of "relatively small Allied forces?" Finally, what could be done in the Aegean to assist both those efforts and open a link to the Soviets? Everything was to be considered in terms of providing direct assistance for OVERLORD. The catharsis was underway.[66] Despite a fairly open mandate, the COS had given a fairly clear indication of their train of thought. This emerged clearly in reaction to further events in Italy, which provided the decisive factor in reshaping a new pattern.

In the latter part of October the Allied advance bogged down, held up by bad weather and difficult terrain. As German reinforcements built a "Winter Line" in the mountains south of Rome, Eisenhower and Alexander took stock. Their report was so disturbing it was sent directly to Churchill and Roosevelt on 24 October. The commanders felt that the premature deployment of 15th Air Force, and the wear and tear on LST, had swung the prospects of relative reinforcement against the Allies. With only 11 divisions in contact, they now faced the risk of losing the initiative. Unless 15th Army Group could retain some of the LST about to leave for the U.K., it might not be able to drive north of Rome before the Germans could dig in. Indeed, as a worst case scenario, it seemed that the Germans were willing and able to concentrate enough forces to launch a counter-offensive.[67] The reactions to this dire warning emphasized differences in perspective. The British felt that the campaign had to be salvaged by whatever action necessary. The Americans felt only minor and temporary adjustments were required. The COS insisted that Eisenhower must be supported even if it meant a delay in OVERLORD. Churchill told Roosevelt that while the German reaction

vindicated British grand strategic arguments, this would be for nought if control of the campaign was lost. Cabinet "warmly endorsed" this stand on the grounds that an unexpected change in the situation required a change in plans.[68]

The only adjustment the Americans had already made was one the British felt most ill-timed: the early deployment of 15th Air Force. The CCS confirmed the move on 22 October, with the proviso that any units in excess of the logistic capacity in Italy would be sent to the U.K. The British argued that POINTBLANK would be better served by concentrating in the U.K., but their real concern was the effect of the move on the situation in Italy. The COS argued that deploying air forces right now, in order to intensify broader efforts, threatened to saturate the logistic capacity the ground forces needed in order to be able to drive far enough north to secure the best bases for those air forces. Portal was driven to suggest that bases just north of Rome would prove acceptable. The Americans would have none of it. Marshall insisted the movement was needed now to provide relief to 8th Air Force and would not unduly hamper 15th Army Group. Fifteenth Air Force was activated on 1 November.[69]

This decision to add to the strain on Eisenhower's supply lines underlined the difference in perspective between London and Washington. The British felt that to proceed to transfer forces to a future operation, even though an active allied ground campaign on European soil was now at risk, would be folly. In other words, the objective - whatever it was - had not yet been achieved, and now might not be without a change in plans. In particular, Eisenhower needed to retain enough LST for long enough to strengthen his forces.[70] The Americans disagreed on several grounds. The Allies overwhelming air superiority would deal with any German concentration. In any case, Eisenhower's forces were fulfilling their mission: to attract German forces. No risks could be taken with the OVERLORD buildup, nor were any needed. After lengthy arguments, the CCS decided on 29 October to put two questions to Eisenhower. What forces did he need in order to retain the initiative? What line had to be reached to secure the campaign definitively?[71]

The problem of forecasting events was, as always, heavily influenced by the impact of prevailing assumptions on the assessment of intelligence. Now a strange irony

emerged: the Americans were sanguine about prospects in Italy but cautious about Germany's overall situation, the opposite of the British assessment. In late October the American JIC offered its own comment on the probability of a German collapse that year. It agreed that the overall German position was grave, but saw the German internal situation as stable. This was closer to the mark; then again, Washington was less desperate to see signs of early German collapse in every piece of information. There seemed to be a general feeling in Whitehall that merely because British policy relied on an early German "crack" it would, somehow, come about.[72] The problem of relative prospects in Italy was another matter. Here the COS entrenched caution came into play.

An intense debate erupted between Brooke, who agreed with the theatre assessment that the Germans could seize the initiative, and the JIC and JPS, who considered this pessimistic. Brooke insisted that an appreciation be drafted based on a determined German move to deploy their central reserves, in order to determine what line would most favour the Allies in terms of relative reinforcement capability. In other words, he wanted an appreciation of what the Germans might do **regardless** of problems elsewhere. This at least raised the basic issues that should have been confronted in August. Given that the Allies were on the ground in Europe, where and in what strength did they have to reach in order to survive any feasible German reaction? The optimism of the moment, and the desperate desire to press "wear down," had dulled the COS normal pessimism regarding challenging the German Army. Its reaction restored this in full force. The JIC answered on 11 November. By running risks, the Germans could concentrate 31 divisions by 1944. To prevent this, the Allies would have to have carried the Pisa-Rimini line. Allied intelligence traced German movements, but it could not settle these arguments about intentions, capabilities and implications.[73] It could and did intensify the arguments about grand strategic priorities.

The challenge the COS now faced was to define a concrete proposal for action in Italy which would mollify American fears about OVERLORD and British motives. The first problem was to sort out the LST question, hopefully with Eisenhower's help. Eisenhower duly asked to be allowed to retain LST but did not offer any firm plan for their offensive use. The COS drafted their own: allow Eisenhower to retain 60 of 104

LST designated to depart, until at least 15 December, in order to boost his supply flow and to enable Alexander to flank the "Winter Line" by divisional scale amphibious assaults on each coast. The issue exploded when the theatre command raised doubts about 15th Army Group's ability to reach Rome, let alone Pisa, before 1944.[74] Churchill and the COS discussed the situation on 4 November. All the illusions based on hopes of rapid success were at last replaced by a searching examination of the basic imperative of the move into Italy. The Allied armies could not stop south of Rome, and would not have to if plans based on better prospects were changed. These plans, which had been upset by the enemy, had to change, because OVERLORD relied on success in Italy. That element could now be defined: Allied ground forces, especially when dominated by British controlled forces, must not only attract German forces but must also remain strong enough to control the campaign. The QUADRANT plans had to be changed in order to salvage OVERLORD.[75]

The CCS discussed both these British arguments and Eisenhower's reply to their questions on 5 November. Eisenhower insisted that, to meet requirements, 68 LST would have to be retained beyond November. That represented one third of the total then allotted to OVERLORD and was seen as the critical issue; but again, the real debate was over repercussions, intended or otherwise. Eisenhower argued that his forces could revert to the defensive, and relinquish surplus assets, after a line well north of Rome - anchored on Civitavecchia - was reached in early 1944. On this basis, the JCS agreed to allow him to retain 68 LST until 15 December, and even to request an extension.[76] By now, the whole argument had brought Allied grand strategic thinking to an important new stage. The campaign in Italy was clearly back to the fore. The British saw German reinforcement first as a threat to Allied forces. The Americans saw it first as fulfilment of the objective of diverting forces from OVERLORD. The question remained: what next?

The "rolling seminar" now faced up to what it had, by unspoken consensus, avoided in the optimistic days of September: all talk of "reverting to the defensive" was problematic. If and only if "wear down" clearly succeeded overall and in Italy, then and only then would Whitehall agree to halt 15th Army Group. This was not a plan to

advance through Italy, but it was a decision not to accept deadlock. There were two equally strong operative factors. Strategically, Whitehall was reluctant to run even a remote risk of losing the initiative to German ground forces. Grand strategically, the Italian campaign was the last that would be dominated by British controlled forces in an Allied command in Europe; to preserve British influence in policy, it could not be allowed to falter. Whitehall now acknowledged that comprehensive national interests required the advance to continue. The American reaction was a strong incentive. Washington was swayed by Eisenhower's assurances, not British arguments. It also delivered an intimidating display of independent flexibility. In addition to reallocating heavy bombers, it was suddenly found possible to allocate several dozen LST and LCT from new output to OVERLORD.[77] Such unilateral adjustments were largely beyond British capability. This lesson, and the German stand in Italy, forced Whitehall to confront the consequences of the incomplete success of the opportunistic lunge into Europe.

Unfortunately, Whitehall's belated return to earth could not check the momentum of what had already been done. The "rolling seminar" continued to grapple with a complex situation east of Italy. It was still hoped that a clear connection between the Italian campaign and support for resistance forces in the Balkans could be demonstrated. Churchill awakened Roosevelt's interest, but confessed that the confused political and military situations continued to defy attempts to sort out any clear policy. British efforts were moved along by the desire to retain control of Allied policy in the area, reports from envoys on the ground, and a determined push by the Foreign Office to create a coherent policy. Regarding both Yugoslavia and Greece, Whitehall thinking moved towards an effort to reconcile political and military interests by attempting to combine support for the most active groups with the insistence that the Allies only deal with the legitimate governments. This effort was conditioned by the need for further information and the assumption that there would not be a massive Allied military movement into the area.[78]

The position in the Aegean was far worse. The decision to hold and even reinforce Leros continued to divide the COS; but by early November it was held by a

swollen brigade without any effective air support. Cairo and Portal confidently assumed that air support could be deployed in time. The Germans won this race as well, and overwhelmed the garrison on 16 November. An almighty row soon erupted over the whole campaign. Wilson glossed over his own decision to proceed after the Germans took Rhodes. Churchill and the COS blamed divided command machinery and American rigidity, especially regarding the long range fighters, and glossed over their own role. Churchill had little choice but to brazen out the furore over what he termed "our first really grievous reverse since Tobruk." The failure in the Aegean appeared even then as a reckless gamble on Italian reaction, which added to a sense of frustration at home over the course of British campaigns.[79] Indeed, the implications of this campaign were so widespread that it warrants another look.

The move into Kos and Leros after the failure to take Rhodes was a barely justifiable risk, given the hope that air support could be secured from Eisenhower. The decision to hold the remaining positions after the shift of events in Italy was militarily absurd. Churchill and the Cairo commanders were the prime movers, but the fatal flaw was the division and distraction of the COS. Brooke objected from the start, with an eye to the need to concentrate on Italy and retain Marshall's support. Portal was a constant supporter even though the RAF, unable to deploy in adequate strength or position, could do little to help. The campaign unfolded as the Admiralty found itself mired in the problem of a change of command. Pound reached the point of collapse and had to be replaced; his illness took his life on 21 October, Trafalgar Day. After some debate, Cunningham replaced him as 1st Sea Lord/CNS. Cunningham moved into the post in the midst of the campaign, and was unable to project any real influence on it. The British were divided in council and moved forward divided in motive. The critical factors were sheer opportunism and the desire to display continued independent capability. Once that capability threatened to fail, it became a matter of prestige. The strength of concerns for British status clinched the decision to press an unfavourable campaign.[80] The real price was not material but rather the impact of defeat on the frame of mind of the "rolling seminar." This was predictably ambivalent. Respect for German combat power was reinforced, but so too was the desperation to retain an

autonomous role and voice in Allied grand strategy. Finally, the inherent tension in "wear down" - between what was felt to be imperative for national interests, and what was considered to be within national capability - came to a head.

The strength of prevailing fundamental assumptions continued to shape the reorientation of Whitehall thinking. This particularly rested on the COS ability to sort through the noise and decide what the Army could and must do. The answer emerged in the form of yet another revised version of "wear down," geared to streamlining and pressing current efforts. The JPS report on theoretical options was received on 4 November. Their conclusion was that the effects of a major incursion into the Balkans, by eight to 10 divisions, could "unravel" the entire Axis southern flank. However, the trend of discussion moved clearly towards reinforcing the current campaign in Italy. The JPS were advised to focus on what might be done in the Mediterranean assuming all Eisenhower's needs must be met and OVERLORD could be delayed.[81] The strength of entrenched assumptions, and the impact of recent events, was obvious.

On 8 November the JPS returned with the most comprehensive analysis of Mediterranean campaigns yet attempted. Entitled "Relation of Mediterranean to OVERLORD," it explored every conceivable option for further operations. The COS conclusions, on 9 November, were categorical. First priority must be to retain the capability to drive north of Rome in 1943 and retain the initiative in Italy in 1944. All other efforts must conform. No other ground campaign, not even a large bridgehead on the Adriatic, could be attempted east of Italy. To occupy German forces, air attack and other efforts in the Balkans should be intensified. The Aegean should be isolated, which meant again pressing for Turkish assistance. Brooke summed up the new consensus: OVERLORD to be delayed if necessary up to two months, the advance in Italy to aim at the Pisa line, all other campaigns to be strictly supplementary, command machinery to be restructured. Finally, the COS had a specific formula to reconcile British and American priorities.[82] Noticeably, this envisaged the Mediterranean as one large and increasingly active theatre. This reflected a new twist in aspirations and concerns regarding British influence in Allied policy.

That new twist was provided by the Soviet position at the Moscow Conference. Before the conference, the Soviets noted that they intended to demand a full account of "Second Front" plans, but they also apparently wanted to pressure Sweden and Turkey to join the Allies immediately. The COS assumed that the Soviet advance would continue regardless, but Ismay was sent to Moscow to help Eden deal with these issues. He was to declare that the time was not yet ripe to pressure Turkey or offer detailed comment on OVERLORD. Then Eisenhower's sombre telegram regarding the Italian front arrived. On Churchill's insistence, Eden informed Stalin that this meant that steps would have to be taken even if it meant delaying OVERLORD. Stalin insisted OVERLORD remain paramount and proceed as soon as possible, but proved surprisingly receptive to escalation in the Mediterranean.[83] This new Soviet posture whetted British appetites and galvanized their ideas.

Churchill took up the case, arguing directly to Stalin that progress in Italy would immediately aid the Soviets and ultimately aid OVERLORD. After lengthy discussion, Eden persuaded Molotov to agree to let the British pressure Turkey to take gradual but definite steps towards intervention. The Turks remained stubbornly aloof, but Whitehall nevertheless revived the policies of preparing air bases in Turkey and pressing for early Turkish entry. The "rolling seminar" remained agreed that the Italian campaign came first; but now there was a new air of optimism.[84] If the Soviets actually wanted the Allies to step up the pressure they could generate before OVERLORD, would that not affect the terms of the Allied debate?

This fluctuation in thought again underlined an important point: in the constant attempt to balance a fluid situation and conflicting pressures, British views beyond broad fundamentals were far from settled. The British certainly hoped that a new debate was emerging, because the Americans pressed from the other direction. At Moscow they assured the Soviets that OVERLORD would not be delayed; this was then declared in the CCS to be a binding pledge.[85] That was only the tip of the iceberg. Deane stayed in Moscow as part of the concerted effort to settle Allied grand strategy, and establish a working relationship with the Soviets, by entrenching OVERLORD. That made it necessary to convince Stalin to support American plans, and to reassure him that there

was no settled Anglo-American policy to challenge Soviet interests. In fact, it is hard to resist the conclusion that Roosevelt had now decided that the British could be taken for granted, and he must treat directly with the Soviets as the crucial grand strategic and post-war factor. Ironically, the Soviet stance in Moscow on current operations raised American concerns.[86] This further intensified both the debate on grand strategy and that on the nature of the conference all now agreed was necessary.

The fact this conference was intended to be the first "Big Three" summit greatly complicated its organization. The American determination to restructure Allied relationships elicited a vigorous British attempt to preserve their own status. Both sides wanted a full conference with Stalin, to probe into his general intentions. Both agreed the CCS needed to be reconvened. There the consensus ended. The Americans tried hard to avoid meeting the British alone before some sort of direct meeting with the Soviets. It took 21 telegrams between Churchill and Roosevelt, from 20 October to 12 November, to sort through a bewildering array of proposed timetables and participants. In what became a frankly demeaning exchange, Churchill was forced to press a transparently evasive Roosevelt to reaffirm the principle on which the integrated Allied war effort had been conceived: that the British and Americans shared a unique identity of interest and status which made it right and necessary for them to forge and pursue common policy. Stalin's stubbornness finally forced the Allies to agree to travel to Teheran for a full conference late in November. Roosevelt accepted a preliminary meeting in Cairo, but the "unique bond" no longer matched his policy. He invited the Chinese and the Soviets to send representatives, to prevent closed consultations which might arouse Stalin's suspicion. Churchill probably tipped off the Soviets about the Chinese presence, as part of a clear attempt to salvage a conference à deux.[87] Clearly the Americans now considered the British a junior partner and this was very obvious to Whitehall.

Concern about what such a loss of influence might mean for British interests went hand in glove with the pressure to reconsider the QUADRANT accord on operational grounds. Churchill made one point regarding 1944 prospects several times:

> "[OVERLORD was] much the greatest thing we have ever attempted and I am not yet satisfied that we have yet taken the measures necessary to give it the best chance of success."

The British considered an Anglo-American consultation imperative, for three virtually symbiotic reasons: to press for the grand strategy they saw as the only way to challenge the Germans safely; to reassert their right to make such a demand; and to preserve that "special relationship" which Churchill especially saw as vital to British post-war prospects. The prospect of Soviet support for escalation in the Mediterranean was as welcome to London as it was disturbing to Washington. But the prospect of being excluded from top level discussion literally horrified Whitehall. Churchill's final plea to Roosevelt was stiff and defensive:

> "HMG cannot abandon their rights to full and frank discussions with you about the vital business of our intermingled armies."[88]

This aptly expressed the tense atmosphere in which London and Washington prepared for conferences that seemed likely to raise issues both hoped to avoid.

After all the smoke and fire, the basic issue remained constant: the British argued that events since QUADRANT called for a reconsideration of that accord, while the Americans insisted that the shift in approach proceed as planned. The formal debate began on 29 October, when proposed agendas were tabled in the CCS. The Americans proposed merely to receive reports from all theatres. The British called for "a general review of our strategy in the light of events since QUADRANT."[89] The Americans had been preparing for just such a claim almost as soon as Churchill left Washington in September. The JCS agreed to stand fast on, and even enhance, the QUADRANT agreement. Their policy was to insist that all operations be tailored to the "achievement of the overall objective." That meant major but secondary campaigns against Japan, no Mediterranean campaign outside Italy, and no delay of OVERLORD. The JCS settled these fundamentals with diligence and professionalism, reflecting the impact of experience, a strong sense of power and a clear objective. Finally, preparations were made to forge a comprehensive consensus with the President before the principals reconvened.[90]

The only issues really troubling the JCS were the Soviet position and the problems of command machinery in Europe. Arrangements were made to receive a full briefing on Soviet desires; but the JCS were forced to prepare to defend their position in what might become a definitive debate on an issue they considered closed. The British call for a restructuring of Mediterranean commands, tabled on 2 November, touched two sensitive points. The JCS remained convinced that the British hoped to abort OVERLORD. They also felt that this was an attempt to play on their view that a theatre commander should receive the maximum possible latitude, in order to escalate the Mediterranean campaign. British arguments about the need for better co-ordination and flexibility were sincere, but their desire to ensure that a more powerful commander pressed offensive action in 1944, with forces dominated by British controlled formations, did not escape the JCS. Part of their response was the call for an overall Supreme Commander for Europe.[91] The jockeying for position had become a contest of will over basic grand strategic approach and the relative weight of each partner's voice.

The final revision of "wear down" emerged through the COS decision, in reaction to global events since QUADRANT, to focus on Italy and abandon large campaigns further east. It seems that the combination of events in Italy, the Aegean and Moscow, and the thorough review of British options, calmed the emotional reaction to the collapse of hopes of quick dramatic success after QUADRANT. The review restored consensus about fundamentals. The Soviet feelers revived hopes for an extension of "wear down." Washington's transparent attempts to reduce British influence revived Whitehall's determination to promote a revised grand strategy which carried the offensive safely forward and preserved the maximum possible British influence. OVERLORD remained paramount. This was reinforced by the acknowledged commitment to the Americans, as well as by the realization that the threat from German weapons of advanced technology had only been delayed by air attacks.[92] Finally, it remained the "final blow" envisaged in principle since 1941. The challenge was to convince the Americans that the British did not object to OVERLORD per se, but only to the arbitrary pursuit of a schedule regardless of circumstances. The trick was to make that case without confessing that the primary reason for this objection was the belief that a change in basic

approach would finally overtax British power.

The COS wasted no time in pressing their new consensus outline. On 9 November they decided to assume that OVERLORD might be delayed into July; Alexander was told to plan on retaining the 68 LST into mid-January.[93] The sincere belief was that these moves would solve the bottleneck in landing craft which seemed to have paralysed Allied plans. This was expressed in a paper on 12 November, entitled "OVERLORD and the Mediterranean," which placed the LST issue in the broadest context. This was the clearest expression yet of the perceived differences over grand strategic approach. The central message was not subtle:

> "...to assume the achievement of a certain strength by a certain date will remove all our difficulties and result in shortening the war is entirely illusory. This policy, if literally interpreted, will inevitably paralyse action in any other theatres without any guarantee of action across the Channel. With the Germans in their present plight, the surest way to win the war in the shortest time is to attack them remorselessly and continuously **in any and every area where we can do so with superiority. The number of places at which we can thus attack them depends mainly on the extent to which they are stretched.** Our policy is therefore clear: we should stretch the German forces to the utmost by threatening as many of their vital interests and areas as possible and, holding them thus, we should attack wherever we can do so in superior force."

The proposed outline was now very specific: unify Mediterranean command, bolster the Italian campaign, stoke chaos in the Balkans by a concerted effort, drop ANVIL, and adapt the OVERLORD schedule to new circumstances. This vision, the result of weeks of rethinking in reaction to events, was grafted onto the basically constant core assumptions of "wear down." The determination to invade France was reaffirmed, but also clarified by an appended comment by Smuts that it must only be launched as the "final knock out blow" when conditions were ripe.[94]

This new consensus was based on the sincere belief that recent events had not resolved the condition of relative weakness which was seen as the underpinning of Allied grand strategy. The other central British concern, the question of status, was now acute. The proposal of a single American "Supremo" for Europe infuriated Whitehall. If it came to pass, the British government would not retain any sort of autonomous direction of any large forces at all. The JCS merely regarded the proposal as a Presidential trial

balloon to be dutifully pressed. Churchill saw it as a direct challenge to British equality and an issue over which he was prepared to resign. The British prepared to explain at the conference why this proposal was strategically unworkable, yet their Mediterranean proposal was strategically essential.[95] The real issue, to them, was whether coalition policy would continue to be defined by equal partners.

Churchill took up the issue at the crux, the share of forces for OVERLORD. The Prime Minister was well aware of the link between forces deployed and influence on policy and the implications of being superseded in a massive final campaign. He called for extraordinary efforts to match the American contribution, with a clear objective:

> "In this way we shall maintain our right to be effectively consulted in operations which are of such great consequence. We have carried the recent trouble [LST for Italy] entirely by mentioning that we had preponderance on the battlefront. We ought to have at least equality in this other most critical task. Moreover the announcement that we had shifted our contribution would sweeten all the discussions which are now proceeding and might enable us to secure any necessary retardation of D-Day."[96]

The problem was clear. The British needed to persevere with the "wear down" approach in order to preserve their ebbing power and influence, but had to find still greater strength in order to exercise the influence needed to preserve it! Brooke's reply was sobering. The initial share of deployment in OVERLORD would be about equal, but that was the last mass of strength available. If OVERLORD was delayed unduly, or if the campaign was prolonged, only the Americans could provide further reinforcements. At a rate of three to five incoming divisions a month, American weight would eventually outstrip the Imperial contribution.[97] The end of "wear down" was truly in sight. "Wear down" was still seen as the only safe approach; but if it did not succeed before OVERLORD the British might face their nightmare, an unlimited clash with an unbeaten German Army. Such a clash would rapidly become a 'Clash of Titans,' and much that had happened since Casablanca clearly illustrated that Britain was no longer one of the 'Titans.' If that came to pass, the British would suffer a serious loss of influence on Allied policy. "Wear down" had thus openly become as much a means to preserve British influence as a grand strategy for defeating the Axis.

The period between QUADRANT and the meeting in Cairo in late November was an extraordinary period in British grand strategy. Many deeply entrenched assumptions collapsed: that Britain could carry an independent campaign, that the latest blow would "crack" the Germans, and especially that the Allies would react similarly to events. Again, Allied success outstripped British success. American success in the Pacific superseded London's desire to contain British efforts against Japan, and made them tertiary. The great strategic bombing offensive rolled along on its parallel course with only one undeniable result: Allied plans were evolving beyond the strategy in which so much of Britain's energy had been invested. Most importantly, the gamble that rapid and extensive success would avert any clash over the elastic QUADRANT compromise was exploded by the German Army. The incomplete success of Allied forces again undermined British plans, aggravated this time by avoidable setbacks sparked by inflated optimism and desperation. The German reaction to this latest thrust of "wear down" partly vindicated it but also exposed the optimism on which it had been based. The Allies could engage German ground forces but could not rout them. Whitehall had assumed Allied combat power could finally make "wear down" enough of a success to allow it to accept a transition in basic approach. It had been wrong.

Whitehall was very good at sorting out what fundamentally could not be done, especially in a fairly static situation. It was less able to cope with multiple, interlocked efforts in a fast paced context. Again, as during ARCADIA, the situation after QUADRANT briefly overwhelmed the cohesion of the COS. Their confusion opened the door to recklessness, driven by the fear that British grand strategy was not succeeding. Yet also again, familiar shared assumptions on fundamental points helped guide the reorientation of British thinking through a complex situation. Failure in the Aegean, and the stall in Italy, cleared the air. The constant fundamental imperative - challenge the German Army only in safe conditions, press hard everywhere else - combined with another familiar and now urgent priority - preserve British influence - to restore consensus on a final revision of "wear down" as a war policy/grand strategy.

The story of grand strategic debate since 1942 had been the attempt to relate "wear down" to its antithesis. After Casablanca, the American decision to accept the

logic of events, and graft "wear down" onto a new vision of "decisive concentration," set the pace. The friction over how to make the transition fed the mutual suspicion that hampered the Allied war effort. Washington gained confidence and clarity of vision from success and a sense of waxing power. But that clarity had a blind spot. The ability and inclination of the Germans to confront Allied challenges suggested that it made sense to "wear down" their power even further before launching OVERLORD. Washington saw this, but felt its own plans made more sense and British plans covered a hidden agenda. Indeed, Whitehall could not explain exactly how to ensure campaigns designed to assist OVERLORD did not delay and dilute it. This was partly because London would not allow a campaign led by Imperial forces to be shut down, something long generally suspected. But in the end, it was because a diluted OVERLORD was exactly what the British wanted.

The British determination to make OVERLORD a heavy but short final touch to previously successful efforts encompassed **all** their concerns. In essence, this had become an argument over how the war was to be won: by the Allies together as equal partners, or by an American preponderance. That was the deep issue symbolized by the bickering over LST and objectives in Italy. It finally had to be faced after the deadlock in Italy. If Allied combat power could not resolve the issue, only one thing could without rupturing the interlocked Allied war effort. It was widely agreed that Soviet successes since Kursk had cleared the way for the escalation of Allied efforts. The Soviet offensive continued, but it faced increasingly stiff German opposition still deep inside the U.S.S.R. Only an active intense Eastern Front could make OVERLORD and/or Mediterranean offensives feasible. That left Stalin in the driver's seat.[98] Ironically, the incomplete success of "wear down" left as its last hope the attitude of its pivotal but most reluctant partner.

Endnotes to Chapter 9

1. Churchill, Closing the Ring, 81, 106.

2. PRO, PREM/3/344/1, Smuts-Churchill, 3/9, reply, 4/9/43.

3. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, Churchill memorandum, 9/9/43; Churchill, Closing the Ring, 115-118. This last point bore a strong resemblance to the original "igniter" concept.

4. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 9/9/43; PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, CCS minutes, 9/9, 11/9/43; PREM3/344/1, Smuts-Churchill, 10/9, reply, 11/9/43.

5. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, CCS minutes, 9/9/43; CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 3/9, 10/9/43; CAB105/57, COS(W)805, 11/9/43; Matloff, 249-253; Churchill, Closing the Ring, 114-119, deliberately exaggerated the cordiality and consensus of these meetings. He was supported by the JSM, the COS - apart from the now resigned and mortally ill Pound - having returned to London.

6. PRO, CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 8/9, 29/9, 27/10/43; CAB80/76, COS(43)694(O), 7/11/43; Hinsley, vol.3, 227; Roskill, vol.3, part I, 48.

7. PRO, CAB86/2, AUB Committee minutes, 27/10, 1/12/43; CAB79/66, COS minutes, 27/10, 1/12/43; CCA, Portal Papers, 4/30, Churchill to Portal, 7/10, reply, 7/10/43; 10/54, Harris to Portal, 29/10/43; 10/56, Harris to Portal, 2/11/43; 8/14, Slessor to Portal, 27/11/43; 237 U-Boats were sunk in 1943, compared to 155 from 1939 through 1942: Roskill, Appendix XX, Table IV, vol.3, part II; Statistical Digest, Table 153.

8. CCA, Somerville Papers, 8/3, Mountbatten to Somerville, 2/9, 8/11, Somerville to Mountbatten, 5/11, 13/11/43; 8/2, Somerville to Cunningham, 27/10/43; PRO, CAB105/164, COSSEA1, 23/10/43; Roskill, vol.3, part I, 217.

9. PRO, CAB65/35, War Cabinet minutes, 24/9/43; 65/40, confidential annexes, 7/10, 8/10, 10/11/43; CAB66/41, WP(43)450, 8/10/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, H290, Cherwell to Churchill, 23/9/43; F188, Cherwell to Churchill, 9/11/43; Moore, 140.

10. PRO, CAB105/44, JSM 1202, 24/9/43; 105/57, COS(W)837, 27/9, COS(W)918, 1/11/43; CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 1/10/43; Kimball, vol.2, R-389, 16/10/43; Matloff, 323; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 507-542; Callahan, Burma 1942-1945, 94-100.

11. PRO, CAB80/74, COS(43)558(O), 20/9, COS(43)591(O), 27/9/43; CAB79/64, COS minutes, 16/9, 17/9/43; 79/65, 27/9, 28/9, 30/9/43; CAB69/5, DC(O) minutes, 28/9/43; PREM3/147/9, Hollis to Churchill, 23/9/43.

12. PRO, CAB105/160, SEACOS 2, 23/10, SEACOS 11, 3/11, SEACOS 22, 13/11/43; CAB79/65, COS minutes, 1/10, 6/10, 7/10, 9/10, 11/10, 12/10/43; 79/66, 19/10/43; 79/67, 28/10, 29/10, 2/11/43; CCCA, Portal Papers, 4/31(2), Portal to Churchill, 7/10/43; Roskill, vol.3, part I, 222, noted that as of September the Eastern Fleet, now back in Ceylon, still boasted only one "R" class battleship and nine cruisers. Relative strength and lines of supply remained the main concern. Allied forces outnumbered the four or five Japanese divisions in Burma but could not concentrate up front. The new focus on air supply was now seen as a possible solution.

13. PRO, CAB105/57, COS(W)915, 29/10, COS(W)932, 5/11/43; 105/44, JSM 1291, 30/10/43; 105/160, SEACOS 19, 10/11/43. Mountbatten repeated the constant view that the next advance could not be allowed to fail, for morale purposes.

14. Compare PRO, CAB79/67, COS minutes, 29/10/43, CAB69/5, DC(O) minutes, 28/9/43 and LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/X, 28/9, 1/10/43 diary entries. Brooke never wavered from his insistence that nothing be done that might even potentially call for assets required in Europe. The troubling requirement for BUCCANEER was 16 LST. Ehrman, vol.V, 129-135, underestimated the inherent opposition in the COS to amphibious operations before 1945.

15. CCA, Portal Papers, 10/55, Harris to Portal, 30/10, reply, 31/10/43; Frankland & Webster, vol.2, 34, 40, 43; Terraine, 549-551. See above, Chapter 2, for the CAS and long range fighters.

16. CCCA, Portal Papers, 4/29(2), Selborne to Churchill, 4/10, Churchill to Portal, 6/10, reply, 10/10/43; 10/51, Portal to Harris, 7/10/43; Frankland & Webster, vol.2, 36.

17. NCA, Cherwell Papers, F186, Cherwell to Churchill, 22/10/43; F187, 6/11/43; CCCA, Portal Papers, 4/44, Portal to Churchill, 2/11/43; 4/28(2), Churchill to Portal, 6/10/43; 10/53, Harris to Portal, 25/10/43; 10/53, Harris to Portal, 25/10/43; 10/58, James Reston to Harris, 4/11, Harris to Portal, 7/11/43; Frankland & Webster, vol.2, 47, 190; Overy, 77, seems based on determinism.

18. Frankland & Webster, vol.2, 47; Richards, 313; Hastings, Bomber Command, 264 265.

19. PRO, CAB79/65, COS minutes, 28/9/43; CAB80/75, COS(43)6029O), 2/10/43; CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 22/10/43; CAB105/44, JSM 1273, 23/10/43; 105/57,

COS(W)901, 25/10, COS(W)941, 10/11/43. It should be remembered that Portal acted as CCS agent in overseeing the strategic bombing offensive in Europe.

20. PRO, CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 5/11/43; CAB105/57, COS(W)941, 10/11/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 2/11/43 Supplementary; CCCA, Portal Papers, 4/41(2), Churchill-Portal correspondence, 29/10-15/11/43.

21. PRO, CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 22/10/43; CAB80/76, COS(43)700(O), 11/11/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 9/11/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-430, 1/10, R-371, 4/10, C-464, 17/10/43, 481; Matloff, 270, 277; Ehrman, vol.V, 121.

22. Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 241-242; Matloff, 53, 397-402; Taylor, 545-546, noted how Churchill used these developments to suppress another "Second Front Now" lobby. Beaverbrook returned to the government in a secondary post, in an unconnected development.

23. PRO, CAB79/64, COS minutes, 4/9, JIC(43)364(O), 10/9/43; 79/66, 21/10, 26/10/43; 79/67, 12/11/43; Howard, British Intelligence, vol.5, 79-82.

24. PRO, CAB79/27, COS minutes, 20/9, 21/10/43; 79/64, 16/9/43.

25. PRO, CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 22/10/43; CAB105/44, JSM 1293, 30/10/43; CAB79/67, COS minutes, 5/11, 12/11/43. The Americans suggested Dill, Portal or Brooke, probably an order of preference. Kimball, vol.2, R-403, 30/10/43.

26. PRO, CAB79/64, COS minutes, 22/9, 23/9/43; CCA, Hankey Papers, 4/35, Liddell Hart to Hankey, 1/10/43; LSE, Dalton Papers, 8/1, Dalton to Attlee, 14/9/43; Sainsbury, K., The Turning Point, Oxford, 1985, 24-30.

27. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 31/8, 7/9/43 Supplementary.

28. LSE, Dalton Papers, 8/1, notes of talk with Maisky, 14/9/43; PRO, CAB80/42, COS(43)265, 27/9/43.

29. PRO, CAB80/74, COS(43)526(O), 12/9/43; CAB69/5, DC(O) minutes, 28/9/43; CAB66/41, WP(43)475, 25/10/43; PREM3/401/19, correspondence, 11/43; UW, JCS Papers, Soviet Union, Reel 1, JCS517/1; Strategic Issues, Reel 1, JLC to JCS, 22/10/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-425, 28/9, C-429, 31/9, C-461, 16/10/43.

30. PRO, CAB65/35, War Cabinet minutes, 3/9, 13/9/43; 65/40, confidential annexes, 5/10, 8/10, 18/10/43; CAB66/41, WP(43)438, 5/10/43; Sainsbury, 20-35; Kimball, vol.2, C-463, 16/10/43.

31. PRO, CAB80/76, COS(43)704(O), 13/11/43; Woodward, L. British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, vol.II, London, 1971, 581-599; Balfour, 364; Ross, 38; Barker, E. British Policy in Southeast Europe, London, 1976, 137;

Sainsbury, 39-54, 77-78; Barker, Churchill and Eden at War, 213.

32. PRO, CAB80/76, COS(43)704(O), 13/11/43; Sainsbury, 117.

33. PRO, CAB79/65, COS minutes, 25/9/43; CAB105/43, JSM 1193, 19/9/43; CCA, Hankey Papers, 11/14 Amery to Hankey, 10/9/43; IWM, Montgomery Papers, 44, notes on "First Phase," 26/9/43; Hinsley, vol.3, 43-46, 116-117; Bennett, 242.

34. PRO, CAB79/64, COS minutes, JIC(43)367, 14/9/43; Hinsley, vol.3, 53-55. On German resistance, see Chapter 7.

35. Kimball, vol.2, C-416, 18/9/43; PRO, CAB105/57, COS(W)823, 21/9/43; CAB79/64, COS minutes, 15/9, 20/9, 23/9/43.

36. CCA, Hankey Papers, 11/9, paper on future strategy, 3/9/43; PRO, CAB80/75, COS(43)626(O), 14/10/43; PREM3/66/2, Casey-Churchill, 3/10, COS to Churchill, 4/10/43; CAB79/65, COS minutes, JIC(43)385(O), 28/9/43; Bennett, 242; Ehrman, vol.V, 80.

37. PRO, CAB80/74, COS(43)508(O), 4/9/43; 80/75, COS(43)594(O), 30/9, COS(43)618)O), 11/10/43; CAB69/5, DO(43)21, 21/9, DO(43)22, 23/9/43, plus DC(O) minutes labelled "closed till 1994"; Stafford, Britain and European Resistance, 209; Ehrman, vol.V, 80.

38. Hinsley, vol.3, 137-161; Bennett, 338-345, for sharp debate as to what London knew and when, but agreement that prejudices and aspirations shaped decisions while the situation remained unclear; PRO, CAB80/74, COS(43)528(O), 12/9/43; 80/75, COS(43)595(O), 30/9/43; CAB79/64, COS minutes, 23/9/43; 79/65, 2/10, 4/10/43; 79/66, 14/10/43; PREM3/66/2, Eden to Churchill, 9/10/43, the clearest expression of what was a debate over emphasis. The only question was whether the British could afford to insist that legitimate authority be restored. At this point, the COS answer was "no." Wheeler, "The British, King Peter, and the path to Tito's Cave," 191-194; Clogg, "Pearls from Swine," in Auty & Clogg, 178; Ehrman, vol.VI, 86.

39. PRO, CAB79/64, COS minutes, 1/9/43; PT, vol.4, Commanders-in-Chief to COS, 7/9, 12/9/43; PREM3/3/8, report on Aegean situation, 24/9/43; Roskill, vol.3, part I, 189-190.

40. Howard, British Intelligence, vol.5, 96; Bennett, 397; Pitt, Churchill and the Generals, London, 1981, 195.

41. PT, vol.4, Churchill-MEDC, 9/9, Churchill-Wilson, 13/9, reply, 14/9, Douglas-Portal, 14/9; Pitt, Churchill and the Generals, 205, a very weak defence of the Prime Minister.

42. PT, vol.4, Commanders-in-Chief to COS, 22/9/43; PRO, PREM3/3/8, report on Aegean situation, 24/9/43; CAB105/57, COS(W)848, 1/10/43; Bennett, 397; Roskill, vol.3, part I, 191.

43. CCA, Knatchbull-Hugessen Papers, 1/14, 16/9/43 diary entry; PRO, CAB79/64, COS minutes, 3/9/43; Weber, 176-177.

44. PRO, CAB105/57, COS(W)848, 1/10/43; [PT, vol.4, Churchill-Eisenhower, 25/9, reply, 26/9, Commanders-in-Chief to COS, 3/10/43;] CAB80/74, COS(43)542(O), 16/9/43; CAB79/65, COS minutes, 30/9/43; PREM3/3/8, report on Aegean situation, 8/10/43.

45. For example: PT, vol.4, Churchill-Wilson (for garrison commander Kos) 3/10/43, "We rely on you to defend this island to the utmost limit."

46. PT, vol.4, Eisenhower-CCS, NAF438, 5/10/43; IWM, Montgomery Papers, 45, notes on "Second Phase," 12/10/43.

47. LHCMA, Brooke papers, 3/A/X, 6/10/43 diary entry; 14/43, Wilson to Brooke, 6/10/43; PRO, CAB79/65, COS minutes, 6/10, 7/10/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-438, 7/10, C-441, 8/10, C-443, 8/10/43.

48. Kimball, vol.2, R-379, 7/10, R-381, 8/10, C-445, 9/10/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 5/10/43 Supplementary; PRO, CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 8/10/43; CAB105/44, JSM 1209, 25/9, JSM 1231, 6/10/43; Matloff, 255-257.

49. PT, vol.4, Eisenhower-CCS, NAF 384, 10/10, J. Cunningham-Churchill, 9/10, 10/10/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-516, 10/10/43; Roskill, vol.3, part I, 197.

50. PT, vol.2, Churchill-Commanders-in-Chief, 5/10, Churchill-Wilson, 7/10/43; vol.4, Churchill-Wilson, 10/10/43; PRO, CAB79/65, COS minutes, 6/10, 7/10/43; CAB65/40, War Cabinet minutes, 5/10/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-445, 9/10, C-449, 10/10/43.

51. Hinsley, vol.3, 173-175; Bennett, 242, 251; Roskill, vol.3, part I, 195-196.

52. PRO, CAB79/64, COS minutes, 24/9/43.

53. PRO, PREM3/3/9, Portal to Tedder, 7/10/43; CAB79/65, COS minutes, 5/10, 6/10/43; CCCA, Portal Papers, 4/40(2), Portal to Churchill, 10/10/43.

54. PRO, CAB79/66, COS minutes, 14/10, 15/10/43; CAB105/57, COS(W)881, 17/10/43; CAB80/75, COS(43)629(O), 16/10/43. See Keegan, The Second World War, 494-495, for a challenge to the claim of forcing added burdens on the Germans in the Balkans.

55. Alexander, H., Memoirs, 1940-1945, London, 1962, 117-118; IWM, Montgomery Papers, 45, notes on "Second Phase," 12/10/43; 49, Montgomery to Brooke, 14/10/43; Ehrman, vol.V, 74.

56. PRO, WO216/163, CIGS Papers, Nye to Brooke, 16/8, Dill to Brooke, 6/9, Nye to Brooke, 7/9/43; CAB80/75, COS(43)597(O), 30/9/43; CAB79/65, COS minutes, 6/10, 12/10/43; CAB105/57, COS(W)873, 13/10/43.

57. PRO, CAB79/66, COS minutes, 19/10/43; CAB105/57, COS(W)884, 19/10/43; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 225, 234.

58. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 12/10, 19/10/43 Supplementaries; JCS Papers, Europe, Reel 10, JCS 524/1, 16/10, JPS 302, 18/10/43; PRO, CAB79/65, COS minutes, 30/9/43; 79/66, 13/10/43; CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 22/10/43.

59. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 19/10/43 Supplementary; CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 15/10/43.

60. PRO, CAB80/75, COS(43)631(O), 17/10/43; PT, vol.2, Wilson-Churchill, 8/10/43; vol.4, Commanders-in-Chief to COS, 11/10, Eden-Churchill, 12/10/43; Kimball, vol.2, 497-498, 502, argued convincingly that one reason Churchill pressed so hard was that Eisenhower had ample forces to spare to aid Wilson. The German shift of plan in Italy nicely fused operational concerns with the "politically" motivated American desire to block other British efforts, themselves heavily "politically" inspired.

61. PRO, PREM3/344/1, H.M. George VI to Churchill, 14/10, reply, 14/10/43; CAB80/75, COS(43)639(O), 19/10/43; CAB79/66, COS minutes, 19/10/43.

62. For example: Eisenhower, D., Eisenhower at War 1943-1945, 13; Ehrman, vol.V, 107; Ben-Moshe, 525-526.

63. PRO, PREM3/344/2, Hollis to Churchill, 14/10/43; CAB80/75, COS(43)639(O), 19/10/43; CAB79/66, COS minutes, 19/10/43. Ben-Moshe, 525-526, cited this paper but did not address this dimension.

64. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 14/38, Dill to Brooke, 16/10/43; 3/A/X, 8/10, 19/10/43 diary entries.

65. PRO, CAB79/66, COS minutes, 20/10/43; UW, JCS Papers, Europe, Reel 1, JCS 449/1, 18/10/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 19/10/43 Supplementary.

66. PRO, CAB79/88, COS minutes, Secretary's Standard File, 20/10/43.

67. Churchill, Closing the Ring, 209-213.

68. PRO, CAB79/66, COS minutes, 26/10/43; 79/67, 27/10/43; PREM3/344/2, Churchill to Hollis, 26/10/43; CAB65/40, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 27/10/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/X, 25/10, 26/10/43, diary entries; Kimball, vol.2, C-475, 26/10/43.

69. PRO, CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 22/10, 29/10/43; CAB105/44, JSM 1276, 23/10, JSM 1290, 29/10, JSM 1305, 7/11/43; 105/57, COS(W)908, 26/10, COS(W)910, 28/10, COS(W)949, 13/11/43. The move involved a redistribution of heavy bomber groups and their support formations. Eighth Air Force was to rise from 24 to 41 groups, 15th Air Force from 6 to 21. CCCA, Portal Papers, 4/43(2), Portal to Churchill, 2/11/43.

70. PRO, PREM3/344/2, Churchill to Dill for Marshall, 24/10/43; CAB105/57, COS(W)907, 26/10/43; Ehrman, vol.V, 114.

71. PRO, PREM3/344/2, Marshall to Churchill, 27/10/43; CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 29/10/43; Matloff, 262.

72. UW, JCS Papers, Europe, Reel 10, JIC Memorandum for Information #34, 25/10/43; Reel 12, JIC Memorandum for Information #32, 20/10/43; Balfour, 357; Kennedy, J., The Business of War, 313; PRO, CAB79/67, JIC(43)439(O), 16/11/43, underlined the determination to cling to the belief in an imminent "crack."

73. PRO, CAB79/67, COS minutes, 29/10, JIC(43)444(O), 2/11, JIC(43)456(O), 11/11/43; Hinsley, vol.3, 175-177.

74. PRO, CAB79/67, COS minutes, 28/10, 29/10, 1/11, 2/11/43; CAB80/76, COS(43)678(O), 1/11/43; PREM3/344/2, Churchill to COS, 31/10/43; IWM, Montgomery Papers, 46, notes on "Third Phase," 26/11/43.

75. PRO, CAB79/67, COS minutes, 4/11/43; CAB65/40, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 4/11/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-490, 4/11/43.

76. PRO, CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 5/11/43; 88/19, CCS 379/3, 5/11, CCS 379/4, 4/11, CCS 379/5, 5/11/43; Kimball, vol.2, R-409, 5/11/43; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 234-236. Doubtless the fact that only 12 of the vessels were American was relevant.

77. PRO, CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 5/11/43; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 235-236; Kimball, vol.2, 562.

78. PRO, CAB80/76, COS(43)698(O), 10/11, COS(43)699(O), 11/11/43; CAB79/67, COS minutes, 11/11/43; PREM3/510/10, Foreign Office to Halifax, 7/12/43; CAB66/43, WP(43)518, 14/11/43; CAB65/36, War Cabinet minutes, 16/11/43; CCCA, Portal Papers, 12/4, Tedder to Portal, 11/11/43; Wheeler, "The British, King Peter, and the Path to Tito's Cave," 194; MacLean, F., Eastern Approaches, New York, 1964, 399-400. MacLean's report certainly fitted nicely with Churchill's views, but the connection to operations in Italy was the decisive factor; Kimball, vol.2, R-395, 22/10, C-470, 23/10/43.

79. PRO, CAB79/66, COS minutes, 25/10/43; 79/67, 28/10, 29/10, 1/11/43; PT, vol.4, Wilson-COS, 23/10, 1/11, Eden-Churchill, 6/11, Wilson-Churchill, 17/11, reply, 18/11/43; Churchill, Closing the Ring, 189-192; Nicolson, 18/11/43 diary entry, 330, a remarkable passage.

80. LHCMA, Brooke papers, 14/38, Dill to Brooke, 22/10/43; CCA, Alexander Papers, 5/8/33 to 5/8/39 and Roskill, Churchill and the Admirals, 237-239, discussed the Cunningham appointment; Hinsley, vol.3, 122-133; Bennett, 398; Parkinson, A Day's March Nearer Home, 194 and Stoler, 126-128, different but narrow interpretations; Pitt, Churchill and the Generals, 195-215; Roskill, vol.3, part I, 205-206, "an avoidable error," became in Churchill and the Admirals, 222, a "tragic and unnecessary fiasco"; Howard, The Mediterranean Strategy, 52.

81. PRO, CAB79/67, COS minutes, 4/11/43.

82. PRO, CAB79/67, COS minutes 8,11, 9/11/43; CAB84/58, JP(43)390(Final), 8/11/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/X, 9/11/43 diary entry; Hinsley, vol.3, 15-18, unaccountably did not mention this important paper.

83. PRO, CAB79/66, COS minutes, 21/10, 22/10, 25/10/43; PREM3/344/2, Churchill-Eden, 26/10, reply, 29/10/43; Churchill, Closing the Ring, 247-251; Sainsbury, 60, 96.

84. PRO, PREM3/344/2, Churchill to Kerr, 7/11/43; 446/6, Churchill-Eden correspondence 29/10- 8/11, Knatchbull-Hugessen-Foreign Office, 15/11/43; CAB 65/40, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annexes, 1/11, 4/11, 8/11/43; CCCA, Portal Papers, 4/47, Portal-Churchill correspondence, 10-13/11/43; CCA, Knatchbull-Hugessen Papers, 1/14, 7/11/43 diary entry; Sainsbury, 64-65, 98-99, 111-112.

85. PRO, CAB105/44, JSM 1284, 28/10/43; CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 29/10/43; Stoler, 133.

86. Matloff, 279-302, understated the comprehensive vision of OVERLORD; Stoler, 133; Sainsbury, 122, an interesting speculation; Kimball, vol.2, 558, missed an important new factor in British thinking. See below Chapter 11.

87. This only encapsulates a byzantine exchange which raised at least six different proposed schedules. Kimball, vol.2, various telegrams from C-467, 20/10 to C-502, 12/11/43, with an essential commentary; UW, JCS Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 13, JCS 533/3, 25/10/43; Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 26/10/43 Supplementary.

88. Kimball, vol.2, C-467, 20/10, C-471, 23/10, C-476, 27/10, C-502, 12/11/43. Churchill quoted the notorious remark by captured German Gen. von Thoma, overheard in his cell: "Our only hope is that they come where we can use the Army upon them."

89. PRO, CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 29/10/43.

90. PRO, CAB79/64, COS minutes, 17/9/43; UW, JCS Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 13, King to JCS, 17/10, JCS 533/1, 22/10, JCS 533/4, 1/11, JCS 533/5, 8/11/43; Europe Reel 1, JCS 577, 8/11/43; Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 9/11/43; Matloff, 259-262, 304-306, 335.

91. Matloff, 304-306, and see below page; PRO, CAB105/57, COS(W)919, 2/11/43; CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 5/11/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 2/11, 9/11/43 Supplementaries.

92. The V-Weapons problem can be traced in PRO, CAB79/64, COS minutes, 31/8, 10/9/43; 79/66, 25/10/43; 79/67, 11/11/43; CAB69/5, DC(O) minutes, 14/9, 25/10, 28/10, 29/10/43; CAB65/36, War Cabinet minutes, 1/11, 2/11/43; NCA, Cherwell papers, various correspondence, G410, G411, F187; Hinsley, vol.3, 46-48, 385-414.

93. PRO, CAB79/67, COS minutes, 9/11/43.

94. PRO, CAB105/57, COS(W)938, 8/11/43; CAB 79/67, COS minutes, 12/11/43; CAB80/76, COS(43)708(O), 14/11/43.

95. PRO, PREM3/272/9, Churchill-Dill, 7/11, Hollis to Churchill, 8/11, Dill-Churchill, 8/11/43; CAB105/44, JSM 1304, 8/11/43; 105/57, COS(W)939, 8/11/43; CCCA, Portal Papers, 4/41(2), Churchill to Portal, 15/11/43.

96. PRO, PREM3/342/5, Churchill to Brooke, Grigg, 6/11/43.

97. PRO, PREM3/342/5, Brooke to Churchill, 11/11/43.

98. Ehrman, vol.V, 115-120, Howard, The Mediterranean Strategy, 44-51; Parkinson, A Day's March Nearer Home, 208-209; Stoler, 133-135, and Morison, Strategy and Compromise, 40-45, all discuss but do not fully explore the relationship between the "Mediterranean versus OVERLORD" debate and the fundamental clash it reflected; Sainsbury, 132, a succinct summary. It is even

more important to realize why King restricted the ETO to around 2,000 landing craft than to trace the specific problems this caused. Kimball, vol.2, 549-550, a perceptive comment on the impact of the Soviet attitude, a theme treated in Chapter 11 below.

Chapter 10

A Clear Dependency

"Our manpower is now fully mobilized for the war effort...the question how we should use our manpower in 1944 depends on what assumption we are prepared to make about the duration of the war with Germany..."

- Churchill, 1/11/43

"In whatever way the adjustments were made, a reduction of our war potential in 1945 was [made] inevitable by the exhaustion of our reserves of manpower. This fall can only be compensated by increased assistance from the U.S., both in forces and in war material. In the meanwhile, we shall have ensured to the best of our ability...by throwing everything into the scale this year."

- JWPS, 22/1/44

In 1943, Allied economic and industrial power answered the basic question of whether Allied resources would provide the material power needed to break the Axis. The performance of British structure made an important contribution, in overall terms. Henceforth, the Allies had to deal with shortages of critical items at awkward times, but not with an overall shortage of munitions. In many respects British structure performed impressively, driving national mobilization and output to greater heights for a longer period than had been thought possible. In both British and Allied structural policy, the basic problem became to ensure that the war economies remained flexible enough to respond efficiently to changing requirements. That meant the nature of these requirements and their repercussions had, as always, to remain well understood as the situation changed. Two particular difficulties surfaced. At the coalition level, the disparity between national outputs grew steadily. This further strained the "common pool" fig leaf and raised new sources of friction. At the national level, plans were again distorted by events and partly unfulfilled expectations. This time, however, the problem lay not in how Whitehall secured its information but in how that information was appreciated.

The perpetual effort to realign structural policy passed through three rough phases. Through April 1943, major specific problems stemming from previous decisions were pursued, while Whitehall came to grips with a new situation emerging from Allied

success at meeting mobilization targets. Through July, the inner circle tried, not entirely successfully, to sort out what adjustments were needed to support the grand strategic offensive. Finally, from August Whitehall strove to forge a clear policy for the ultimate offensive phase, and to relate it to emerging questions about British post-war prospects.

Whitehall benefitted from an established view of fundamental imperatives and how to deal with them. But the effort to sort out specific adjustments and priorities was hampered by the strain of forcing a still greater effort out of national structure, and growing fears of the long term consequences of this policy. This constant blend of continuity and change continued to underpin the questions "what could the U.K. still do," and "what would the effort do to the U.K.?" But at the crucial level, the balance was uneven. The acknowledgement of likely dependence in 1940 became in 1943 the reluctant acceptance of definite immediate and long term dependence. In both respects this was the result of a deliberate decision to pursue a policy beyond national means and hope somehow to avert the consequences. This latter point came to the fore of Whitehall thinking by the end of 1943. The basic decision, however, remained unchanged. Early and complete victory was to be pursued by still greater effort, despite the fact that the limits of British structure had become a clear and consistent limiting factor in British grand strategy.

The ambitious outline adopted at Casablanca, and the optimistic "audit" that accompanied it, made it necessary to settle the legacy of the "common pool" principle. That decision emerged as opposed to being declared. It was shaped by two things: the American decisions of 1942, and the growing disparity between American and British capability. In mid-March, the BWSC in Washington warned that while 1944 would be a year of "reasonable plenty," there would be problems in ensuring certain items were available and properly distributed in time. This would be aggravated by the fact that while Allied output would rise, British output would decline.[1] The British were forced to accept the fact that the explosive growth in American war production had made their earlier vision of the "common pool" obsolete. American war production now reached a level four times that of the U.K. The share of resources devoted to munitions in the

American economy had risen from 9% in 1941 to 39% by early 1943, without serious cuts in civilian standards. The British were being left behind. That meant there would be no serious revival of the CPRB as a body of overall control. The concept of future Orders of Battle by theatre being used as an allocation guide was finally quietly abandoned. The CPRB was restricted to dealing with specific problems. Overall co-ordination was left to the established channels between departments. Whitehall hoped to retain as much influence as possible; but it was now widely realized that the disparity of capability gave Washington the preponderant voice in the distribution of uncommitted resources.[2]

This voice was strengthened by Washington's success in resolving the confusion caused by the policy of uncontrolled mobilization and defining a new structural policy related to overall developments. The impressive boom in American output paved the way. Despite occasional friction, the JCS were able to sort out an agreed program, with Nelson, by late April. The JCS now looked confidently forward to recouping the benefits of earlier efforts in the second half of 1943. The most important decision was the further revision of the ASP. The decisions of late 1942 were confirmed early in March. Given the survival of the Red Army, and the mushrooming of logistic and air forces, it was now neither necessary nor possible to base policy on a massive ground force. Marshall agreed that the needs of Allied production programs must set the limit to the size of the Army needed to pursue the emerging synthesis grand strategy. A ceiling of 8.2 million men was accepted. An intense study of the new composition of forces required was launched even as TRIDENT preparations began. The Americans thus came into line with the British in weighting airpower more heavily, at the expense of ground forces. This settled British fears of an out of control U.S. Army program and ended hopes of milking that program.[3] A new phase had begun.

Allied progress forced the British to grapple in early 1943 with immediate and long term problems simultaneously. Their efforts were heavily influenced by prevailing ideas. In early February, Cabinet reaffirmed Churchill's directive that all research priority decisions should assume that Germany would be defeated in 1944 and an intense effort would be mounted against Japan. But it was also agreed that only preliminary

studies could as yet be pursued regarding "Phase II," that period of war against Japan alone.[4] Uncertainty regarding distant problems was also evident when the issue of post-war civil aviation policy arose. Cabinet agreed that the government should assume responsibility for Britain's readiness to compete in this area, but no development was to be initiated yet. The current needs of the RAF left nothing to spare.[5] This both underlined the inevitable connection between current and post-war problems and reaffirmed the policy of focusing on the war. This was also evident regarding the perceived crisis in the U.K. stock position. Lyttelton declared in April that as destocking since November had reduced levels below the "permissible minimum," further cuts in the use of imported raw materials were required. Whitehall clearly remained concerned, justifiably or not, about chronic shortages in the midst of rising abundance.[6]

The British position at this point can be expressed succinctly: continued inability to meet rising demands in certain areas, despite impressive overall progress. Production monthly surveys from February through April noted the import squeeze but also reported steady increases in overall output. The LPC quarterly survey in March was equally mixed. Despite the perceived threat posed by the shipping crisis to the plan to maintain high overall output, the underlying tone was optimistic. Post-war issues were mentioned, for the first time. The basic conclusion was that a "new stage in mobilization" was at hand. This conclusion was powerfully reinforced by a joint Production-Labour survey of munitions production results in the second half of 1942. Progress was summarized as follows: 1) American supply and co-operation were now on a predictable basis; 2) the overall program had been duly reorganized; 3) the RAF and RN programs were still expanding, but the Army program was virtually complete; 4) overall, requirements in most items were being met. The first phase of mobilization was complete. The new challenges, the "Main Tasks for 1943," were to make Allied structure flexible enough to deliver the right type of advanced equipment at the right time, while conserving limited British resources.[7] Eight months late, the British had reached the point of fulfilment only to find that still greater tasks lay ahead.

The problem that now came to hamper all British structural policy can be expressed in one word: disparity. It fits in every sense: continued disparity between

supply and demand in some crucial items as well as overall disparity between Allies. Everywhere the British turned, a troubling disparity persisted in either a specific item or an entire program designed to meet the rising demands of services pursuing an ever more ambitious offensive outline. The Army's overall requirements were in hand, which allowed the policy of contracting Supply programs. After enforced inactivity in the U.K., the Army had ample overall munitions to take the offensive.[8] The problems lay in specific areas, especially, as usual, armoured fighting vehicles. The whole program issue was reopened by booming American output and delays in Cromwell types development. The whole doctrine issue was reopened by disappointment with the performance of British types in Tunisia, as compared to the Sherman, plus the prospect of operations in Europe. The British now produced ample numbers of tanks, but too many were obsolete types. The Americans called for the British to accept even more Shermans. Bitter debates erupted over what types were needed, whether Cromwells would arrive in time and meet expectations, and whether the decision to rely on Shermans could be taken as far as scrapping U.K. programs. By late April the DC(S) had only decided that the U.K. could never rely entirely on foreign supply.[9] So far, abundance had not overcome disparity.

The RAF and MAP had a slightly different problem: both agreed on what types were required, but the program remained unbalanced by continued production of obsolete types. In order to overcome total reliance on American supply, MAP made a great effort to pledge enough transport types to enable Transport Command to be set up in March.[10] The new "realistic" levels still proved optimistic, but the margin was narrowed. Output of fighters remained steady, while that of heavy bombers rose from 282 in January to 364 in April. The DC(S) had difficulty determining how to phase out obsolete types with minimal disruption and whether it would be better to concentrate on Lancasters or to devote some effort to a still more advanced specification. The claims of the Fleet Air Arm could not be met, even after targets were reduced. The problems were unchanged. The industry was both saturated and of varied quality. The need for a steady flow was imperative. The investment in heavy bombers left little flexibility. It was eventually decided to phase out Wellingtons in stages and both increase Lancasters and launch the

new type. The bomber program rolled on, while Cripps' team intensified their efforts to reorganize it and forecast its ability to meet demands.[11]

Compared to previous years, the debate over the new RN program was perfunctory. The Admiralty's new proposal attempted to lay a complete basis for both the Navy of the grand strategic offensive and the post-war fleet. No new battleships were proposed; one of the two under construction was suspended, levelling the battle fleet at 15. Instead, the "abundant" and urgent need for aircraft carriers of all types was stressed. In fact, aircraft carriers now absorbed all the available shipyard capacity for large vessels. The focus was now on the compromise light fleet carrier type, first ordered in 1942. Four more full size fleet carriers were ordered, but as a long term project. To reinforce the four fleet units then in service in time for the war, the sixteen light fleet carriers then on order went ahead on a priority basis. All the escort carriers required were to come from American supply. In order to increase the output of escort vessels of all types, in hopes of providing 98 new destroyers through 1945, pre-fabricated construction methods were pressed forward. Cabinet approved the entire program, which rested on American supply for all escort carriers and a major share of escort types and landing craft. After the last scheduled LST was completed in April, it was admitted "in future we shall have to rely on the Americans for these vessels." Overall, naval output rose steadily in this period.[12] Later developments, as will be seen, shifted the focus once again from escort types to landing craft, and British industry remained able to respond. However, in the broadest sense Cabinet had no real choice but to accept this dependence, trapped by its own policies and the limits of British structure.

By late April 1943, it could be argued that the British structural position remained unchanged, as new strains replaced the old. The basic parameters remained intact: heavy reliance on overseas aid for essential margins, offset in the area of bomber production by a deliberate over-concentration of resources. The basic remedy also remained intact: press the Americans and closely control the supply and distribution of the most vital item, manpower. At first, Whitehall expected the implementation of its late 1942 budget to meet all needs. At the very least, it felt confident that all problems could be detected and resolved by tightly monitoring this universal resource. Even in

March the LPC argued that the budget would be fulfilled, but this contradicted a definite sense of unease already rising in Whitehall, based on the perceived progress of transfers between sectors. The plan had been to increase the services and MAP in even steps, mainly by reducing Supply programs and transferring labour and/or production, as required. Cherwell's staff already felt that Supply was not contracting, Labour was not co-ordinating, and the whole policy was not in step. By late March they called for a general review.[13]

Production staff supported this call in their March review, which declared that while the Army and RAF intakes were ahead of schedule, the intake and outflow of MAP and Supply were behind. The LPC reversed itself in early April. Cherwell went so far as to suggest on 30 April that the whole budget would fail because MAP was being elbowed out. Attention shifted to discovering how this had happened and what might be done. The vital question - the point at which no further transfers to maintain an overall intense effort would be possible - still seemed unanswerable. Lyttleton and Bevin made some effort to review this issue. They noted that the rate of growth in overall output had slowed, which meant the overall limit on manpower transfers was probably in sight. However, Production staff most precisely summed up the essential continuity of the British problem. British power was approaching its peak just as Allied grand strategy became more ambitious. The current policy - shield structural programs, in order to generate enough materiel in 1943 for an all out effort in 1944 - had both gone awry and been outpaced again by rising demands in nearly every sector. It was now likely that the services would have to be further increased, in order to maintain the combat power to pursue the offensive as a major partner. But this time, that seemed certain to require a reduction in overall production.[14] The manpower pool was draining faster than "wear down" was succeeding. As a new phase began, structural power was perceived to be as serious and consistent a limiting factor as ever in British war policy.

Through mid-summer 1943, the basic challenge of structural policy remained two-fold - improve and efficiently adjust British performance, and retain the maximum possible American aid. During this period, the monthly reports of U.K. performance

traced a definite pattern. Supply programs at last began to contract. The other service programs enjoyed continued overall growth. But two serious problems remained. In May, it was noted that U.K. capacity would prove inadequate for 1944 requirements, because these were to be adjusted but not, overall, contracted. In June and July, another concern was stressed: "though the broad scheme of production is now developing closely in accordance with plan, there remain individual cases that give grounds for concern." Shipping, imports and stocks experienced a "marked recovery," but other critical bottlenecks worsened. Whitehall itself was at least better organized to face the task, now that Lyttleton had abandoned hopes of a super-Ministry and entrenched Production as a fairly effective forum for departmental co-operation.[15] Organization on an Allied level was another matter.

The redefinition of the "common pool" concept actually helped the Allies clarify the nature of their integrated position. The overall raw material and production situations were now stable, the chains of administration settled. The Americans easily rebuffed a last British attempt to endow the combined bodies with some vestige of their original intrusive mandates. That forced the CPRB and its parallel bodies to settle for offering advice on the situation facing the Allies. In May, the CPRB advised that the increased naval and air requirements for 1944 ruled out an overall contraction. The transition must be planned in advance, because the Allies would have to make adjustments due to the different stages of their programs. While the U.K. was about to pass peak capacity, and Canada was approaching it, the U.S. effort could and would increase yet further. The problem can be stated in numerical terms. American war production in 1943 was budgeted at $90 billion, over four times the U.K. figure. In the second quarter alone, American naval and air production totalled $5.129 billion, that of the entire Empire, Canada included, $2.299 billion.[16] Quite simply, American policy would be decisive in adjusting and shifting to ensure the right items were supplied and distributed as needed.

The friction attendant in a partnership based on increasingly fictional equality had wide effects on Allied thinking. The British returned to stressing their far greater degree of sacrifice and conversion to war production, in the hope of convincing the Americans

to take more notice of relative efforts.[17] Washington came to see Lend-Lease more and more as an instrument of post-war national as well as Allied war policy. The British now began to insist on reviving their export trade, in order to preserve their post-war position. The Americans became more adamant that the quid pro quo for Lend-Lease must be American dictation of global economic restructuring. The effects of all this on the war effort were serious yet indirect. It became clear, to Whitehall's concern, that American power was underwriting an Allied rather than a British war policy. Landing craft apart, the abundant flow of American supplies met the reduced British targets set in 1942. That helped secure the British grand strategic position. But British materiel problems were solved partly in spite of American policy.[18] The spectre of the eventual cost only made the control of grand strategy a more explosive issue than ever.

Part and parcel of these problems was the new outline settled at TRIDENT. That outline, and the progress of the war it reflected, forced Whitehall to take a first serious look at prospects and policies for Phase II, the stage of war against Japan alone. An inquiry about administrative powers grew into a full scale discussion of what British interests required and British power allowed. A very serious gap between these two factors soon appeared. Lyttleton pressed the issue in early July, calling for the COS to offer "broad guidelines" as to the grand strategy and forces desired and the structural effort required. Churchill intervened on 21 July with a comment on broad issues. The overriding imperative was a quick victory, won with the maximum possible British participation. It was time to study how to win a national commitment to this policy and how to balance it with the essential reconversion to a peacetime economy. On cue, the COS agreed that a large effort would be required.[19] This added to the growing concern about the cost of pursuing global war beyond national means.

It should not be construed that the policy of a Combined war effort in overall terms was now or ever in any real danger. The real issue was the degree of equality, in all respects, the British would be able to preserve. Washington's growing self confidence was not a good sign in this regard. The JCS rebuffed all attempts to loosen their control of war programs. The steady and predictable flow of materiel helped bring a degree of long awaited stability to distribution and logistics. An important step was

the approval of the War Department report on a definitive scale for the ASP. A total strength of 7,657,000 was now accepted. Ground forces were reduced to 90 divisions, 88 of which were now active. This would give the western Allies ground forces capable of reentering Europe to challenge a still strong German Army, but only if that Army remained heavily engaged on the Eastern Front. Also, the 60 divisions that would become available in the U.S. to build up the ultimate offensive campaigns in Europe and later Asia, would ensure that American visions prevailed in Allied policy.[20] What had been probable now seemed certain: American weight would both carry the Allies forward and propel the Americans into the lead role in the climactic phase.

Nevertheless, the legacies of the unco-ordinated decisions of 1942 could not be completely avoided. Disparity overall was now awkward enough to increase friction in areas of both deficiency and abundance. The TRIDENT decisions reinforced the serious bottleneck regarding LCT and LST. Even during TRIDENT, the COS were reminded there was no remaining margin in the U.K.; increased needs would have to be met by the Americans. Unfortunately, King disagreed that either redistribution or increased output was now required. For the hapless British, their own bottleneck coincided with a larger Allied one.[21] That guaranteed further serious arguments which were easily avoidable. In this item, Whitehall had been right to wind down its landing craft program in order to shift scarce capacity to escort vessels. It had been fair to assume that Washington would acknowledge the need to provide large amphibious resources for whatever final offensive outline emerged. The sheer confusion in the face of fast paced events, plus American suspicions, had the opposite effect. Now all Allied plans seemed threatened by an avoidable shortage in a critical item, created primarily by the clash of contending grand strategies.

The debate over tank policy, now at an advanced stage, took a different direction. Intense discussion in May and June, over the relative merits of various vehicles and guns, fused the issues of doctrine and structure into one discussion. The question of whether to emphasize multi-role types or retain large numbers of specialized types proved difficult to resolve from a tactical perspective; the structural aspect was more clear cut. While the British were struggling with the Cromwell development, and wasting scarce

manpower on obsolete types, the Americans were producing more than enough Shermans. However, political factors set a limit to production comparisons. Under intense pressure, the DC(S) finally settled on a compromise. British production in 1944 would be reduced by a further one thousand, and by 1945 all types but Churchills and Cromwells would be phased out. Three thousand more Shermans would be accepted, to bring the 1944 total to over 8,000. It made structural and perhaps even tactical sense to take more Shermans, but their very abundance allowed Whitehall to weigh other factors more heavily:

> "We must make our own tanks work and equip them with guns that will beat the enemy's."[22]

The ultimate question remained the same: when would the manpower pool run dry? The TRIDENT outline, the decision to continue to maintain maximum effort, and the uneven execution of the 1942 budget combined to suggest the answer. In May, MAP and all three services submitted demands for yet another increase in intake. This, plus Bevin's situation report, focused the attention of the JWPS. As far as Production was concerned, the problem was obvious. The military and political need for yet further exertion would finally outstrip available manpower that year. The services and their industries could no longer grow simultaneously. The fat of "Group III" was almost gone; a choice would have to be made. Most parties involved made arguments as to why their claims could not be pared. The exchange of views made it clear by mid-June that the heart of the problem remained MAP's bomber program.[23] Also, two strongly opposed schools had emerged as to what had happened, why, and what must be done.

The bare facts of MAP's record were not in dispute. Steady growth was achieved in all areas and many targets were met. On the other hand, these targets had been reduced once again in April. The heavy bomber targets retained first priority, but the original increases of 1941 had now been pared by 40% and MAP continued to lag behind the scheduled increases.[24] Agreement ended there. Labour felt that the manpower budget had successfully set overall parameters and directions but failed to balance transfers between sectors. For this it blamed the policy of maximum effort, internecine rivalry, and a tendency by departments to overestimate their ability to absorb labour and

underestimate the difficulties in shifting people from place to place. MAP was singled out as the prime offender. The Air Staff, and Cherwell's people, took a different view. They felt Labour's inability to transfer the allotted workers was responsible for MAP's shortfall. Labour called for a cut of 90,000 in MAP's existing allocation. MAP responded by calling for an intake increase of 212,000. Portal argued that MAP had already been pared to the bone, while the bomber program remained the hub of grand strategy itself. Finally, Cherwell's people were convinced that Labour deliberately impeded MAP's intake on the grounds it was inflated.[25]

Anderson focused the issue for Cabinet on 30 June. His report was startling. The services were only 273,000 short of the intake of 1 million authorized from mid-1942 to December 1943. Supply had increased rather than contracted. MAP was 339,000 short of its reduced authorization of 503,000. If new service claims were met, the overall deficit would rise from 651,000 to 912,000. The balance yet available from "Group III" was "negligible." Anderson concluded that the services must be maintained, by releases from industry.[26] This sparked Cherwell to intensify the vigorous lobby on MAP's behalf. The case was dogmatic - Bevin could not be trusted to execute a policy of which he disapproved. The Army claim was an attempt to conceal a satisfactory position. Most of all, the 4,000 bomber target "was in tatters" because of insufficient labour. The choice was "between infantry and aircraft." MAP must be supported and the Army trimmed. The desired result emerged on 6 July, when Churchill used Cherwell's figures to call for cuts in all service intakes and an increase of 175,000 to MAP.[27]

Cabinet thrashed out the debate through July. Supply agreed to accelerate its contraction. All agreed transfers must be synchronized. But the Admiralty insisted on its increase, noting that it had already been forced to lay up some older vessels The WO warned two more divisions would now have to be broken up as it was, a claim rejected by Cherwell but soon borne out by events. Ironically, MAP laid down the path to compromise. By now, it was genuinely unsure whether the answer was simply more labour. Overall output seemed to have levelled off, yet more complex types were being produced and productivity was rising. It seemed that the industry might be near its

absolute limit in size, but might yet be made more efficient. Earlier hopes of ample labour and American deliveries were now set aside; this probably helped clarify matters. Cripps offered to accept a reduced intake if he could be assured it would be supplied in full.[28] That broke one deadlock but laid the basis for another.

Churchill drafted a new budget for the balance of 1943 on 19 July. It called for continued contraction by Supply, the services to receive further but reduced intakes, and for an intake increase of 115,000 for MAP. It was specifically noted that MAP's share was not to be affected by any revisions. This was indeed "unprecedented favour." Bevin accepted under protest. Despite being advised that this was not what was intended, he moved to apply this literally, as an overriding absolute priority. For the first time, an overall manpower budget had not been accepted as settled national policy. This was because those quarters in the best position to know were convinced it was the wrong policy.[29]

The root issue was not whether more workers would mean more aircraft. The vital point at stake was whether a grand strategy evolving towards a comprehensive offensive outline would continue to rest on a structure unbalanced by the momentum of a policy based on a 1941 outline of strategy and structure. Cherwell's diatribes and Portal's special pleading apart, it is difficult to document this point categorically. It rests more on the impression that those quarters instrumental in investing the remaining margin of national power in heavy bombers were reluctant to admit that this policy might not succeed. However, the emergence of a new pattern could not be concealed. Demand had outpaced supply. Already, increased requirements for landing craft crews for OVERLORD loomed as a potential crisis.[30] A broad spectrum of Whitehall opinion now agreed that a stark choice would have to be made between industry and the military. The July 1943 decision was incorrect. The ultimate responsibility was Churchill's, in whose thoughts the contending pressures battled in microcosm. The "do everything" approach was no longer feasible. Putting the bomber program first was no longer sensible. But the issue was now beyond sense. The bomber program represented British strategic/structural independence. Churchill would not let it go, and face the glaring

macroeconomic choice, until he had no alternative. Whitehall's first effort to define a structural policy for grand strategic offensive was a self induced failure.[31]

The move into Europe and the QUADRANT outline forced Whitehall, in autumn 1943, to sort out a definitive structural policy for the grand strategic offensive. At the same time, the British war machine passed the point of its peak capability to support a comprehensive effort. Finally, the direct connection between the conduct of the final offensive phase and the immediate post-war situation emerged even more clearly. These three factors combined with the widening disparity in Allied capabilities to shape the reorientation of British policy. These decisions were so important that this experience must be traced at some length.

One important positive force was the overall progress of British output. From August, Production surveys noted a consistently "uneventful rise" in aggregate output. Many grave recent problems, especially shipping, were reduced to routine scrutiny.[32] This confirmed prevailing assumptions that the Allies only real problems were to stay ahead in technological development and to prevent bottlenecks of critical items. The overall ratio of production was felt to favour the Allies over the Axis by three to one, a margin likely to rise to four to one in 1944. The industrial struggle was no contest. However, for Whitehall the struggle for sheer survival had been replaced by an equally difficult struggle to retain the U.K's place in the first tier of the coalition. Statistics were less promising here. The conversion of national resources to direct war production had reached the astonishing level of 65%. Nevertheless, the Imperial share of Allied munitions production, which could only decline, was only 22%. Nor could the question of relative efficiency be avoided. Then and later, responsible Whitehall quarters felt that key American industries were twice as efficient as their British counterparts.[33] All these disparities steadily inflated the issue of Britain's status as an "equal" partner in an integrated war effort.

Washington also now had to consider possible limits to further expansion of the war effort, but the two situations did not compare. American overall output in 1943 never quite met official targets but doubled the levels reached in 1942. The Army

program was now in hand and nearing completion. Even with a tighter rein kept on supplies to all Allies - the Soviets excepted - the sheer volume of supplies to Britain also more than doubled.[34] The massive power of the American war machine more than justified Churchill's constant faith that it would become "the arsenal of victory." However, questions of policy now deteriorated markedly. Whitehall mounted a sustained effort to preserve its equal status and improve Allied integration by citing the intensity of Britain's effort and the high degree of Allied interdependence. Washington counterattacked with a drive to reduce British influence and press its post-war economic agenda. The argument underlined the link between policies for the offensive phase and plans for immediate post-war reorganization.

The British claimed that because less than half of the U.S. economy was yet devoted directly to war production, the Americans should assume the burden of new strains in the common effort. The Americans remained unmoved. The British team in Washington were able to maintain agreement that continued interdependence was unavoidable, but gained no recognition that this entitled the British to future special consideration. Washington concentrated on its effort to exploit British financial and economic dependence to compel London to co-operate in laying the basis of post-war reorganization. By November, the concept of the "common pool" had been virtually abandoned and Whitehall was treating American pressure as economic blackmail.[35]

This did not seriously affect the flow of supplies; the British continued to receive over 60% of all Lend-Lease support. But it did spark debate over relative weight in overall policy. Ugly aspects were public feuding over the comparative size of war efforts and private feuding over London's continued right to a voice in allocation decisions. This certainly brought forward in Whitehall thinking the problem of preserving British post-war freedom of action.[36] It also affected a dispute over policy for the final offensive phase. The British insisted that it was essential to continue Combined control of an integrated effort. In December, the CPRB expressed what had become diverging views. The British felt an intense Allied war effort would have to be maintained through 1944, in order to make up for a now unavoidable contraction in British war production. The Americans hoped to be able to reconvert some of their

capacity,[37] and **in effect** served notice that they were now unsure whether it was really necessary to maintain a maximum British war effort into late 1944. The implications for British influence in general were all too obvious.

Indeed, apart from obvious relief at the turn of the tide in the war itself, Whitehall's view in autumn 1943 of prospects for the near future can only be termed sombre. This was certainly clear regarding the evolution of ideas about "Phase II." In October the COS offered the requested estimates of the force and production levels required to sustain a large British role in defeating Japan. The civil authorities were widely shocked at the scope, which they estimated as only a 20% reduction in national mobilization. This would ruin any hope of early reconversion to revive economic strength. Lyttleton and Cherwell called for the reduction to be doubled. Against this, the QUADRANT plan and subsequent reviews made clear that a large British role was seen as an essential national interest. Whitehall could not yet agree beyond broad parameters.[38] The pace would now be set by the redefinition of grand strategy. Structural policy would again have to conform.

This was a familiar trend, but one greatly accelerated by the QUADRANT decision and the escalation of the war. Again, a changing grand strategic outline exerted strong pressure on structural policy. To express the issue in one sentence: could and should British structure be adjusted from the unbalanced focus on the MAP program to support an integrated final offensive? Naturally the answer to "should" was a grand strategic issue. As for "could," leaving aside for the moment the manpower question, the signals were mixed. From September, the contraction of Supply output proceeded well. However, tanks remained a problem. Real progress with Cromwell development and output came only late in the year. This confirmed the decision to rely heavily on American types in 1944. The Admiralty strenuously resisted attempts to reduce its program. As the emerging grand strategic outline envisaged an expanded role for the Army in Europe and the RN in the Pacific, the idea of running risks on their critical items was not well received.[39] These pressures, the problems of POINTBLANK, and above all the rise of OVERLORD put the bomber program under a microscope.

Harris welcomed such attention. By October, he felt that British interests were threatened in two areas. MAP could not accelerate the switch to Lancasters, the only type really desired, because all its capacity was in use and several of the types to be phased out were handled by inefficient plants. Nor was there any realistic hope of developing an advanced British type in time to equip the force slated for Phase II. Harris' urgent entreaties on these points could only be met by rather marginal adjustments in phasing out Stirlings and upgrading Halifaxes. The basic problem remained the scale and pace of the demands on the industry. Despite preferential treatment, it was less able than ever to adjust quickly to changing needs on any large scale. In fact, targets were revised yet again in September. Both heavy bomber and overall deliveries were to dip slightly at first, but rise even higher in 1944. Overall deliveries remained in the steady 2,100 to 2,300 per month range through December. Heavy bomber deliveries rose above 400 per month, but lagged behind even the new targets. Just at the point Bomber Command was facing its fiercest battles in the air and in Allied debate, the stark fact had to be faced: MAP would be pressed to sustain Bomber Command, let alone bring it to the strength envisaged in 1941. The bomber program had fallen short. The reasons - over-optimistic planning, the consequences of dispersal in 1940, inefficiency, lack of double shifts[40] - were less important than the fact that Whitehall recognized the situation and acted.

The final action was closely bound up with overall manpower decisions, to be noted below. But the specific decisions which related to MAP will be discussed now, as they capped the whole thrust of its program. By the time the DC(S) met on 3 January 1944, it had a policy and reliable data. The policy was to shift manpower to the services and concentrate remaining capacity for a maximum effort in 1944. The data can be summed up as follows: MAP had absorbed 1,710,000 workers in direct industry, plus another 1,678,000 in related sectors (comparable figures for the larger Supply sector were 1.69 and 1.31); yet it had not met its targets and still produced too many types. After several discussions, the DC(S) decided on 27 January that no dramatic increase could be expected from any moves to streamline MAP industries. Instead, the program should be trimmed. Five types - Lancaster, Halifax, Mosquito, Tempest and Spitfire -

were to be "designated." They would receive preferential support. All other types would be phased out or relegated, in order to produce the maximum impact in 1944.[41] This was the measure of the national gamble on the bomber program. There was success, to be sure. These were five excellent types, already deployed in numbers in a powerful air force. But victory was not in sight, which put the revision in the larger context of a sweeping readjustment of national policy. The direct impetus for these changes was the rise of OVERLORD.

The QUADRANT decisions finally forced Whitehall to confront the real prospect of launching a comprehensive grand strategic offensive within the year. Just as efforts to avoid the consequences dominated grand strategic review in autumn 1943, efforts to confront the consequences dominated structural policy review. The Army was not entirely unprepared for an expanded role in the final phase, but grave uncertainties remained. Manpower was one; landing craft were another. OVERLORD was now the focus of structural adjustments. Even before the COS returned from QUADRANT, they were warned that British industry could not produce enough LST and LCT in time to meet British needs. The Americans now planned to increase production, but this was not expected to take effect in time to help OVERLORD. Worse, Morgan insisted that even stronger assault forces would now be required.[42] In an attempt to help efforts to persuade King to change his position on allocations, Whitehall launched a searching probe of the position regarding landing craft.

Production felt there should be a three fold solution: 1) secure more vessels from the Americans, one way or another; 2) increase domestic LCT output; 3) concentrate the U.K. built vessels now scattered on miscellaneous tasks. Nelson sided with the British and helped secure both a further increase and an acceleration of production, especially of LST. King even agreed in early November to raise OVERLORD's allocation of available craft. But even this still left OVERLORD an estimated 16 LST and 365 LCT short, on the shaky assumption that all transferred vessels arrived as and when intended.[43] This made it strategically and politically important, especially when lobbying Washington, for the British to make every effort to narrow the margin. However, Whitehall quickly found itself trapped in a vicious circle. The Admiralty

insisted no significant adjustment could be made in the shipyards without unduly delaying all other naval output. Even if the price was accepted, the vessels could only be built by large scale prefabricated construction in heavily "diluted" yards. This would infuriate the labour unions. Brooke advised against the move, in order to avoid massive labour strife. Production, noting that the bulk of previous U.K. output had been equipped as fire support types, demanded to know why these could not be converted, to narrow the margin. The COS explained that this policy had been based on tactical "lessons" gleaned from the Dieppe raid; even so, the basic reason was that it had never been assumed American output would not suffice.[44] At this point Churchill intervened.

The Prime Minister noted "it would be very valuable" if American fears for OVERLORD could be appeased by a major new contribution. Structure had again to be made to conform to policy. On 2 November the DC(S) agreed to accept the consequences of building 75 more LCT by May 1944.[45] This soon became part of a general effort to reinvigorate landing craft output, at the expense of larger warships. Churchill unwisely ignored advice to use this decision cautiously. His message to Roosevelt of 4 November, in support of Eisenhower's request to retain some LST, was pointedly laced by this promised windfall for OVERLORD. Even greater efforts were now made to find the resources to produce the MULBERRY artificial harbour project, which it had been agreed would be undertaken by the British. Although the bulk of the impact of both landing craft and harbour projects was felt in 1944, by late November 1943, many quarters in Washington suspected that the ability of the British to attempt both efforts belied their complaints of serious strain. However, Whitehall realized that together the projects would delay other shipping programs and use up the last margin of flexibility in British structure.[46]

This drove home an already clear problem. Allied grand strategy was shifting to an approach which could only increase British dependence on the U.S., and there was little the British could do about it. This helped reorient thinking to some extent. In particular, the bomber program was finally demoted from "primus inter pares," if only to equal footing with efforts to OVERLORD's varied requirements. But this constant pressure on British structure only aggravated debate on all aspects of British policy. In

particular, further stress was placed on the political and Imperial cohesion Whitehall considered indispensable to maintain the current position and improve future prospects.

The one political factor now beyond dispute in 1943 was Churchill's position as war leader. With survival assured, and eventual victory probable, the central direction of the war was no longer seriously challenged.[47] However, rising general expectations of significant post-war reform, articulated by and revolving around the Beveridge Report, increasingly dominated the political atmosphere. Powerful quarters of official opinion became convinced that industrial revival should be the first priority, and that the nation would not be able to afford massive expenditures on social services. This uncertainty emerged in the government's poor handling of the Report in early 1943, which had significant consequences. Public unease as to the government's commitment to post-war reform rose appreciably. Cherwell warned Churchill that the nation regarded massive social expenditure after the war as an overriding priority, regardless of the situation.[48] This added to the difficulty of settling overall policy, by itself and by its impact on the coalition.

The better the war went, the harder it became for Churchill to maintain the policy of total concentration on the war effort. This was especially true regarding problems directly involved in the war effort but with significant post-war connotations. Coal production was a classic case. The policy of inducement by persuasion, incentive, and shared control was meant to increase the output of this vital resource without raising the emotional issue of a permanent role for the state. The policy proved, for many reasons, such a serious failure that a political crisis ensued. In October the LPC were informed that drastic measures were necessary in order to meet the margin of demand. These included direct control of the mines by Fuel and Power for the duration, and even the direction of youths into the pits. Cabinet finally accepted a compromise form of control and a scheme for conscription by lot, whose victims became known as "Bevin Boys." This issue should not be inflated regarding the war itself. There was never a critical shortage of coal, and this industry was an extreme case of alienation and obsolescence.[49] But the furore in late 1943 made it clear that partisan differences would no longer be easily avoided by treating problems from the perspective of the war effort alone.

The emergence of post-war domestic concerns did not rupture Churchill's coalition, but certainly strained it. The Labour Party increasingly felt the time had come to review detailed post-war policy. Its leaders chafed at Churchill's determination to hold back the tide. They argued that a broad agenda should be defined, in order to be able to launch programs when the time came. He felt that the determining factor should be the uncertain economic position, and no commitments should be made until it was clear how they could be supported. Churchill's fiscal arguments were up against a growing psychological tide - the inchoate but widespread suspicion that vested interests would again obstruct reforms. Beaverbrook's return to the government was seen as the call for renewed domestic battle it was partly intended to be. At the same time, Attlee was made Lord President, with greater responsibility for post-war issues. The lines were finally drawn in October. The Labour Party reserved the right to leave the coalition. This forced Churchill's hand. On 19 October, he offered a comprehensive policy. Three stages would overlap: "war, transition, and peace and freedom." The first must remain priority, but "practical discussions" on the second could now be intensified. Full employment and industrial revival should be equal priorities. An election should be called early in the "transition period," to allow for a firm mandate.[50] Differences in visions of future agendas were becoming ever more apparent; this made it more important than ever that victory be won in the most favourable of circumstances.

The same trend made the role of the Empire - especially the "white Dominions" - an increasingly important factor in British calculations, in all three of Churchill's stages. The U.K. continued to carry the great bulk of the Imperial war effort. Yet it became increasingly obvious how essential Dominion contributions were to maintaining that effort on a global scale. Nevertheless, Whitehall continued to treat the Dominions like junior partners in a family firm - entitled to close consultation, but expected to follow a lead on all major questions. Dominion authorities continued to be kept fairly well apprised of the general evolution of grand strategy. But they were only involved in formulating it if their forces were heavily involved in the specific case, as in the reorganization of Atlantic commands. Ottawa was partly to blame for the fact that the Canadian voice in grand strategy remained nearly unheard; it certainly caused very serious confusion in the

deployment of the Canadian Army. But Whitehall did nothing to alleviate this; on the contrary, Brooke continued to indulge in shameful conspiracy regarding the Canadian Army high command.[51] Canberra was also rudely shocked by British unwillingness to debate the Americans over Australian interests. London still saw the Empire as an integral unit of power, but its immediate priority was Europe. In fact, Whitehall saw itself as a trustee for the Dominions in pursuing a grand strategy that was now far more Allied than Imperial. Long term interests were another matter, but for now the consequences of "Europe first," and the seat on the CCS, were overriding.[52] Only Smuts was able to exert any real influence over the central direction of the war, and this remained a result of personal ties.

Whitehall's attitude towards control of the central direction of the war was natural and, to a large extent, justifiable. But the position became more tenuous when the structural contribution of the Empire was taken into account. In every component of power, Imperial assets now filled an important margin. In some cases they were indispensable, or even preponderant. The RAF was forced to accept "Dominionization" even when - particularly in Bomber Command - it felt that Dominion commanded sub-units were inefficient. Canadian economic assistance was now indispensable, especially as it was given on far more generous terms than American. Eventually over half of Canadian munitions production was supplied to the U.K., the bulk of it ground ordnance. A delicate problem emerged in spring 1943 when it became clear that the bulk of U.K. orders would have to be shifted to air and maritime items, just as the generous Mutual Aid financial provisions were settled. Whitehall's handling of the matter speaks for itself. The greatest respect was shown for C.D. Howe and for Canadian problems. The transition was managed by truly intimate **prior** consultations. Why? Canada now contributed 8% to the total Commonwealth pool of food, raw materials and munitions, with few strings attached.[53] This had earned it, on structural policy at least, a status somewhere between junior and senior partner. Naturally the British welcomed such a contribution. But it also drove home their growing need for Dominion assistance to maintain a full Imperial effort.

Dependence on the Dominions also became a central issue in questions of post-war reorganization. The majority sentiment in Whitehall was consistently expressed by the Dominions Office: the only way the U.K. could retain a position as a World Power, on a level equivalent to the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., was to deploy, and speak for, the weight of a united Commonwealth. As the question became serious, efforts to organize a Prime Ministers Conference began. In July, a Cabinet committee was set up to review a "post-war settlement."[54] Nevertheless uncertainty continued to dominate a healthy debate. Much depended on the eventual direction of American policy. This helped bring closer a consensus on the Imperial future. Some, especially Churchill, continued to dispute how far Britain could afford to rely on having full Imperial support at its disposal, but all agreed that it seemed essential.

In June, Attlee circulated a comment on proposed post-war international organizations which expressed the alternatives that shaped the Imperial debate. In any such bodies, could the U.K. speak for the Empire on all matters? Should each Dominion have a voice? Should there be a U.K. representative plus one Dominion to represent the rest? Should there be only one Imperial representative, not necessarily a Briton? As the argument ran on, a note of desperation emerged. In early 1944, Halifax was rebuked for a speech in Toronto which implied the Empire must act with one voice in the proposed post-war forum. But Halifax had only articulated the majority vision in Whitehall. By now the British knew that the Dominions, especially Canada and South Africa, would not continue to accept an automatic lead. This problem dated back to the turn of the century. How could widely separated polities, of unequal weight and often divergent interests, consistently press a truly common policy without subjugating any partner? The new factor was that to preserve - or perhaps restore - World Power status, Dominion weight was now required. Also, it was widely felt in British political opinion that an international order without a British World Power, to balance and "guide" the Americans and Soviets, would lead to disaster. Yet London refused, as always, to bind itself to constant prior consultation in return for Dominion support. This was an emotional stand.[55] Reason argued that a post-war U.K. could not stand alone; but pride, and a sense of past tradition and present mission, left this generation unwilling to

accept that it could not seek to match its rivals without offering constitutional sacrifice. Diplomatic uncertainty was preferable to avowed dependence.

Such emotionalism did not disrupt the definitive adjustment of British structural policy. In fact, the reverse was true. Whitehall regained its ability to appraise overall prospects and priorities, and adjust national power accordingly by the central control of manpower. It did so with surprising speed, once Bevin drove home his point that the distribution of manpower was a far more intricate task than shifting orders or materiel. Anderson, Lyttleton and Bevin shaped a compromise. Production and Labour would control the new allocations by means of designating "preferences" and balancing shares among them, rather than by overriding priority. Cabinet approved this new policy on 19 August.[56] This left Cherwell's people isolated in their criticism of Bevin. By late September, the MAP intake was ahead of schedule. In October, MAP's first preference status was revoked. The July decision had turned out to be a blip, overcome by the forceful representations of experienced quarters and the common sense of the compromise. MAP received its required labour at last; but in the process it absorbed the last small pool of fairly transferable manpower. The well ran dry, just as the QUADRANT accord raised urgent new demands which required continued flexibility.[57]

The disappearance of that flexibility led to another genuine crisis. The British now had to face the consequences of committing themselves to an outline of specific offensive plans which exceeded their manpower resources. More manpower was needed, to man landing craft, provide the now vast infrastructure required in the U.K. for BOLERO and OVERLORD, undertake special projects for the latter, and provide the armed forces the depth needed for an intense campaign, if such ensued. One debate was resolved under pressure of the generally acknowledged serious manpower situation plus the American refusal to crew British landing craft. After some squabbling, the services agreed to find the manpower needed to crew the vessels and to maintain properly the forces committed to the offensive. The price for the Army was the breakup of 61st Division and 42nd Armoured Division, for the RN several moves, including the breakup of the Royal Marine Division. The closer OVERLORD came, the more Brooke insisted that manpower policy be adjusted to suit the expanded role of the Army. Churchill

agonized over the breakup of divisions, because it appeared as a visible reduction in British strength. But there was no real choice. If "wear down" did not succeed, and an intense campaign ensued, the nation could only commit the forces it could maintain.[58]

The course of events and the evolution of the grand strategic debate helped focus the manpower policy question. The contraction of Supply programs helped make it possible to meet MAP needs. But the emergence of OVERLORD requirements - and the prospect of intense operations they reflected - called for a further escalation the nation simply could not manage. On 22 October Bevin gave formal notice of what many had expected for months: under existing policy all sectors needed increased intakes for 1944, these could not be met, so policy would have to change. Civil standards could not be cut further without gravely jeopardizing prospects of post-war revival. The general consensus was that war production should be cut, in order to maintain the services. Churchill summarized the issue on 1 November.* As a comprehensive effort was no longer possible, two alternatives were apparent: 1) assume victory in Europe in 1944, and concentrate resources to ensure that Britain made the greatest possible direct contribution; 2) or, expect to continue "well beyond" 1944 and determine how best to reduce the overall war effort. Two objective facts simplified the choice. First, since 1942 structural policy had aimed towards a 1944 climax. Second, the U.K. would have to rely more heavily on American help for operations after 1944 no matter what it did. The conclusion seemed obvious: take whatever risks necessary to strive for a 1944 victory won by a significant British contribution, because that contribution would then decline regardless of Allied strategic decisions.[59] This way, British influence might be preserved.

Charged with a clear cut task, Whitehall was again able to reach a consensus on fundamental objectives. On 1 December the final decision was taken. The services would receive a further intake of 288,000. This, plus overall small increases in basic industries, would be met by net cuts in the labour force of the supply departments of some 312,000. The total mobilization level was to be maintained as long as possible.

** See Chapter heading*

The transfers were to be synchronized by Lyttleton and Bevin. There was some desultory debate, but this policy was soon firmly entrenched.[60] The 1942 decision had been to bolster production in order to provide an extended structural effort. It was now assumed that the results of that effort could be leaned on and the policy reversed, in order to prepare to drive for final victory in Europe. The final adjustment was, of course, the direct result of changing circumstances, but it followed quite logically the chain of policy from previous years.

Whitehall's ability to define the issue and reach an informed decision at the end of 1943 exposed the real cause of its decision of July. Objectively, manpower remained the most reliable means to determine whether national power was commensurate with national policy. Subjectively, hopes, prejudices and contending views of both how to use that means, and what national policy to pursue, underlined how nervous Whitehall was about the fate of "wear down" - and thus British interests - just before QUADRANT. By December the situation was clearer. Several key issues had been decided and some British aspirations quashed.* The latter point was particularly important. Whitehall could now stop chasing the chimera of grand strategic control and take stock of how best to press British interests in a new situation. The LPC offered its perceptions on 12 December. As the finite manpower limit had now been reached, all future tasks - Phase II, overseas relief, recovery at home - would be beyond British capability unless the mobilization level was soon reduced. After close study, Lyttleton submitted an even more probing paper on 27 January 1944, entitled "Production Implications of the Manpower Decisions." This rightly noted that the overall effort to harness, escalate and extend an intense war effort had been more successful overall than expected. Britain had produced more equipment and maintained larger forces for longer than had been thought possible. But only now were the Allies even in a position to consider a push for victory. The conclusion was obvious, familiar, and easily accepted - throw literally everything into the scales in 1944, because the optimum position had already been passed anyway.[61] It was now an overriding national interest to win the war **that year.**

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** See Chapter 11*

1943 was a year of upheaval in British structural policy. The Allied war effort remained interdependent and integrated, but the "common pool" concept was finally dropped. The policy of extending an intense comprehensive effort succeeded, overall. But as before, crucial - and in many cases expanding - margins were not met. The decision to fight a total war beyond national means had put British structure on a treadmill - running ever harder just to keep position. The one thing that could have altered this, the course of the war, became the direct spark for change. In 1943 the Allies became militarily and economically strong enough to seize the initiative, but the U.K. proved too weak in both respects to maintain its grand strategy as Allied policy. The most clear and consistent limiting factor in British policy was structural weakness. As the debate over "wear down" versus "decisive concentration" reached its peak, the British were unable to generate enough material leverage to preserve "wear down." The parallel was neat and exact. Success in the field came too slowly and incompletely to offset American resolve. Structural success remained too heavily dependent on overseas supply, and too incomplete, to affect the argument. This was in spite of an unprecedented success of organization on a national scale; ultimately, over 22 million adults were directly involved in the war effort, out of a total national population under 44 million. Yet what stands out in 1943 is not change but the element of continuity in perceptions and decisions.

As early as mid-1942 Whitehall based its ideas on victory in Europe in 1944. The adjustments made in 1943 flowed from that decision as well as from events. Earlier victory would have been a windfall and it was not counted on. Therefore, by and large the British were able to muster the strength for one last push. However, the most important point of continuity remained the fundamentally artificial nature of basic national war policy. In 1940 the British decided to fight a war beyond their means and risk the consequences. That did not change, not even as 1943 gave way to 1944. This meant that a continuing element of fundamental risk and uncertainty had to be accepted. This grounded the adjustments made as the situation developed.

To put it bluntly, Whitehall's fundamental assessment of the abstract nature of the imperative national objective **did not change.** Sheer survival was no longer at stake; but

it had been replaced by the challenge of survival as a World Power, a challenge seen as only a shade less apocalyptic. Churchill's three phases - war, transition, "peace and freedom" - fused into one great national problem in Whitehall thinking. The grand strategy meant to win victory on British terms had fallen short. The need to push still harder left Britain clearly dependent on Allied aid if it were to retain the prominent role that its leaders considered essential to post-war security and prosperity. The Allied war effort remained interdependent enough to suggest one possible solution. Post-war strategic, constitutional, diplomatic and economic uncertainty could not be avoided; but it might be offset by mustering one last great effort to play a prominent role in the grand strategy that secured victory. "Wear down" was eclipsed, but its objective remained constant. In structural terms, the thread remained unbroken: it was to wage war beyond national means, in the hope that success itself would ward off the consequences of such extravagance.

Endnotes to Chapter 10

1. PRO, CAB92/40, JWPS minutes, BWSC(43)11, 15/3/43.

2. PRO, CAB92/40, JWPS minutes, 16/4, JWPS(43)30, 30/4/43; 92/63, LCPRB minutes, 6/4/43; Hall & Wrigley, 213; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 628-632; Rosen, 159-160.

3. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 9/3, 23/3, 30/3, 27/4/43; Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 1, JCS146/13, 15/3, Leahy to Nelson, 22/4/43; PRO, CAB92/40, JWPS minutes, 16/4/43; comparative ratio of effort by labour allocations as of April 1943, for maritime, air and ground programs, was 20, 42, and 38% in the U.S., 25, 39 and 36% in the U.K.; Leighton & Coakley, 1940-1943, 632-635; Matloff, "The 90 Division Gamble," in Greenfield, Command Decisions, 368-372; Hall & Wrigley, 182-185.

4. PRO, CAB65/33, War Cabinet minutes, 18/2/43.

5. PRO, CAB66/34, WP(43)83, 24/2/43; CAB65/33, War Cabinet minutes, 25/2/43.

6. PRO, CAB80/40, COS(43)120, 10/4/43; CAB66/35, WP(43)138, 12/4/43; CAB65/34, War Cabinet minutes, 21/4/43.

7. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/6/4, monthly production surveys, #11-#13, 2-4/43; PRO, CAB71/92, LP(43)57, 17/3/43; CAB66/36, WP(43)159, 21/4/43. This report rated American supply as equivalent to the efforts of 1.5 million workers, or, as was noted, "an entire MAP."

8. NCA, Cherwell Papers, G507, Army Stocks, 2/3/43; PRO, CAB66/36, WP(43)159, 21/4/43.

9. NCA, Cherwell papers, G368, "Special Supplement to AFV Technical Report #12 - Fighting Efficiency," 6/2/43; CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/6/4, monthly production surveys, #11-#13, 2/4/43; PRO, PREM3/427/1, Supply to Churchill, 24/3, Cherwell to Churchill, 20/4/43; CAB70/6, DC(S)(43)22, 16/4 DC(S) minutes, 20/4, 23/4/43. The policy of developing current designs around the concept of a multi-role "main battle tank" was also confirmed, but many issues remained unsettled. Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 642-643; Hall & Wrigley, 10.

10. PRO, CAB66/34, WP(43)92, 3/3/43; CAB65/33, War Cabinet minutes, 8/3/43. A total of 200 Yorks were scheduled for delivery in 1943 - 209 actually arrived, none before June.

11. PRO, CAB70/6, DC(S)(43)8, 16/2, DC(S)(43)12, 18/3, DC(S)(43)14, 25/3, DC(S)(43)15, 26/3, DC(S) minutes, 30/3, 7/4/43; CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/6/4, monthly production surveys, #11-#13, 2-4/43; Postan, 307.

12. PRO, CAB66/35, WP(43)122, 26/3, WP(43)145, 12/4/43; CAB65/34, War Cabinet minutes, 1/4/43; PREM3/322/5, Churchill to A.V. Alexander, 23/3, reply, 25/3/43; CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/6/4, monthly production surveys, #11-#13, 2-4/43; Postan, 289-292; two previously ordered fleet carriers and six light fleet carriers were, in fact, completed in 1944 and 1945.

13. PRO, CAB71/12, LP(43)57, 17/3/43; NCA, Cherwell papers, H77, Wilson to Cherwell, 1/3, 30/3/43.

14. PRO, CAB71/11, LPC minutes, 9/4/43; CAB66/36, WP(43)159, 21/4/43; CCA Robinson Papers, 2/6/4, monthly production surveys, #12-#13, 3-4/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F177, Cherwell to Churchill, 30/4/43.

15. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/6/4, monthly production surveys, #14-#16, 5-7/43; PRO, CAB71/11, LPC minutes, 23/7/43, noted a rise in raw materials stocks from 4.8 million tons in May to 6.2 in July; Scott & Hughes, 259; Rosen, 51, 114; Postan, 262.

16. PRO, CAB88/2, CCS minutes, 4/6/43; CAB92/63, LCPRB(43)39, 3/5, CPRB minutes, 27/5/43; CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/7/7, Chart Book, Warlike Stores Production 1943; 2/6/4, "The Status of the Combined Production Programs," 30/6/43.

17. PRO, CAB92/63, CPRB minutes, 27/5, 18/6/43; CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/6/4, "The Status of the Combined Production Program," 30/6/43.

18. PRO, CAB71/12, LP(43)101, 6/5/43; 71/11, LPC minutes, 7/5, 21/5/43; CAB92/63, CPRB Chart, U.S. Aircraft Deliveries, 1-5/43; 2/6/4, "The Status of the Combined Production Program," 30/6/43; Behrens, 440; Hall, 405.

19. PRO, CAB71/13, LP(43)125, 28/5/43; CAB66/37, WP(43)238, 11/6, WP(43)239, 14/6/43; 66/38, WP(43)284, 29/6/43; 66/39, WP(43)327, 21/7/43; CAB92/40, JWPS minutes, 30/6, 5/7/43; CAB80/40, COS(43)190, 6/7/43; 80/41, COS(43)222, 30/7/43.

20. UW, JCS Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 8, JCS 338, 26/5/43; JCS Meetings, Reel 1, minutes, 15/6/43; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 91-98, 115-118; Matloff, "The 90 Division Gamble," in Greenfield, Command Decisions, 372-374.

21. PRO, CAB79/61, COS minutes, 13/5/43; CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/6/4, monthly production surveys, #14-#16, 5-7/43; Hall, 405; Hall & Wrigley, 36.

22. PRO, CAB70/6, DC(S) minutes, 3/5, 12/5, 15/6, DC(S)(43)29, 8/7, DC(S)(43)31, 23/7/43; PREM3/427/1, correspondence, 15/6-12/7/43; 427/3,correspondence, 10/6-15/8/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/VIII, 3/5/43 diary entry; NCA, Cherwell Papers, G369, correspondence, 12-22/7/43; CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/6/4, monthly production surveys, #14-#16, 5-7/43; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 642-644.

23. PRO, CAB66/37, WP(43)219, 28/5, WP(43)221, 23/5/43; CAB71/12, LP(43)115, 21/5/43; CAB92/40, JWPS minutes, 1/6, 8/6, JWPS(43)39, JWPS(43)40, 19/6/43; Parker, 202-204.

24. NCA, Cherwell Papers, G145, Wilson to Cherwell, 7/6/43; CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/6/4, monthly production surveys, #14-#16, 5-7/43; Postan, 307. Heavy bomber targets, as revised, rose above 400 in May. Deliveries rose from 363 in April to 434 in May, but dipped below 400 until September. Overall deliveries remained impressively steady, between 2,000 and 2,380 per month.

25. CCA, Bevin papers, 2/4, Bevin to secretary, 7/6/43; PRO, CAB92/63, LCPRB(43)47, 14/7/43; 92/40, JWPS(43)34, 19/6, minutes, 21/6, 22/6/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, H78, Bevin to Churchill, 10/7/43; F179, Cherwell to Churchill, 18/6/43; H78, Wilson to Cherwell, 21/6/43.

26. PRO, CAB66/38, WP(43)271, 30/6/43; Parker, 205.

27. NCA, Cherwell Papers, F180, Cherwell-Churchill correspondence, 23-28/6/43; F181, Cherwell to Churchill, 2/7/43; F242, Churchill to Cherwell, 3/7/43; PRO, CAB66/38, WP(43)295, 6/7/43.

28. PRO, CAB65/39, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annexes, 9/7, 16/7/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, H78, Cripps to Cherwell, 30/6/43; F178, Cherwell to Churchill, 3/5, 15/7/43; F179, Cherwell to Churchill, 10/6/43; CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/6/4, monthly production survey, #14, 5/43, agreed that efficiency had improved but termed it "very far below the levels of the U.S..."; Postan, 313-316; Inman, 192.

29. PRO, CAB66/39, WP(43)319, 19/7/43; CAB65/39, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 22/7/43; Parker, 205-207; Bullock, 251; Roskill, Churchill and the Admirals, 233, missed the point that MAP was again placed ahead of the services when it seemed clear the manpower pool could no longer support such broad growth.

30. PRO, CAB79/61, COS minutes, 11/6, 17/6/43; 79/27, 24/6/43; 79/63, 27/7/43; CAB80/72, COS(43)427(O), 31/7/43; D'Este, 253.

31. The contention in Ehrman, vol.V, 42, that this "redistribution" postponed the saturation point until the end of 1943 cannot be sustained. The decision to prolong MAP's privileged status delayed the reckoning in Whitehall, but did not ameliorate the manpower situation itself. One possible motive was lingering hope of American willingness to meet new margins. See PRO, CAB92/40, JWPS(43), 14/7/43.

32. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/6/4, monthly production surveys, #17-#21, 8-12/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F186, Cherwell to Churchill, 15/10/43.

33. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/2/3, "Comparative Axis-UN Production," 3/8, Robinson to CPRB, 13/8/43; 2/5/9, Robinson to Board of Trade, 9/3/44; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F183, Cherwell to Churchill, 4/8/43. Conversion was measured, as always, by the manpower budget.

34. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 14/9/43; Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 1, JLC to JCS, 23/10/43; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 115, 124, 627; Hall, 409, 416.

35. PRO, CAB92/63, LCPRB(43)52, 6/8, minutes, 13/8, LCPRB(43)59, 16/9/43; 92/40, JWPS(43)51, 23/8/43; CAB65/39, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 27/7/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, H168, minutes of conference on Article VII, 22/11/43; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 641, 647; Dobson, 148-159.

36. PRO, CAB65/36, War Cabinet minutes, 27/10/43; CAB92/40, JWPS minutes, 6/12/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F188, Cherwell to Churchill, 12/11/43; H168, note on Article VII talks, 16/11/43; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 627, 636-637.

37. PRO, CAB92/63, CPRB minutes, 30/9/43; CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/8/5, "The Status of the Combined Production Program," 8/12/43.

38. PRO, CAB65/35, War Cabinet minutes, 4/8/43; CAB80/76, COS(43)557(O), 25/10/43; CAB92/40, JWPS minutes, 18/10, 9/11/43; CCA, Bevin Papers, 2/4, Bevin to Ince, 10/12/43.

39. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/6/9, Monthly Index Total Munitions Production; 2/6/4, monthly production surveys, #17-#21, 8-12/43; PRO, PREM3/322/5, A.V. Alexander- Churchill correspondence, 10/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F187, Cherwell to Churchill, 4/11/43; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 642-644.

40. CCCA, Portal Papers, 10/44, Harris to Portal, 7/9, reply, 14/9, Harris to Portal, 26/10/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, G69, correspondence, 9/43, Day to Cherwell, 8/12/43; Hornby, 210-212; Postan, Hay, Scott, 152-153; Postan, Appendix 4, 484-485.

41. PRO, CAB70/6, DC9S)(43)40, 29/12/43, minutes, 3/1, 8/1, 17/1, 27/1/44; NCA, Cherwell Papers, G69, Day to Cherwell, 31/12/43; HLRO, Beaverbrook Papers, D421, Beaverbrook to Churchill, 16/1/44, ironically argued that long term development not be allowed to suffer; Inman, 3.

42. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/2/3, report on implications of QUADRANT decisions, 27/8/43; PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, White House meeting, 3/9/43; CAB79/64, COS minutes, 7/9/43; CAB80/75, COS(43)596(O), 30/9/43; Hull, 396.

43. CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/2/3, report on implications of QUADRANT decisions, 27/8/43; PRO, CAB80/75, COS(43)614(O), 7/10/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 26/10/43; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 259, 267.

44. PRO, CAB80/75, COS(43)566(O), 22/9/43; 80/76, COS(43)679(O), 2/11/43; CAB79/64, COS minutes, 23/9/43; 79/65, 5/10/43.

45. PRO, CAB70/6, DC(S) minutes, 28/10, 2/11/43.

46. PREM3/206/11, A.V. Alexander to Churchill, 5/11/43; CAB92/40, JWPS(43)58, 8/11, JWPS(43)62, 30/11/43; CAB80/77, COS(43)772(O), 18/12/43; CAB79/68, COS minutes, 23/12/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-490, 14/11/43; Ehrman, vol.V, 35; Postan, 280-286, 292-294; Keegan, The Second World War, 377, for a criticism of the distribution of British LST output. The problem in the case of the LST was size - such large vessels simply overtaxed shipyard capacity, and caused a ripple effect. The problem in the case of MULBERRY was labour, drawing on 45,000 sorely needed workers at its peak. The resulting delays in other programs were only felt in 1944, but the determination of the British to press the project underlined their desire to retain clear influence in the central Allied effort.

47. CCA, Hankey Papers, 4/35, Hankey to Hoare, 16/5/43, an ironic comment. Controversies arose over unconditional surrender and "area" bombing, discussed briefly below, but they did not constitute a challenge to Churchill's position.

48. NCA, Cherwell Papers, H257, Cherwell to Churchill, 11/2, 24/11/43; LSE, Dalton Papers, D28, 16/2, 18/2/43 diary entries; Nicolson, 16/2, 17/2, 18/2/43 diary entries; Wheeler-Bennett, J. John Anderson, London, 1962, 275; Addison, 221-227.

49. PRO, CAB71/11, LPC minutes, 6/10, 12/11, 19/11/43; CAB65/40, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 26/11/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, F185, Cherwell to Churchill, 7/10/43; Addison; 232, Court, 218-249. See Corelli Barnett, The Audit of War, chapter 4, for a provocative analysis.

50. PRO, CAB66/38, WP(43)255, 26/6/43; 66/39, WP(43)308, 14/7, WP(43)324, 20/7/43; 66/41, WP(43)467, 19/10/43; CAB65/40, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 14/10/43; LSE, Dalton Papers,D28, 7/4, 8/4, 27/9, 21/10, 2/11, 29/11/43 diary entries; CCA, Bevin Papers, 2/4, draft for Cabinet, 9/6/43; Grigg Papers, 9/6/25, Grigg to father, 7/12/43; Addison, 324-326; Taylor, Beaverbrook, 548; Burridge, T. Clement Attlee, London, 1985, 153.

51. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, COS minutes, 12/5/43, for a typical Imperial briefing. The most notorious case was the deliberate exclusion of Canadian representatives from the QUADRANT discussions, held on Canadian soil. Ottawa clearly accepted this decision and continued to abdicate any claim to a larger voice, with unfortunate results for the Army. For Brooke's behaviour, see above, Chapter 6; Kimball, vol.2, C-358, 10/7/43; CAB105/56, COS(W)728, 24/7/43; CAB65/39, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 19/8/43; CAB66/40, WP(43)380, 25/8/43.

52. PRO, CAB99/22, TRIDENT Papers, COS minutes, 7/5/43; PREM3/63/8, Curtin-Churchill, 8/10/43; CAB80/76, COS(43)749(O), 14/12/43; CCCA, Portal Papers, 4/40, correspondence, 7/43; NCA, Cherwell papers, F182, Cherwell to Churchill, 29/7/43; Horner, 257-439.

53. CCCA, Portal Papers, 10/4, Harris to Portal, 10/1, reply, 7/2/43; CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/5/3, report on Canadian production, 23/3/43; PRO, CAB92/40, JWPS(43)11, 8/2, JWPS(43)18, 19/3, JWPS(43)24, 14/4, minutes, 16/4/43; 92/63, CPRB minutes, 14/5, 30/9/43; CAB65/39, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 19/8/43; Hall 483-484; Sayers, 324, 351.

54. PRO, CAB66/35, WP(43)115, 22/3/43; CAB65/34, War Cabinet minutes, 6/4/43; 65/39, confidential annex, 29/7/43.

55. PRO, CAB66/37, WP(43)244, 15/6/43; 66/39, WP(43)321, 19/7/43; 66/40, WP(43)380, 25/8, WP(43)394, 14/9/43; CAB65/35, War Cabinet minutes, 19/8, 24/9/43; CCA, Bevin Papers, 2/4, note on India, 21/6/43. The conventional argument is that the scale of Dominion war efforts and the resulting rise in expectations rendered "Imperial Federation" truly obsolete. This author does not deny this. The point is that Whitehall hoped to revive it, at no sacrifice, to preserve its own position. Anyone doubting the emotional and 'wishful-thinking' elements of British thinking should trace the episode of the Halifax speech: NCA, Cherwell Papers, F243, Office of the Minister of Defence to Cherwell, 26/1/44; CCA, Hickleton Papers, A4/410/4.15, Eden to Halifax, 10/2, reply, 21/2/44; A4/410/4.19, Halifax to Cranborne, 30/1, reply, 9/2/44; Bevin Papers, 3/1/C, Bevin to Cranborne, 1/2/44. Halifax could not have chosen a worse site for such a speech than the bastion of MacKenzie King's domestic political enemies, which helped make the issue a near crisis.

56. PRO, CAB92/40, JWPS(43)50, 9/8, minutes, 10/8/43; CAB65/35, War Cabinet minutes, 16/8, 19/8/43; Parker, 208; Scott & Hughes, 483-485; Bullock, 251.

57. NCA, Cherwell Papers, H79, Wilson to Cherwell, 19/8/43; H80, 14/9/43; F184, Cherwell to Churchill, 20/9, 29/9/43; CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/6/4, monthly production surveys, #17-#21, 8-12/43; Inman, 194, supported the July decisions; Postan, 304-305, and Howard, vol.IV, 290, did not.

58. PRO, CAB99/23, QUADRANT Papers, COS minutes, 13/8/43; PREM3/147/9, Marshall to Churchill, 4/9/43; CAB79/63, COS minutes, 3/8, 4/8/43; 79/65, 5/10/43; CAB80/72, COS(43)446(O), 11/8/43; 80/41, COS(43)245, 29/8/43; 80/76, COS(43)671(O), 29/10/43; CAB88/3, CCS minutes, 22/10/43; Ehrman, vol.V, 37; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/IX, 9/7, 16/7/43 diary entries.

59. PRO, CAB65/40, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 18/10/43; CAB66/41, WP(43)472, 22/10, WP43490, 1/11/43; CCA, Robinson Papers, 2/6/4, monthly production survey #18, 9/43; 2/5/7, paper on manpower, 28/10/43; Parker, 211.

60. PRO, CAB79/67, COS minutes, 5/11/43; CAB65/40, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 1/12/43; CAB92/40, JWPS(43)64, 3/12, minutes, 6/12/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, H81, Wilson to Cherwell, 23/11, 1/12/43; Parker, 209, 220-227; Lee, 91, was incorrect.

61. PRO, CAB71/14, LP(43)282, 11/12/43; CAB70/7, DC(S)(44)4, 27/1/44.

Chapter 11

EUREKA - Strategy Eclipsed

> **-"[Leahy] asked Gen. Brooke whether he felt that the conditions laid down for OVERLORD would ever arise unless the Germans had collapsed beforehand - [Brooke] firmly believed that they would and he foresaw the conditions arising in 1944, provided the enemy were engaged on other fronts as well."**
>
> **- CCS, 30/11/43**

The British and American delegations that assembled in Cairo in mid-November 1943 were, in one sense, repeating a familiar pattern. Once again the course of the war, and different opinions of its central direction, forced the Allies to convene a conference of principals, in an attempt to restore a consensus on grand strategy. But even at the time this conference was seen as the departure that it in fact became. The code name, SEXTANT, was apt. The grand strategic issue was reduced to the emphasis to be placed on the firm place of OVERLORD in the planned grand strategic offensive. Also, the British and Americans were no longer to settle issues alone. SEXTANT was a preliminary for EUREKA, the first meeting of Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin, to be held in Teheran at the end of the month. There it was hoped to confirm a broad outline for grand strategic offensive. Discussions to clarify views on political issues were planned as well. These points summed up the basic challenge confronting the British delegation - to assert their right to continue to participate as a full partner at the summit of coalition policy making.

The British hoped to reach consensus on all major issues in Cairo, with the Americans alone. That consensus could then be presented to the Soviets as Allied policy. Ideally, it would involve adjustments in grand strategy and command machinery which would bolster the campaigns currently underway, in which Imperial forces played a major role. There was no intent to evade OVERLORD. But the British did hope to make sure it came about in circumstances as close as possible to those always envisaged in the "wear down" scenario, and now apparently essential to preserve British power and influence. The American and Soviet positions forced the British to lower their sights and press yet another amended vision of a grand strategy now slipping out of their hands. The real clash at SEXTANT/EUREKA was not merely the conflicting package of

specific plans, so fascinating yet bewildering, but a deeper clash of national war policies. The stakes were the degrees of influence over, and the shape of, the ultimate offensive phase and the period of transition to the post-war settlement which it would heavily influence. The end result was a final - but not total - rejection of the British approach of grand strategy based on relative weakness. However, the British reaction underlined the strength of entrenched assumptions and patterns of thought. The substantive change in grand strategic approach was accepted, but in British minds its definition was shaped by prevailing concepts. In one sense, this was a defeat Whitehall hoped to ignore long enough for events to soften the blow.

The British arrived in Cairo with a comprehensive consensus. First, the Americans were to be pressed to settle a common position in bilateral talks. The Chinese were present in Cairo, but the British hoped they could be "persuaded to go and see the Pyramids and enjoy themselves." For SEAC, the goal was agreement on some form of campaign which would appease the Americans and Chinese without risking any large fixed commitment. The key issue was, of course, what to do in Europe. In specific terms, the COS did not object to Churchill's vision of "Rome in early January, Rhodes in late January, Turkey to be lobbied, OVERLORD to be delayed if necessary."[1] The obvious problem was the allocation of landing craft, but there were more profound stakes. The British hoped to intensify operations in the Mediterranean, focusing on the only large ground campaign envisaged - Italy - and increase their control over these operations. Some quarters still saw the theatre as a fruitful arena for the primary overall effort. Churchill and the COS disagreed. To the COS, intensified effort in the Mediterranean was intended to achieve two goals: 1) German power would be worn down safely, which would make OVERLORD a safer and shorter proposition; 2) victory would thus be won with a more visibly important British role, which would help preserve British general interests and status. The specific issue remained whether OVERLORD was to proceed as and when planned regardless of the effects on other efforts.[2] To the British, this meant nothing less than whether they would continue to be an equal partner or be forced into important but secondary status.

The real motion at Cairo was in American thinking. The American delegation also knew its own mind and was, with three possible exceptions, confident that its own policy could now be entrenched as Allied grand strategy. The first priority, to reach a prior consensus with which to face the British, was pursued diligently. The JCS soon reached agreement. A new outline for grand strategy against Japan was to be presented. Operations in Italy could continue, but no major effort could be mounted anywhere else in the Mediterranean. OVERLORD was to retain first priority and to proceed as planned. Roosevelt approved the position on 15 November in an aside that absorbed one paragraph of over seven pages of minutes:

> "...as far as he was concerned - Amen. The paper was okay and approved by him. He added that he felt we should send the paper to the British and during the first few days of the SEXTANT conference definitely stand on it."

This consensus was amplified on 19 November. Roosevelt also gave his subordinates insights into his views on the political issues now emerging, and directed them to prepare, for use at the conference, a detailed projection of the Allied Order of Battle.[3] The message was clear - an overall American policy was taking shape, and it was now time to entrench it by flexing American muscles.

The three possible exceptions to American confidence can be summed up as Chinese capability, British motives, and Soviet intentions. Even though its strategic vision was evolving, Washington remained determined to press large operations in SEAC, to bolster the Chinese. Roosevelt was particularly eager to build up the Chinese as a wartime asset and a post-war proxy. This forced the JCS to pressure the British about an area where Imperial forces were predominant, on behalf of an ally now widely felt to be unreliable. As for British motives, Washington was now convinced that British grand strategic and command reorganization proposals, plus the EAC, were all part of an attempt to tie Allied power to the pursuit of specific British interests. Winant, American Ambassador to the U.K., briefed the JCS so accurately that it seems certain he was primed by the "rolling seminar":

> "...with reference to cross-Channel operations...the British were disturbed not so much by the difficulties of landing as by those to be encountered during the first 60 days...the British are still behind the OVERLORD operation but wish to be

> sure that German resistance is properly softened before undertaking the actual landing operation."[4]

Nevertheless, the JCS continued to believe that the British hoped to abort OVERLORD by diversions elsewhere. This coloured their otherwise perceptive view of British proposals for command changes in the Mediterranean. The need to press Roosevelt's impossible proposal to name Marshall Supreme Commander for Europe also weakened the position. Finally, the JCS were forced to prepare a controversial proposal to shift suggested zones of occupation in Germany, in order to meet Roosevelt's fears about French reliability and a domestic demand for early withdrawal from Europe.[5] This combination of false perceptions, weak positions and Presidential pressure made an early consensus at SEXTANT unlikely.

In fact, the JCS wondered whether an attempt to reach a consensus in Cairo should even be made. Once the conference began, it became clear that the British were willing to risk a relatively ambitious attack on Burma only if large Chinese operations were guaranteed. Roosevelt foolishly attempted to secure them by offering a vague but direct promise to Chiang Kai-Shek that BUCCANEER, the planned amphibious assault on the Andaman Islands, would be launched early in 1944, to complement the attack on Burma. The British regarded the time spent on this question as time wasted. Worse, this new claim added to the traffic jam of claims for landing craft through spring 1944. On the other hand, the COS liked the American proposal to shift the weight of the grand strategic offensive against Japan to the Pacific. This proposal stemmed from growing scepticism as to the utility of China as the main bastion, plus the reaction to the successful beginning of the drive in the central Pacific. This envisaged a proposed role for a British "Pacific Fleet." While this soon commenced a British debate about their own role, no firm decisions could be reached; after Roosevelt's reckless pledge, the JCS were even less inclined to settle anything in Cairo.[6] This decision was made final by the combination of a clear British position and an all too uncertain Soviet stance.

After careful consideration, the JCS were unable to decide whether recent Soviet interest in pressing Turkey might produce a shift in the Soviet position on grand strategy. Although the Soviet offensive continued, heavy fighting was in progress deep in the

Ukraine. Deane warned his superiors that the Soviets might welcome the earlier assistance that escalated efforts in the Balkans might bring. Although Harriman insisted that, on the contrary, Stalin still saw OVERLORD as the overriding priority, the JCS remained uncertain. Marshall was particularly worried that Churchill might try to solicit Stalin's support for his supposed vision of a large ground offensive east of Italy. Circumstantial evidence points to a cautious decision: establish what direction British thoughts on OVERLORD were taking; if the answer was unfavourable, insist on consulting the Soviets.[7]

The essential clash of positions at SEXTANT was summed up in a forthright exchange at the plenary session on 24 November. Roosevelt pressed the JCS plan. It was necessary to have a full "preliminary discussion," but "final decisions would depend on the conference with Stalin." The mixed reports on Soviet views and needs made it important to settle the question of grand strategy in Europe. Churchill's answer was based on a powerful paper he had drafted for the COS en route. Allied campaigns had been very successful in 1943, but divided views and poor organization had led to setbacks in the last two months. There had been an opportunity to seize the Aegean, bolster the Yugoslav Partisans, and push north in Italy, all before the Germans could react. It had been lost. Why? Because of a difference of opinion, and mutual lack of faith regarding OVERLORD. The familiar "wear down" interpretation of the Allied position followed, but this time it was extended by the most explicit confession yet that, as British power was now fully deployed, it could not sustain a lengthy OVERLORD. Therefore, although OVERLORD must remain "top of the bill," it must be assisted by continued intense activity in the Mediterranean. To put it bluntly:

> "all preparations for OVERLORD to go ahead full steam within the framework of the foregoing policy [Rome, Rhodes, aid to Tito, lobby Turkey] for the Mediterranean."

Roosevelt was equally blunt:

> "[FDR] read out the figures for the U.S. and British air and land forces at present disposed overseas and in their respective home countries."

The lines were drawn. The final decision - to direct the CCS to reach an agreed view "if

possible" before the meeting with the Soviets[8] - amounted to an agreement to spell out contending cases and allow discovery.

In practice, Roosevelt and Churchill merely put positions, familiar for some time to all concerned, formally on record. But this was something that had to be done. Roosevelt made it clear that the Americans now saw themselves as senior partner, with a comprehensive policy and the power to press it. Churchill made no secret about the fact that he wanted to press "wear down" to the maximum possible intent now because, if the Germans did not "throw in the sponge" by spring 1944, the additional strength required for any long campaign would have to come from the Americans. This debate was fundamental. The Americans wanted OVERLORD as scheduled, to meet American objectives - concentrate power, control policy, seek decisive battle, and establish a favourable long term position. The British wanted a maximum effort to be made in current campaigns in order to meet their objectives - make OVERLORD a safe and short proposition, defeat Germany by methods in which British arms clearly played a major role. The British were desperate to infer the most favourable meaning from any signs of American indecision. Here, the confusion over BUCCANEER had an effect. Marshall met Churchill privately late on 23 November but left somewhat mystified. Marshall was sure Churchill's ideas about the Mediterranean were dangerous, but seems to have wondered openly whether the OVERLORD date might now have to be adjusted to make BUCCANEER possible.[9] The confusion this caused was quickly apparent on both sides.

The CCS met in closed session on 25 November. Apparently, the British proposed to delay OVERLORD till mid-July, to allow the Allies to "press hard in Italy," and to "do everything possible" to assist the Balkan resistance and redeem the Aegean failure.[10] This helped crystallize ideas forming in American minds for some time. An agreement of sorts was reached on 26 November. Stressing the importance of OVERLORD and BUCCANEER, the Americans "tentatively accepted the British proposals as a **basis for negotiation with the Soviets.**" This formally launched the national war policy the Americans hoped would cement their grand strategic and post-war position: establish a bilateral working relationship with the Soviets based on a co-

ordinated grand strategy centred on OVERLORD. This meant dealing over the heads of the British. The Americans were not unwilling to do this, in order to sidestep perceived British obstructions to current and future American policies. But of course it also reflected a belief that the extent of British dependence now allowed Washington to take greater liberties.[11] Perhaps the British should have accepted this agreement at its face value, as a decision to submit contending cases to Stalin. Instead they grasped at straws.

The British overestimated the JCS resolve to press BUCCANEER. They duly convinced themselves the Americans were willing to be flexible on the OVERLORD schedule in order to clear the path. The COS left Cairo talking of "an agreement in principle." No such commitment had been made. The Americans did not trust British motives or proposals and were determined to entrench their own plans.[12] To an extent the signs were mixed. The proposal to make Marshall a "Supremo" receded, while the Americans agreed to restructure Mediterranean commands. But these were hollow victories. The former, as noted, was never a realistic proposition. The latter was useless unless the new command was authorized to do what the British wanted it to do. Worse, the Americans proposed to unify command of their two strategic bombing forces. This would cut Portal out of their control altogether. As some had foreseen,* the very right of the British to have an effective voice in an effective CCS now seemed in question. The status of the CCS as a solely British-American body was reaffirmed, but the writing was on the wall. The advance of the Red Army aggravated the whole problem. Whitehall thinking now began to consider seriously the prospect of Soviet occupation of central Europe.[13] In all SEXTANT was a week of frustration the British were glad to leave with any reason for hope. It was easier to suggest that American investments in the Chinese, and in an integrated war effort, would again tilt consensus towards "wear down" than it was to confront the prospect of the Americans calling in a partner who might veto it once and for all.

** See above Chapter 6*

The four days of talks in Teheran, from 28 November to 1 December, were for many reasons a unique event in the history of the "Grand Alliance." This was the first full summit meeting of the "Big Three." Given the nature of the Soviet system under Stalin, it was also the Allies first opportunity to press for firmer indications of Soviet positions on many issues. But arguably the conference, as a moment of transition, was most crucial to the British. The British arrived at Teheran in a cautiously optimistic mood. American indecision and Soviet suggestions led them to hope that favourable grand strategic decisions at Teheran were at least possible. These hopes were unrealized. For the British, EUREKA was a heavy - but not total - defeat. Henceforth, the Allies worked to a new agenda. As it unfolded, and diplomatic issues became more urgent, the bond of interdependence was modified by a shift in Allied policy and British status. Yet EUREKA, and the talks in Cairo which bracketed it, were points both of departure and acceleration. At the fundamental level - the clash of concepts of national war policies - change was important and drastic, but not universal.

EUREKA was the only wartime "Big Three" conference at which diplomatic and military problems seemed roughly equal in importance. The Grand Alliance had to decide simultaneously how to shape its grand strategic offensive and upon what broad shape of post-war international order it might agree. However, each principal approached the conference from a different situation and with a different agenda. The inclusion of the Soviets in the familiar British-American circle made the "mood" of the talks, their social and personal atmosphere, unusually important. In this respect, EUREKA was undoubtedly an overall success. Pomp, pageantry and personal harmony helped make possible long and testy discussion in an uncongenial and intrigue ridden setting. Yet indisputedly the least comfortable delegation was the British. Churchill found himself confronted by a deliberate attempt by Roosevelt to forge an American-Soviet bond by portraying the British as the obstacle to policies both desired. This was not so apparent on diplomatic issues. Indeed, it was largely due to British pressure that these were explored as much as they were. But the results were inconclusive. Regarding the treatment of Germany, and the proposed post-war international organization, only vague principles could be settled. No clear consensus emerged over

the present and future status of either France or eastern Europe. This did not yet seem cause for despair regarding future Allied co-operation or British interests.[14] Grand strategic questions were another matter. Here, the result was directly shaped by an American-Soviet settlement at British expense.

The CCS went to Teheran expecting the talks to be shaped by "political" issues. The opposite proved to be true, because of the American decision to submit contending cases to Stalin. The tone of the conference was set by Roosevelt's decision to move into the Soviet embassy and his insistence on meeting privately with Stalin. It has been well said that EUREKA was a "Roosevelt conference" - somewhat chaotic, constant closet conversations mingling with ill defined formal sessions and frequent working social events. It was a useful term in another sense as well, as the crux of the conference was the deliberate American attempt to isolate and defeat British grand strategic arguments by establishing an American-Soviet consensus. The prerequisite was Soviet preference for the massive aid of OVERLORD over earlier lesser assistance from escalation in the Mediterranean. On 28 November the Americans took stock. After further scrutiny, the JCS were now guardedly optimistic that Harriman was right - Stalin would oppose anything that delayed OVERLORD. Even if it was not clear cut, the JCS were willing to leave some assets in Italy for a time as long as nothing major was attempted further east. Also, Turkey seemed likely to remain aloof, which would scuttle British plans. Therefore, Roosevelt was advised that it seemed best to proceed with the decision to present the alternatives to Stalin.[15]

The showdown which "settled" the issues at the core of Allied grand strategic debate began that afternoon, with the first plenary session. It unfolded in two stages. For two days, the British pressed their original position against what started as Soviet, but became American-Soviet pressure. Thereafter, the British lowered their sights and tried to salvage as much as they could - in general and specific terms - from defeat. The continuity of views on fundamentals underpinned the British position throughout. The specifics of debate were the relative merits of various plans and the feasibility of deploying the necessary amphibious forces they all required. But this remained an expression of a clash of deeper policies.

The British entered the talks with these understandings and objectives: 1) the Americans would agree to escalated operations in both Italy and the Aegean; 2) OVERLORD would be postponed to 15 July. The questions of BUCCANEER, and Soviet and Turkish attitudes, remained open; but the COS expected some American support of their outline. The plans hinged on retaining the 68 LST in Italy long enough to enable an amphibious attack to be launched in order to capture Rome in January. The subsequent objective would be the Pisa line. Rhodes could then be assaulted in early February. Subsequent action in the theatre would then be desired.[16] This represented, of course, a final maximum commitment to "wear down."

The conference was dominated by the presentations of the three leaders. All presented very ably. To begin the first session, Roosevelt immediately outlined the issues to Stalin. He framed the question in terms of how best to assist the Soviets, then sat back to observe what became a wide ranging Churchill-Stalin debate. Churchill repeated his frank case for "wear down." Current Allied operations were designed to make OVERLORD possible. This was vital to the British because they no longer had the manpower to sustain a long intense Continental campaign. Their proposals would assist everyone by containing and reducing German forces. Would this not be worth a slight delay in OVERLORD? In any case, it was politically and militarily unacceptable to reduce the efforts of the large Imperial forces in the Mediterranean before OVERLORD. Stalin's response was a blunt cross-examination which settled one issue definitively - the Soviets saw the "Second Front" as an overriding priority, and felt nothing else could progress until it was settled. Escalation in the Mediterranean was well and good, but OVERLORD was the only campaign that could trap the Germans in a two front vice powerful enough to crush them. It should not be delayed. Instead of dispersing forces and gambling on Turkish attitudes, power should be concentrated. Rome should certainly be taken. Then, Allied forces should invade southern France, to make OVERLORD secure by taking the Germans in the flank. This was a clever suggestion. Roosevelt intervened to note that it seemed Aegean operations would delay OVERLORD but an attack on southern France would pave the way for it; therefore, the latter should be seriously reviewed. The definitive positions were out in the open. The

Americans and Soviets would tolerate continued efforts in Italy, but insist on focusing all other efforts to launch OVERLORD in May, whatever the situation. To Churchill, this was intolerable:

> "...he wished it to be placed on record that he could not in any circumstances agree to sacrifice the activities of the armies of the Mediterranean, which included 20 British and British controlled divisions, merely in order to keep the exact date of 1 May for OVERLORD."[17]

However, his sole success was an agreement to have the CCS pursue the issue with Voroshilov the next day.

Stalin confused the whole issue with his suggestion that ANVIL should be done before OVERLORD. The CCS now spent much time discussing the plan, which hitherto had been little more than a vague concept. The British were strongly opposed to the idea of launching the attack before OVERLORD, if indeed at all. Brooke then, and Churchill later, felt that Stalin's goal was to divert Allied forces from the Balkans, in order to improve Soviet control. There was another dimension. On 29 November, Voroshilov went out of his way to attack Brooke for being reluctant to commit to OVERLORD. Brooke repeated the familiar "wear down" interpretation. Voroshilov's reply was revealing. Complementary operations were all very well, but they must not derail OVERLORD. Stalin would **not** insist even on ANVIL, but he did insist on OVERLORD, "in the manner and date already agreed upon." The Soviets' naive view of the practical problems of OVERLORD irked Marshall just as much as Brooke;[18] but their first priority was clearly to receive a categorical promise that it would be launched in spring 1944.

Voroshilov was merely the reconnaissance patrol. Stalin was the heavy artillery and it fired later that day. Everyone realized that as long as no Supreme Commander for OVERLORD had been publicly appointed, the operation could not be regarded as etched in stone as and when planned. Stalin voiced the problems left unspoken while Roosevelt dithered. The operation could never be guaranteed until there was an authority with the power to settle final plans and press for the required support, and with a vested interest in doing so because his career would be on the line. Churchill's response amounted to a lengthy repetition of the "wear down" case, with some pleas made more

specific. No political calculations were involved in Balkan plans. Nothing could or would be done in the Aegean without Turkish help. The enemy must be fought where it was safe to do so and on a constant basis. Nevertheless, nothing would be done that would lead to an open ended commitment. This spirited performance revealed the latent Roosevelt-Stalin axis. American patience had expired. Roosevelt insisted that as any major activity east of Italy might lead to a "vacuum" effect, the CCS be directed to draft an outline as follows: OVERLORD to go as scheduled, all else to be planned accordingly. On cue, Stalin argued that in order to assist OVERLORD by synchronizing the Soviet offensive, the date had to be settled. This was a powerful argument. Roosevelt pointedly responded that a date had been set, at QUADRANT, and only subsequent "events" had revived the issue. Stalin went for the kill:

> "[Stalin] wished to pose a very direct question to Mr. Churchill regarding OVERLORD. Did he and the COS really believe in OVERLORD?
> -[Churchill] Provided the conditions previously stated for OVERLORD were to obtain when the time came, he firmly believed it would be our stern duty to hurl across the Channel against the Germans every sinew of our strength."[19]

In one sense Churchill's retort only expressed the vision of the "Second Front" that had so long been a central feature of "wear down." But the British clearly understood the position they were now in: both their major Allies interpreted their plans as an attempt to avoid OVERLORD altogether and they were no longer willing to debate the issue. Under this sort of pressure, British thinking developed very rapidly overnight and the next morning. The objective was to preserve as much emphasis on current campaigns as possible while making clear British desire to get on with the war in Europe. This was damage control. A new British consensus emerged. As Stalin had reaffirmed Soviet intentions to intervene against Japan after victory in Europe, all relevant plans, including BUCCANEER, should be reassessed. ANVIL could be accepted in principle. Aegean activity should be left dependent on Turkish assistance; no assets slated for OVERLORD should be allotted there regardless of what happened. Alexander should keep the LST until mid-January, to ensure the early capture of Rome. Operations should continue until the Pisa line was reached, at which point the situation should be reviewed. OVERLORD would proceed, albeit delayed until 1 June to allow

the Italian offensive to continue.[20] The COS then took the package to the Americans, while Churchill arranged his own private talk with Stalin. This seemed designed to both repair the damage done regarding OVERLORD and to reassert equal status.

The confrontation in the CCS ended definitively a debate that had occupied the Allies since the ROUNDUP proposal of April 1942. For a time the CCS bogged down in confusion over landing craft claims and transfer dates, and which plans would or would not delay OVERLORD. Portal even tried to preserve some flexibility regarding the Aegean. But Brooke and Marshall focused the issue. ANVIL should go, but no earlier than simultaneously with OVERLORD. BUCCANEER would have to be reviewed. The crux of the matter was the invasion date for OVERLORD. This still involved the questions of perceived motives and operational prerequisites, as the Leahy-Brooke exchange* showed. The British continued to interpret plans from the perspective of perceived relative weakness. The Americans continued to suspect this concealed a hidden agenda. Finally, consensus was restored on this basis: the OVERLORD date could be expressed as "sometime during May"; ANVIL was to become a priority and to go concurrently, but its details could be settled later; operations in Italy were to continue and the LST transfer could be delayed. Soon after, Churchill was closeted with Stalin. The Soviet leader received a detailed and impassioned briefing on the whole "wear down" concept, and on why the British supported OVERLORD but saw it differently. The one thing the Prime Minister could not bring himself to do was disclose the date agreed for OVERLORD. Roosevelt wanted to do that himself. Churchill hoped this would be seen as a restoration of solid British-American consensus;[21] Stalin, no doubt, saw its other dimension as well.

The CCS presented an agreed program later that afternoon, 30 November, to the "Big Three." It was quickly approved, but many loose ends remained. BUCCANEER, singled out by Churchill as the cause of anxiety regarding landing craft availability, remained to be settled. No overall "audit" of resources had been agreed. The reorganization of command machinery, with new appointments, was still to be done. These and other problems would have to be resolved at another British-American session

** See Chapter heading*

in Cairo. Many of these problems were now focused, however, because the pivotal decisions had been reached. All three leaders agreed that the "supreme decision" - OVERLORD to proceed regardless "sometime in May," accompanied by some sort of ANVIL - was final. This was clearly seen, for the first time, as a contractual obligation. It had been made possible by the British surrender to Soviet-American pressure. The record is clear. No further resources were to be made available for any attack on Rhodes; for anything now to happen in the Aegean, the Turks must come in. OVERLORD was to proceed by 1 June, not by mid-July.[22] Most of all, it was to begin whether "wear down" had clearly succeeded or not. Now, at last, the British committed themselves irreversibly to a shift in their basic grand strategic approach at a specific moment, that is when OVERLORD was launched. This was a definite but not a categorical change, a point that begs explanation.

The heart of the matter was the British attitude towards OVERLORD. Whitehall had always planned to launch a "Second Front" to deliver the final blow. Churchill himself assured Stalin that the COSSAC prerequisites were guidelines, not rigid limits. The COS had been ready for some time to settle for a 1 June date, if need be.* Yet something very important had very definitely changed. OVERLORD was now clearly the keystone of Allied co-operation over grand strategy and future policy. The Americans had not given away anything they were not already comfortable with. Operations east of Italy, not in Italy, were their problem. That prospect had now been replaced by ANVIL. Also, the categorical pledge to Stalin was to be nailed down by the public declaration, back in Cairo, of the new Supreme Commander for OVERLORD. American policy had at last become Allied policy. To be sure, the "wear down" campaigns would continue, but there would be no more opportunistic amphibious forays outside current campaigns. Churchill realized what had happened. Now that OVERLORD was set, he concentrated on it. The invasion would have to be "done with smashing force." The CCS and the Soviet High Command would now have to concert all their plans, to arrange one massive co-ordinated offensive. Even deception plans would have to be co-ordinated, in order to cover the truth "with a bodyguard of lies."[23]

* *See above p.529*

What precisely had happened? Henceforth, OVERLORD moved from its status as the **object** of British grand strategy to become its **fixed pivot**.

The transition was definite, subtle, yet not categorical. The new outline did **not** realize the objectives the British brought to Teheran. "Wear down" was now set for termination. However, as far as the British were concerned, their approach to the new outline **would continue to be guided by the assumptions that had underwritten "wear down."** When it became clear the full British program had been rejected, the response was to settle for continued pressure in Italy. The Americans could not really object. Stalin's attitude could not completely reverse the consequences of previous decisions and an integrated war effort. The COS, as before, settled for concentrating on the campaign that had emerged as the main focus of "wear down."[24] The triumph of the American agenda forced the British to accept an Allied grand strategy no longer based on perceived relative weakness. Yet it also reinforced their determination to influence its execution by approaching it with that same consistent assumption. The OVERLORD decision preceded by one day the Cabinet decision to base manpower policy on an all out push for victory in Europe in 1944. The dates were coincidental but the decisions were not. The British now accepted OVERLORD, not as a complement to, but as a transition from, "wear down." British policy now developed as two equally intense parallel efforts: one to strengthen OVERLORD, to make it safe and short; the other to press "wear down" campaigns, to do exactly the same thing and to preserve British influence in Allied policy. The British accepted a new agenda because they felt they had no choice. For the same reason, they approached it with an old attitude.

The settlement of the loose ends in Cairo, and after, marked the true completion of the EUREKA/SEXTANT revision of grand strategy. The ideas pressed by the British, and the decisions reached, underlined what had happened: definitive but not categorical change. At least, this was the case where it most counted - in the perceptions of those who made the decisions. With the question of basic grand strategic approach settled, the British were able to resolve some of the specific problems in a not unsatisfactory fashion.

However, the governing factor in all their efforts was the new contractual commitment to a May-June OVERLORD.

The Americans made this clear at the start of the resumed SEXTANT talks, by declaring that as the key issues were settled they intended to depart in 48 hours. The British considered this a crude pressure tactic, yet did not disguise their concern. Churchill and the COS noted that several issues needed to be resolved: BUCCANEER, ANVIL, command appointments, the "audit." These were valid points, but there was an even greater concern. The British saw the unfortunate decisions of the previous talks as the result of Chinese and Soviet intrusions into unfinished Allied deliberations. They were desperate not to leave Cairo without restoring a firm British-American consensus. Fortunately there was a valid case to be made. As the Allied war effort remained integrated, the loose ends had to be settled in Allied conference. Churchill made the case successfully on 4 December. Two "new facts" had to be taken into account: Stalin's pledge to intervene eventually against Japan, and "the decision to do OVERLORD during May." These were new points, which had set ideas in motion all around.[25] From them, a new specific outline emerged after five days of - even for the CCS - unusually wearying talks.

The first obstacle to overcome was Roosevelt's commitment to BUCCANEER. Ironically, the evolution of the new American vision for the grand strategic offensive against Japan helped the COS reverse the decision. The proposal, received formally on 4 December, was clearly influenced by the impact of success in the Pacific and by Stalin's pronouncement. The emphasis was now to be placed on a massive accelerated two pronged drive through the Pacific, to establish the position for the final direct assaults. The relief of China remained important, but it was no longer the primary objective. The main British effort should now be to deploy a large Pacific Fleet. The COS accepted the plan in principle, noting that it would require Cabinet approval. It would also require substantial American logistical support; this would be available, at the cost of increased dependence. However, the COS were now able to insist on reviewing the whole scope of SEAC plans for 1944 in light of the new outline.[26]

That review proceeded amidst the chronic confusion regarding the allocation of landing craft through spring 1944. The British used this confusion to press a simple thesis: now that OVERLORD and ANVIL were "on," they needed to be made as strong as possible; therefore, in order to strengthen the amphibious pool for these primary campaigns, problematic operations like BUCCANEER should be dropped. Marshall was sympathetic, but Roosevelt and King remained reluctant to reverse the decision. The British turned to SEAC to provide the clinching argument. Mountbatten's group inherited their predecessor's conviction that, for political and morale factors, the first serious offensive against the Japanese could not be allowed to fail. Their plan for BUCCANEER called for over 30,000 combat troops, in order to assault a garrison of 5,000. This raised the question of whether the extra LST required could return in time for OVERLORD. This, plus the continued wavering of the Chinese, forced Roosevelt to reconsider. BUCCANEER was scrapped. Mountbatten was directed to advise what could be done with forces already available. But even this success had unwelcome side effects for the British. Churchill smarted from the widespread impression that while American troops were engaged in heavy fighting in the Pacific, British commanders would not move without luxurious odds. Also, the British had expressly reinforced the emphasis on ANVIL and its connection to OVERLORD.[27] That emphasis raised the "OVERLORD-Mediterranean" relationship in a new context.

Now that OVERLORD seemed secure, the Americans had no objection to settling related issues. The ducks fell quickly. Eisenhower, not Marshall, was named Supreme Commander Allied Expeditionary Force, the OVERLORD command. This turned out to be one of the wisest appointments Roosevelt ever made, especially because Eisenhower personified the policy of Allied integration that the British now so prized. At the time, however, Roosevelt made the choice because he needed Marshall in Washington and OVERLORD seemed secure. A reorganized Mediterranean Command was also approved. Wilson replaced Eisenhower, and took over operational responsibility for the Balkans, the Aegean and Turkey; this relegated Middle East Command to a backwater. Yet this was a hollow victory for the British. The Americans approved the move because they were certain that several factors - the focus on OVERLORD, ANVIL and Italy, the

Turkish attitude - would limit operations east of Italy to the small scale efforts already approved. Finally, the Americans brushed off British protests and confirmed their plan to combine 8th and 15th Air Forces into one command. Portal felt obliged to note "he could not undertake to subordinate the operations of the RAF to those of 8th Air Force." Obviously, the COS felt that these American moves were designed to take charge of the primary offensive campaigns, leaving them in charge only of a theatre scheduled to become a supporting effort.[28]

These decisions made it possible to agree on other plans and priorities. The policy of complementing the drive in Italy, by placing an intensified effort to aid resistance forces in the Balkans under the direct control of AFHQ, was confirmed by the CCS. This belated success for the COS coincided with the emergence of a consensus on the need to support the Partisans. Unfortunately, it followed a steadily growing German counteroffensive against Tito's forces and a worsening situation in Greece. It was now generally agreed that policy in the area should be governed by the fact that no large forces could be deployed there.[29] Regardless of whether there had ever really been any chance to "bounce" the Balkans, the COS themselves decided that the Allies were in no position to make a major move in the area.

Churchill's indecision, plus the Turks all too clear resolve, made the Aegean situation even more confusing. On the one hand, Churchill argued that the capture of Rhodes no longer seemed so important and anyway nothing could be done without the Turks. On the other hand, efforts to induce the Turks to intervene were revived and the issue was frequently raised with the Americans. The British spoke in terms of aiding OVERLORD and the Soviets, but this was garbled by Churchillian comments like:

> "If we could get a grip on the Balkans, there would be a tremendous abridgement of our difficulties..."

This lobby was pressed in spite of the clear limits to Allied deployments and obvious Turkish reserve. This only underlined Churchill's desire to orchestrate visible British successes and his resentment at recent events. All it succeeded in doing was stoking American suspicions for nought, as the main campaign absorbed all attention.[30]

There is a conclusion that must be drawn. At the very moment the British were supposedly trying to ward off Soviet penetration and protect their own interests by planning large campaigns east of Italy, they had in fact accepted the logic of their own underlying assumptions and committed their strength elsewhere. The clinching argument was the new status of OVERLORD, as seen in British eyes. Churchill was categorical:

> "...OVERLORD was a task transcending all others. A million Americans were to be thrown in, and 500-600,000 British. Terrific battles were to be expected on a scale far greater than anything we had experienced before."[31]

OVERLORD was on, this was a fundamental departure, and it must succeed. The British now found themselves pressing for ANVIL to be a strong two division assault; it should be launched either simultaneously or shortly after OVERLORD, in order to be of safe and satisfactory assistance. The CCS soon reached a consensus. OVERLORD would be reinforced while ANVIL would become a priority operation to be made as strong as resources allowed. Nevertheless, the British continued to define this new outline through the "wear down" perspective. This was not concealed. Churchill pressed simultaneously for OVERLORD-ANVIL and Italy-Rhodes, for a familiar reason:

> "He himself was not apprehensive about the landing [OVERLORD]; but the critical period would be about the 30th day. It was therefore essential that the Germans should be held at every point, and that the whole ring should close in together."

The British had, in fact, formed a new "synthesis" in their own agenda. OVERLORD and ANVIL were on, nothing was conditional. But the British hoped to use this to gather forces which could, in the meantime, be used to press forward the "wear down" campaigns more intensely.[32]

The campaign in Italy remained the key point. In order to understand the British perspective properly, the precise nature of the final SEXTANT/EUREKA consensus must be established. The COS now spelled out the definitive accords reached by the "Big Three" in Teheran and amplified by their own decisions in Cairo:

> "...a) OVERLORD and ANVIL are the supreme operations for 1944. They must be carried out during 1944. Nothing must be undertaken in any other part of the world which hazards the success of these two operations.
> b) OVERLORD as at present planned is on a narrow margin. Everything practicable should be done to increase its strength.

> c) Examination of ANVIL on a two division assault basis must be pressed forward as soon as possible; if it reveals increased requirements, consideration will have to be given to the provision of additional resources.
> d) Operations in the Aegean, in particular the capture of Rhodes, are desirable, provided that they can be fitted in **without detriment to OVERLORD and ANVIL."**[33]

As a comparison with the TRIDENT and QUADRANT accords will quickly reveal, this was the binding commitment which terminated the opportunistic approach in Allied grand strategy. It was not merely a matter of OVERLORD in June instead of July and no attack on Rhodes. It was a more fundamental firm agreement: the Allies would let current campaigns run their course and then shift to the projection of concentrated force in a direct challenge to the German Army. The connection between the two visions remained the campaign in Italy. The agreement was now to retain the 68 LST to 15 January, to hasten the capture of Rome. They would then be sent to the U.K. The advance would continue to the Pisa line. The situation would then be reassessed in light of the impact of OVERLORD/ANVIL. The Americans saw this as a means to check further efforts. The COS saw it as licence to press "wear down" now and an option to argue for continued British led advances in the future. But they also realized that this depended on the fate of OVERLORD, and that all other overseas efforts had to be limited in order to keep this thrust alive. The British left Cairo not unhappy with the agreements made there.[34] However, by now this merely meant that they felt some vestige of the British approach had been salvaged, by circumstances, from a definitive shift in Allied policy.

The best way to assess the impact of the SEXTANT/EUREKA decisions on British grand strategy is to proceed along two lines. First, the efforts of the "rolling seminar" to sort out a new consensus of its own shed much light on how the British position was now seen. A comparison can then be made to the assessment of the conferences in the literature. This will enable conclusions to be drawn as to why the conferences constituted, for the British, a definitive yet not categorical defeat.

From early December into January, one of the most complicated dialogues the Allies had yet experienced erupted over the problem of sharing out landing craft. The specific problem was how to launch a strong amphibious assault in Italy as soon as possible, plus a smaller amphibious operation in Burma in the spring, and still meet the OVERLORD/ANVIL targets. The dialogue was aggravated by the fact that Churchill remained in the Mediterranean weakened by pneumonia and frustrated by his condition. A veritable blizzard of telegrams ensued between a grumpy Prime Minister, SEAC, London and Washington. However, events soon helped bring the problems into focus.

In mid-December the COS formally accepted in principle the shift of the main British effort against Japan to a Pacific Fleet. That meant accepting a role as junior partners in an American power drive, but it also assisted their policy of preventing any assault on Burma that might set off continuous operations before Germany was defeated.[35] Initial optimism that the Turks would be responsive, and the assault on Rhodes could be revived, quickly evaporated.[36] In Italy, Alexanders's forces again bogged down in miserable weather and heavy fighting, as they grappled with now formidable German defences in the mountains south of Rome. SEAC's reply to the query from Cairo moved matters along. Mountbatten proposed in essence to revise the old outline of limited ground, LRPG and coastal thrusts. His only extra requirements were five LST scheduled for transfer but needed for a divisional scale amphibious assault on the coast, operation PIGSTICK. Mountbatten insisted this would not lead to an extended commitment.[37] On the other hand, Alexander's staff was at last finalizing a plan to break the deadlock in Italy. The assault by the main forces should be assisted by a two division amphibious assault on the west coast just below Rome, to outflank the enemy line and trap German forces. This would mean retaining many LST even longer. By 21 December the COS minds were clear: drop the attack on Rhodes and concentrate everything, including SEAC's LST if necessary, on the 15th Army Group plan.[38]

Brooke, his convictions reinforced by a trip to Italy after SEXTANT, was the prime mover. But the solution was a corporate effort. The COS suggested PIGSTICK be abandoned. Churchill tried to save it by arguing that if 15th Army Group retained 56 LST until 15 February all plans could proceed. The COS adopted this proposal, but

also pressed their own, on these grounds: 1) Churchill had personally demanded early action to break the Italian deadlock; 2) the Prime Minister was apparently unaware that the new policy regarding grand strategy against Japan reduced the importance of SEAC operations; 3) as it was, OVERLORD, ANVIL, and the new plan, SHINGLE, would "stretch resources to the limit." Dropping PIGSTICK would enable the British to reinforce their own "enormously more important" effort in Italy, and reduce SEAC plans to the safe minimum the COS were willing to accept. This could be sold to Washington as a move to bolster ANVIL; it would also add to the "general pool" in the Mediterranean. It had also become clear that Eisenhower would probably insist on moves to strengthen OVERLORD which would press it back into June. These arguments convinced Churchill, who agreed PIGSTICK could become "PIGSTUCK." He also confirmed a unilateral COS decision to transfer SEAC's LST and took up the cudgel for SHINGLE. The JCS were annoyed, but eventually agreed SHINGLE and ANVIL were more urgent than "PIGSTUCK." Alexander was allotted 88 LST from various sources in order to launch SHINGLE in late January.[39] Once again, the British had dropped more peripheral campaigns in order to bolster the main "wear down" ground campaign.

The vital point of this argument, however, is that it took place in the shadow of OVERLORD. Other operations were now contingent on it, rather than the reverse. Now, even in British thinking the ambiguities dogged "wear down," while OVERLORD became the clear cut dominant project. This was not a 180° turn. OVERLORD simply emerged from an already established trend of mental and physical preparations to assume pride of place. The "wear down" prism continued to focus British thinking, but it now centred around OVERLORD. The mixture was highlighted by the agreement on SHINGLE. The Americans, to Churchill's delight, did indeed "yield to necessity" and approved further escalation in Italy - but on condition that "OVERLORD was paramount."[40] It was now generally obvious that OVERLORD was to be the major Allied stroke of the war. Critical comments arose in the U.S. Senate to the effect that the Americans were carrying the greatest burden and should therefore control all Allied policy. This raised deep concern in British circles that their role would be unfairly belittled. The JCS agreed, and supported a public declaration that all Allies were

exerting their maximum possible effort.[41] Interdependence remained operative; but the steady shift of the agenda since TRIDENT was now in place.

This impression was reinforced by the new atmosphere of preparations for OVERLORD. Now that the long accepted concept was a plan with a fixed time frame, Whitehall reflected soberly on what it understood to be the grand strategic decision of the war. For the first time, Churchill turned his powerful scrutiny onto the planning on a consistent detailed basis. The "rolling seminar" focused on all aspects of the campaign. The command appointments were revealing. Montgomery and Ramsay joined Leigh-Mallory as force commanders; Tedder became Eisenhower's Deputy. This was very much considered the "first team." Montgomery had long regarded the command of 21st Army Group as the plum post of the war and he accepted it with delight. He assumed command of a force already largely established. AEAF had come into being just before SEXTANT. SOE preparations to assist the campaign were well advanced. Perhaps even more important, the new spirit generated by the TRIDENT decision was reinforced by visible shifts in the Allied position. On the positive side, after QUADRANT the BOLERO stream had at last become a flood. There were now 11 full strength American divisions in the U.K., 10 of which had arrived after July.[42] On the negative side, the German development of advanced secret weapons was now considered a direct threat to both the U.K. and OVERLORD. AEAF was unleashed to disrupt German preparations. Opinions were mixed as to the degree of danger, but it was now agreed that the best way to remove a genuine threat was an early OVERLORD.[43]

The German reaction also indicated that Berlin was well aware that the "Second Front," long expected, was now imminent. Hitler felt defeating an Allied invasion of France could be potentially decisive. Time could be gained to recoup and concentrate German power. If the invasion succeeded, the result would be a sustained and intense three front war on land, which would inexorably crush Germany. Directive #51, making the defence of northwest Europe top priority, was issued on 3 November. Work on the "Atlantic Wall" had continued, but the forces in the west had been used as a strategic reserve. Now, a determined effort would be made to strengthen the area.[44] The Allies were only able to trace the broad outline of this reassessment, largely due to their own

preconceptions. The Americans emphasized the damage that had already been done to German power, and argued that German resources were at full stretch. Whitehall agreed that significant damage had been done. It considered that German productive capacity had been reduced by at least 10%. German manpower resources were felt to be in irreversible decline. However, there was real confusion in British circles about German capabilities and intentions. A lively debate raged as to the strength of the German Air Force, and its ability to mount a sustained defence. The JIC underestimated the extent of Hitler's policy shift and continued to stress the Eastern Front. It had long been agreed that Germany could not regain the initiative; but no consensus could be reached on whether an early "crack" was now likely. All in all, the situation seemed uncertain enough that the Official Historians of intelligence later argued that at this point Whitehall felt its grand strategy was "in the balance."[45]

This lingering uncertainty conditioned the British position on what OVERLORD was and how it should be prepared. The shift in emphasis in deception policy was important. Previous plans were discarded as inadequate. OVERLORD was to be the climax of the war, the campaign for which the elaborate deception infrastructure had been developed. Bevan was directed to revise his plans and to assume that the fact of OVERLORD could not be concealed, but its timing, target and strength must be. By the end of December, a draft of operation BODYGUARD was ready for the CCS. BODYGUARD received final approval on 20 January 1944. It was a comprehensive scheme, based heavily on the successfully inflated Order of Battle and aimed to induce faulty German dispositions on a grand strategic scale. A policy for a definitive campaign was taking shape.[46] This was underlined by an even more important issue - the ongoing debate about the directive to Eisenhower.

The argument was straightforward. The Americans wished to give Eisenhower an expansive task and broad latitude. Eisenhower should be empowered to advise on how Wilson's command should assist his task of "destroying the German Armed Forces." The British wanted to restrict Eisenhower's powers, increase their own influence by having Montgomery named Ground Forces Commander, and define the talks on lines clearly influenced by the "wear down" assumptions. The final outcome was a

compromise. Eisenhower received undefined influence over Mediterranean plans, and there was to be no Ground Commander. But his task was spelled out as follows:

> "You will enter the continent of Europe and, in conjunction with the other United Nations, undertake operations aimed at the heart of Germany and the destruction of her Armed Forces. The date for entering the continent is the month of May 1944. After adequate Channel ports have been secured, exploitation will be directed towards securing an area that will facilitate both ground and air operations against the enemy."[47]

This final success for "wear down" was due to the fact that the Allied war effort remained interdependent. This was true in a broader sense as well, as both London and Washington agreed that the decisive factor in the fate of OVERLORD would be the Red Army's ability to continue to engage the bulk of the German Army. The COS had always regarded the Eastern Front as the main "grinding agent." The COS balked at letting Eisenhower co-ordinate with the Soviets, but Brooke emphasized how dependent Allied plans were on current and future Soviet efforts.[48] The synthesis was now mature. The Allies would launch a campaign of "decisive concentration," but treat it as part of a comprehensive, multi-theatre, multi-element campaign to "wear down" Germany. The critical departure was that now victory would be sought, if necessary, by mounting a direct all out challenge to the German Army.

The most acute tension in the fusion of "wear down" and OVERLORD came over the proposed role of the campaign that had formed the most constant core of the former and was indispensable to the latter - the strategic bombing offensive. Harris' plan to win the war by destroying Berlin was simultaneously launched in the air but left isolated by shifts in American strategy and Allied grand strategy. POINTBLANK was confirmed as both prelude to, and integral part, of OVERLORD at EUREKA/SEXTANT. This revived the issue of exactly how its forces would contribute. The Americans were already introducing the long range fighters which in 1944 would shatter the German fighter force and turn the tide in the air. They wanted the heavy bombers to come under Eisenhower's control, and concentrate on targets directly related to defences in France, as soon as possible. The Air Staff agreed with Harris that Bomber Command must remain under British control. An epic battle was fought over this issue. It was not

finally resolved until March, after Eisenhower threatened to resign.[49] Strategy was another matter.

Portal informed Harris in late December that Bomber Command's strategy would have to be adjusted, "as we are now committed for good or ill to OVERLORD." An equally epic battle erupted, expressed in forms of words which reflected a serious clash of concepts. Harris doubted Bomber Command could effectively attack precise targets in France. Also, he was convinced that the "general attack on German power" by "area" bombing was succeeding and would still be an incomparably better strategy. In other words, Harris wanted OVERLORD to fit into the existing outline! But this was January 1944. The Air Staff rejected all his arguments. Portal politely but firmly told Harris to adjust, as "the [Allies] were irrevocably committed to OVERLORD" and it must not fail. Various elements were in play here: scepticism about "area" bombing, control and status, Harris' desire to preserve his policy and pride of place.[50] But the deepest argument was over the extent to which OVERLORD would now absorb "wear down." Harris, the most ardent and interested "wear down" advocate, held out the longest. The evolution of opinion left him behind.

An Official Historian of British grand strategy summed up the nature and impact of the emergence of OVERLORD as follows:

> "OVERLORD was not only a vast and intricate operation, it provided both a complication and a climax for the British war economy, affecting in different degrees almost every aspect of the national life."[51]

This assessment cannot be improved. OVERLORD was the culmination of the long road the British embarked upon with the fall of France. However, it had not come about in the manner they desired. Massive preparations had long been made to launch the final blow; but it was not supposed to follow the incomplete success of the only grand strategy deemed suitable for the overall British situation. The response was not ambivalent, but rather dual. OVERLORD was on for May-June. Any lingering doubts must have been removed in January when Churchill reshaped the War Cabinet's Anti U-Boat Warfare Committee into the OVERLORD committee. The establishment of a committee, that great event in officialdom, was Whitehall's contractual commitment. A comprehensive

effort would now be made to gird national power for a set "final blow."[52] However, that blow would still be preceded by the last efforts of an approach designed to reduce its dimensions, conducted under the assumption of relative weakness, and pursued with a determination to preserve the U.K.'s status as a leader of the coalition. Whitehall accepted the definitive shift, but treated it as a fusion.

Assessments of EUREKA/SEXTANT invariably revolved around who "won" or "lost," and why. As the discussions were themselves part of the lengthy evolution of Allied war policy, revolving around the "Second Front," the literature developed accordingly. American and British Official Historians agreed on several points: this was a decisive episode, Stalin's position was crucial, a new firm outline emerged, both Allies had reasons to be satisfied. Ehrman underlined the definitive nature of the choice regarding OVERLORD, but saw it as capping a decision laid down at QUADRANT. Matloff saw the emergence of a bargain: a firm "decisive concentration" in Europe, and a free hand in the Pacific, in return for downgrading SEAC. The most recent substantial treatment of the conferences called them a "turning point" in both efforts to define grand strategy and attempts to lay a basis for post-war order. Sainsbury entitled a chapter "Stalin decides Allied Strategy." He also argued that while the British retained a strong voice in policy and command machinery, the outline plan itself had a clearly American emphasis. Another American Official Historian, R.M. Leighton, pressed a revisionist argument. Leighton argued that the supposed decisiveness of the conference rested on the American belief that they had prevented a British effort to scrap OVERLORD altogether. He felt that intention "even now cannot be proved to have even existed outside the minds of the Americans." EUREKA was not a defeat for the British. It was merely a shift in emphasis, recognized by the conferences but "settled" by the irresistible momentum of the BOLERO buildup and the other concrete preparations for OVERLORD.[53]

Leighton usefully advanced the argument by suggesting that the conference exchanges had to be assessed as part of a broader intellectual and policy context. He was absolutely correct to argue that the Americans badly misunderstood the British attitude

to OVERLORD. The strong "wear down" consensus included an intention to launch a "Second Front," but it was a different vision than that which materialized as OVERLORD. This was not easy to understand, especially after "wear down" became focused on a specific area, and questions of status and post-war interests complicated the issue. Some voices still charge Churchill with hoping in 1943 to project large Allied armies into the Balkans, although careful scholarship noted that such a plan was expressly rejected.[54] However, a thorough enquiry must move beyond LST, amphibious assaults and personal and national pride. The central fact must be seen: the conferences capped a clash of national war policies and their matching grand strategies. Here, a grasp of the nature and influence of the "wear down" consensus can help clarify the problem.

Michael Howard argued that the British did not see the conferences as a defeat at the time. This is untenable. The contemporary records underlined the frustration and concern in the "rolling seminar" at the demise of "wear down" and the prospect of being "cut out" by their larger Allies. But Howard understood why the British were so eager to press the Italian campaign. Nobody yet felt that the first priority should be to forestall the Red Army. Nor was it suggested that Germany be approached through Italy. The idea was to press campaigns that would dilute OVERLORD and help maintain the British claim to a place on the "Big Three."[55] This was dangerously ambiguous in one sense, especially as it was already clear Churchill would never allow a British commanded Army Group to sit on the defensive in Europe. This led to costly folly in Italy in 1944.[56] But in another sense, this was the essential connection.

EUREKA **did** matter. Allied grand strategy was a synthesis, but now its flavour was American. More important, American national war policy emerged triumphant and the British **accepted** OVERLORD as irreversible. That meant almost certain American dominance of the final offensive phase. It also established the U.S policy of laying a basis for either a favourable relationship with Stalin or a position of their choosing from which to confront him. American thinking was every bit as multi-faceted as British.[57] British reactions underlined their apprehension about a definitive ground campaign. This is best understood on the most fundamental level. "Wear down" was finally rejected as

the continuing approach of Allied grand strategy. But the British refused to abandon it because it still matched their national war policy. They accepted OVERLORD from their own perspective. To them, "wear down" was driven underground, not terminated but rather eclipsed, in the literal sense. It remained Whitehall's hope that the Allies could win victory as roughly equal partners, and then maintain a common diplomatic front. The first point was now a futile dream. One reason was clear: the late and incomplete success of Allied campaigns, which made OVERLORD necessary. Brooke placed the other reason on record to conclude SEXTANT on 7 December, in what should serve as an encapsulation of the British dilemma:

> "...The COS would like to express their appreciation of the unstinting help given to the British and other Allies from U.S. production. This aspect of U.S. assistance was not mentioned in the considerations of strategy, but nevertheless had the widest repercussions on all our plans, and was playing a great part in the successful development of the war. The COS would like to express their deep admiration of the stupendous efforts which the U.S. had made in the field of production."[58]

The overriding imperative, to erect a coalition powerful enough to defeat the Axis, had come to pass. Sheer salvation was assured. But the fundamental assumption of relative weakness had also been vindicated by events, and the consequences of that weakness could no longer be avoided. The British could pursue "wear down" to a degree, but they could no longer make it Allied policy.

Endnotes to Chapter 11

1. Churchill, Closing the Ring, 279; PRO, PREM3/3/9, Churchill to COS, 21/11/43; Ehrman, vol.V, 153.

2. PRO, PREM3/342/6, Ismay to Churchill, 21/11/43; CAB99/25, SEXTANT Papers, COS minutes, 18/11, 22/11/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/X, 18/11, 20/11/43 diary entries; CCA, Somerville Papers, 8/3, Somerville to Mountbatten, 16/1//43.

3. UW, JCS Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 13, JCS 533/6, 16/11/43; Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 15/11, 19/11/43; Matloff, 338-346.

4. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 22/11/43.

5. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 15/11, 17/11, 18/11, 19/11, 22/11/43; Matloff, 338-346; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 274; Eisenhower, D., Eisenhower at War, 21.

6. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 23/11, 25/11/43; PRO, CAB99/25, SEXTANT Papers, CCS minutes, 22/11, 23/11, 24/11, 25/11, COS minutes, 23/11, 26/11, Plenary Session, 23/11/43.

7. UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 19/11, 22/11, 24/11/43; Papers, Strategic Issues, Reel 13, JCS 533/7, 18/11, JCS 606/1, 23/11/43; the connection between the latter, the decision of 25-26/11, and the approach at EUREKA, seems more convincing than Eisenhower, D., Eisenhower at War, 23; Sainsbury, 192, was convincing.

8. PRO, CAB99/25, SEXTANT Papers, Plenary Session, 24/11/43; Churchill, Closing the Ring, 281-285. These figures showed the British slightly ahead in terms of forces currently in contact, but the Americans with overall forces two and a half times the size of the Imperial and British controlled total - 11,000,000 to somewhat over 4,000,000.

9. PRO, CAB99/25, SEXTANT Papers, Plenary Session, 24/11, CCS minutes, 24/11/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/X, 21/11, 24/11/43 diary entries; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 24/11/43.

10. LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/X, 25/11/43 diary entry; UW, JCS Papers, Europe, Reel 1, CCS 409, 25/11, JCS 611, 26/11/43; Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 25/11, 26/11/43; PRO, CAB9925, SEXTANT Papers, CCS minutes, 25/11, 26/11/43.

11. PRO, CAB99/25, SEXTANT Papers, CCS minutes, 26/11/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 15/11, 19/11, 26/11/43, noted the JCS made sure to strike the dangerous "do everything possible" phrase; Matloff, 348-355; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 274, 276; Stoler, 143.

12. PRO, CAB99/25, EUREKA Papers, COS(5)14, 28/11, COS minutes, 26/1//43; Leighton, "OVERLORD versus the Mediterranean at the Cairo-Teheran Conferences," in Greenfield, Command Decisions, 271-274, most clearly expressed the thesis that Roosevelt's rash pledge of BUCCANEER, plus the mystery of Stalin's attitude, made the JCS consider shifting the OVERLORD date. The thesis has some merit, but it was made clear at the time that the Americans were hoping Stalin would block any Aegean-Balkan schemes that would delay OVERLORD. As for the JCS own attitude to BUCCANEER, see below page 706.

13. PRO, CAB99/25, CCS minutes, 22/11, 24/11, 26/11, COS minutes, 25/11, 26/11/43; Horne, 205; Churchill, Closing the Ring, 286-290, reprinted the powerful Whitehall rejection of a "Supremo." Marshall would have accepted Dill, but only because he trusted him to pursue a grand strategy unacceptable to London. Sainsbury, 160, perhaps overlooked the element of calculation in Marshall's acceptance of a Mediterranean reorganization. This was a stark power struggle. Brooke hoped the onset of a European offensive might at last lure the CCS to London. Consider Marshall's position on a related issue: "Any move to remove the centre of gravity from Washington to London concerns him extremely." UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 15/11/43.

14. PRO, CAB99/25, EUREKA Papers, Plenary Session, 29/11/43; Kimball, vol.2, 610-612; Sainsbury, 217-281. One revealing exception was the episode of the fate suggested for German officers during Churchill's birthday party. Roosevelt's behaviour was clearly part of his attempt to woo Stalin at Churchill's expense.

15. PRO, CAB99/25, SEXTANT Papers, CCS minutes, 24/11/43; UW, JCS Papers, Europe, Reel 13, Memorandum for Information #157, 22/1//43; Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 28/11/43; Matloff, 399; Sainsbury, 221-223.

16. PRO, CAB99/25, EUREKA Papers, COS minutes, 28/11/43.

17. PRO, CAB99/25, EUREKA Papers, Plenary Session, 28/11/43.

18. PRO, CAB99/25, EUREKA Papers, CCS minutes, 29/11/43; CAB65/40, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 22/12/43; Sainsbury, 233, Kimball, vol.2, 611.

19. PRO, CAB99/25, EUREKA Papers, Plenary Session, 29/11/43.

20. PRO, CAB99/25, EUREKA Papers, COS minutes 30/11/43.

21. PRO, CAB99/25, EUREKA Papers, CCS minutes, 30/11/43; Churchill, Closing the Ring, 321-326; Sainsbury, 256; Eisenhower, D., Eisenhower at War, 34, noted that the new proposals had been discussed privately before the CCS met.

22. PRO, CAB99/25, EUREKA Papers, Plenary Session, 30/1//43; SEXTANT Papers, COS minutes, 24/11/43; Matloff, 363.

23. PRO, CAB99/25, EUREKA Papers, Plenary Session, 30/11/43; Churchill, Closing the Ring, 346.

24. PRO, CAB99/25, EUREKA Papers, COS minutes, 30/11/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/X, 30/11/43 diary entry and retrospective; Gilbert, Road to Victory, 571; Ben-Moshe, 528.

25. PRO, CAB99/25, SEXTANT Papers, CCS minutes 3/12, Plenary Session, 4/12/43; CAB65/40, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annexes, 13/12, 22/12/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/X, 3/12/43 diary entry.

26. PRO, CAB99/25, SEXTANT Papers, COS minutes, 4/12, 6/12, CCS minutes, 4/12, 7/12/43; Matloff, 374-376.

27. PRO, CAB99/25, SEXTANT Papers, COS minutes, 3/12, 4/12, 5/12, 6/12, CCS minutes, 5/12, 6/12, 7/12, Plenary Sessions, 4/12, 5/12, 6/12/43; CCA, Somerville Papers, 8/2, Somerville to Cunningham, 4/12/43; Matloff, 372; Ehrman, vol.V, 184. In Closing the Ring, 353-354, Churchill only hinted at the blinding anger traced in Gilbert, Road to Victory, 602. See PRO, PREM3/147/7, Churchill-Mountbatten, 6/12, Churchill to COS, 6/12, 8/12/43 and 10/11/44, Churchill to Ismay, 7/12/43. Churchill was so furious at being embarrassed in front of Roosevelt, especially after Wedemeyer questioned the morale of the Indian Army, that he failed to detect the fact that American pressure for a large campaign in Burma had finally begun to wane.

28. PRO, CAB99/25, SEXTANT Papers, CCS minutes, 4/12, 5/12, 7/12, COS minutes, 7/12/43; CAB65/40, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 22/12/43; Ehrman, vol.V, 200; Eisenhower, D., Eisenhower at War, 50. The British gained two other minor victories which nevertheless testified to continued interdependence: the idea of a European "Supremo" was quietly discarded; the "Expeditionary Force" title made it clear that Eisenhower would not control all U.K. based forces.

29. PRO, CAB79/67, COS minutes, 28/11/43; CAB65/40, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annexes, 22/11, 13/12/43; CAB80/76, COS(43)732(O), 26/11/43; CAB99/25, SEXTANT Papers, CCS minutes, 5/12, COS minutes, 7/12/43;

PREM3/510/10, Foreign Office-Halifax, 7/12/43.

30. PRO, PREM/3/446/17, Eden-Churchill, 19/11, Knatchbull-Hugessen-Eden, 1/12, FO-Eden, 3/12/43; CAB65/40 War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 13/12/43; CCA, Knatchbull-Hugessen Papers, 1/14, 5-6/12/43 diary entries; Sainsbury, 288-289.

31. PRO, CAB99/25, SEXTANT Papers, Plenary Session, 4/12/43.

32. PRO, CAB99/25, CCS minutes, 3/12, 5/12, 6/12, Plenary Sessions, 4/12, 5/12, 6/12, COS minutes, 5/12/43; Sainsbury, 281.

33. PRO, CAB99/25, SEXTANT Papers, CCS 426/1, 6/12/43.

34. PRO, CAB99/25, SEXTANT Papers, CCS 426/1, 6/12/43; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/X, 6/12/43 diary entry and retrospective.

35. PRO, CAB84/59, JP(43)429(Final), 17/12/43; this decision was influenced by the belief that the Japanese would not launch any serious assault from Burma as their policy was to conserve their forces: CAB79/68, JIC(43)494, COS minutes, 7/12/23/12/43. The Americans, on the other hand, felt the Japanese were still capable of major "spoiler" attacks: CAB99/25, SEXTANT Papers, CCS 300/2, COS minutes, 23/11/43.

36. Kimball, vol.2, C-509, 9/12/43; PRO, CAB79/68, COS minutes, 15/12/43; CAB105/57, COS(W)996, 16/12/43; 105/58, COS(W)1007, 21/12/43.

37. PRO,CAB105/160, SEACOS 38, 7/12, SEACOS 44, 17/12, SEACOS 46, 18/12, SEACOS 52, 23/12/43; 105/164, COSSEA 24, 14/12, COSSEA 29, 20/12/43.

38. PRO, CAB79/68, COS minutes, 21/12/43.

39. PRO, CAB79/68, COS minutes, 20/12, 23/12, 26/12, 27/12, 29/12/43; CAB105/58, various telegrams from 28/12/43 to 6/1/44; 105/44, various telegrams from 28/12/43 to 6/1/44; 105/164, various telegrams from 29/12/43 to 9/1/44; PREM3/147/6, COS-Churchill, 23/12/43; 248/2, Churchill-COS, 19/12, 23/12, 26/12, 28/12, 30/12,43; 3/1, COS-Churchill, 22/12, 24/12, reply, 25/12/43; Kimball, vol.2, C-521, 26/12, R-427, 27/12/43; UW, JCS Papers, Pacific, Reel 12, JCS 678, 25/1/44.

40. Kimball, vol.2, R-427, 27/12, C-524, 28/12/43; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 312.

41. PRO, PREM/3/342/5, Churchill-Hopkins, 29/12, reply, 31/12/43; UW, JCS Meetings, Reel 2, minutes, 28/12/43; CAB79/68, COS minutes, 29/12, 31/1243; CAB65/40, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 28/12/43.

42. PRO, CAB79/68, COS minutes, 29/12/43; PREM/3/342/6, Churchill-COS, 30/12/43, COS-Churchill, 1/1/44; CAB80/76, COS(43)717(O), 17/11/43; CAB65/40, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 15/12/43; CCA, Hickleton Papers, A4/410/4.29, Bracken to Halifax, 3/2/44; Kimball, vol.2, C-512, 19/12, R-421, 20/12/43; Foot, 351; IWM, Montgomery Papers, 30, notes, 26/1/43; 491, Montgomery to Brooke, 15/2/43; 41, notes for "historical purposes," Appendix C, 22/8/43; Matloff, 390.

43. PRO, CAB95/5, DC(O) minutes, 18/11, 22/12/43; CAB79/68, COS minutes, 15/12, 16/12, 21/12, 22/12/43; CAB80/76, COS(43)739(O), 29/11, COS(43)745(O), 2/12/43; 80/77, COS(43)774(O), 20/12/43; CAB105/57, COS(W)994, 15/12/43.

44. Trevor-Roper, Directive #51, 3/11/43, 218-224; Wilt, 120; Howard, British Intelligence, vol.5, 97.

45. PRO, CAB99/25, SEXTANT Papers, CCS 300/3, COS minutes, 24/11/43; CAB66/42, WP(43)527, 22/11/43; UW, JCS Papers, Europe, JPS 339, 16/12/43; NCA, Cherwell Papers, G519, analysis of JIC(43)417, 21-22/10/43; Hinsley, vol.3, 23, 30, 51-55, 64-65. "Ultra" intercepts revealed that Berlin also saw Eisenhower's appointment as a decisive move. Hinsley's last argument rested on Whitehall's fears of the V Weapons and the feeling that they **might** soon lose the ability to read Enigma traffic.

46. PRO, CAB80/76, COS(43)735(O), 28/11/43; CAB79/68, COS minutes, 30/11, 24/12/43; CAB105/44, COS(W)1026, 29/12/43; CAB80/77, COS(43)779(O)(Final), 23/1/44; Howard, British Intelligence, vol.5, 105-114, with the BODYGUARD directive reprinted as Appendix 5.

47. PRO, CAB79/68, COS minutes, 31/12/43; CAB88/15, CCS 304/8, 6/1, CCS 304/9, 271, CCS 304/10, 10/2, CCS 304/11, 11/2, CCS 304/12, 12/2/44.

48. UW, JCS Papers, Soviet Union, Reel 2, Deane-JCS, 27/2, JPS to JCS, 27/3, CCS 526/1, 3/4/44; PRO, CAB65/40, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 22/12/43.

49. Eisenhower's reaction, and Tedder's support, vindicated earlier Whitehall fears of the effects of creating vested interests behind OVERLORD. Even the final compromise did **not** give SHAEF untrammelled authority over Bomber command. Frankland & Webster, vol.2, 52, 79-82.

50. CCCA, Portal Papers, 10/1(2), Portal to Harris, 23/12/43, 3/1/44, Harris to Portal, 27/12/43; 10/5(2), Harris to Portal, 13/1, reply, 30/1/44; NCA, Cherwell Papers, G197, Harris to Cherwell, 8/12/43. Frankland & Webster, vol.2, 55-70, 84, 193-198, 254, made two important points: 1) estimates as to the impact of

previous efforts were "a virtual guess"; 2) Harris' desperation to vindicate his force and strategy before it could be changed. Outright **defeat** over Berlin, and later over Nuremberg, helped propel the transition and must be part of any assessment of "area" bombing and its part in "wear down." See Conclusion.

51. Ehrman, vol.V, 285.

52. PRO, CAB65/41, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 24/1/44; CAB66/45, WP(44)2, 3/1/44; 66/46, WP(44)68, 31/1/44.

53. Ehrman, vol.V, 173-182, 02-203; Matloff, 383-387; Sainsbury, 291; Leighton & Coakley, 1943-1945, 290-296; Leighton, "OVERLORD versus the Mediterranean at the Cairo-Teheran Conferences," in Greenfield, Command Decisions, 255, 277.

54. Dunn, 40, and De Santis, H. "In Search of Yugoslavia: Anglo-American Policy Making 1943-1945," JCH, vol.16, #3, 7/1981, 547-550, for sloppy analyses; Eisenhower, D. Eisenhower at War, 19 and Ehrman, vol.V, Appendix VI, 554-556, are more convincing; interestingly, after the war John Kennedy argued that if the British had prevailed OVERLORD would **not** have gone at all in 1944: The Business of War, 305. This testified to the intense emotions of the time. See also Conclusion.

55. Howard, The Mediterranean Strategy, 55-57; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 3/A/X, 28/11, 30/11/43 diary entries and retrospectives; CAB65/40, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annexes, 13/12, 22/12/43.

56. That folly was the difficult drive north after summer 1944, once the ANVIL-Adriatic debate, a 1944 controversy, was settled. The British did not move into Italy in 1943 intending to drive on Germany or forestall the Soviets. It can be said that their opportunism led to an ill defined campaign which unfortunately later became the major forum for pressing a claim to equality on the CCS. See UW, JCS Papers, Europe, Reel 5, "Supreme Commander's Dispatch; Italian Campaign 1943-1944," and IWM, Montgomery Papers, 48, summary of campaign, 26/12/43, for two interested contemporary accounts. See also Conclusion.

57. Eisenhower, D., Eisenhower at War, 19-20, 50-54; Stoler, 153, and Sainsbury, 295, for two substantial critiques of American thinking.

58. PRO, CAB99/25, SEXTANT Papers, CCS minutes, 7/12/43.

Conclusion

"No country mobilized its resources more effectively than Britain. Had it been possible to bring the war to an end, say, 18 months earlier, her political weight inside the coalition would have been much greater than it proved to be in the last year of the struggle."
- David Dilks[1]

Dilks' powerful statement addressed the ultimate question that must be applied to this analysis of British grand strategy: so what? Why did it matter, beyond the issue of pride, what British grand strategy had been? How did it affect the final phase of the war and the ultimate result? These questions will be answered by a three stage overview. Firstly, the course of the ultimate offensives in 1944-1945 will be examined, in relation to the grand strategic experience and controversies already traced. Secondly, an attempt will be made to explain why coalition policy and grand strategy shifted as they did, and what this meant for the British. Finally, the whole problem will be put in a more specific context, and final results will be compared to specific objectives. To answer "so what," this study will suggest why, in broad relative terms, the grand strategy pursued by the British was sensible and, on balance, far superior to those pursued by their enemies.

As before, the best way to treat the unfolding Allied offensive, as seen from Whitehall, is to work in from the outside. This meant, until well into 1945, the war against Japan. After Churchill became aware of the COS desire to shift the main effort to the Pacific, the argument that developed between the two was their longest and most bitter of the war. Weakness was always a factor. In spring 1944 Slim's Fourteenth Army stood on the defensive, forced to parry a Japanese blow and restore the Army's self confidence; it succeeded. Then prestige came gradually to the fore. Churchill was absolutely determined to achieve two goals: to stake out a large role in the final offensive, and to retake the lost Imperial positions by Imperial efforts. This was in order to preserve British influence and interests in this large and distant region. The COS were convinced that British weakness meant a choice would have to be made. Ironically, in the end Allied power proved so overwhelming that the British were in a sense able to pursue both tracks. The Pacific Fleet played a minor role in the final offensive, while

SEAC forces retook Burma and scooped up the other lost colonies on Japan's final surrender. In fact, the long term damage to British prestige and the ability to preserve British influence had already been done.[2] However - and this will become a recurring theme - the cautious policy pursued after mid-1942 had at least not made the final British position completely irretrievable.

The Mediterranean offensive, the last ground campaign standard bearer for "wear down," reflected the difficult power position that had inspired the vision in the first place. The initial results seemed dismal, but overall developments underlined a shift in British thinking. The assault at Anzio failed to deliver the knock-out blow. This delayed the conquest of Rome, which both unhinged Churchill's whole vision and guaranteed that the only move of Allied forces east of Italy would be on German heels. The Allies failed to trap German forces south of Rome when the dam finally burst in May and June. This left them facing one last heavily defended line in northern Italy by autumn. Meanwhile, the ANVIL debate reflected the shift in British thinking. By mid-1944 Churchill was warned about the Soviet advance into eastern Europe and the possibility of Alexander's advance in Italy stalling again. He felt that together these developments would fatally hinder British ability to influence developments in eastern and southeastern Europe. After three bouts of severe debate, ANVIL finally went ahead as DRAGOON in August. This left Alexander too weak to execute another amphibious hook, and Churchill's priorities condemned his troops to a final punishing slog in northern Italy. Now, and only now, British strategic decisions were shaped by concerns about Soviet expansion. In the end the British still took steps to preserve their influence on events, especially in Greece. These steps were seriously restricted by their weakness.[3] Overall, however, the bulk of Allied power had shifted north, which meant that events elsewhere would determine the broadest shape of the situation in Europe as hostilities ended.

This picture of continued delay and growing frustration was exactly reversed regarding the hard pressed POINTBLANK attack on Germany itself. By the time the Allied Air Forces resumed an all out offensive against Germany in July, their position had dramatically improved. Certainly the growth in the strength and efficiency of a rejuvenated Bomber command was important, but so too were American actions. The

resumption of American pressure had already savaged the German Air Force fighter arm, and the combined American air forces now deployed nearly 4,000 of the over 5,200 front line force of bombers that began the final campaign. That campaign, over ten months, pummelled Germany,[4] as the bombers unleashed the rain of destruction that had been hoped for two years before. It also set off a debate which often strayed from the grand strategic point.

The debate started with a consensus: Germany was not destroyed, but was damaged heavily enough, ironically in vital choke points such as oil, to lose the capacity to wage war. Also, the bulk of this damage, 72% as measured by bomb load dropped, was done from July 1944 on.[5] Critics then and later suggested that from a moral perspective the continuation of "area" bombing was an unacceptable, and unsafe, escalation of the level of violence. These qualms shaped a craven tendency to skip over the campaign in shame after the war, but did not affect the decisions of those who directed it until very near the end.[6] The material issue, the question of relative gain, underscored why: necessity, momentum, and hope. Supporters insisted that the balance was favourable. With less than 10% of British national resources, the Allies forced the Germans to reduce the share of their air forces deployed against the Soviets from 65% in 1941 to 32% in 1944, and increase the ratio of fighters in their aircraft production from 17% in 1941 to 76% in 1944. They concluded that what happened after July 1944 showed what could have happened earlier had the bombers been even more favoured.[7]

This case is unconvincing. The figure of 10% of national resources included such generally used assets as coal mines. A fairer comparison, Bomber Command's share of direct **military** effort, has already been noted as more like 30% of the national total. The fact is that the bombers could not do the job without overwhelming force. Undoubtedly the Germans were affected, especially their manpower. But for "wear down," the crucial time was 1942-1943. During that time, German war production more than doubled. Bomber Command's efforts held the line and helped lay the basis for final success, but at the cost of a serious delay in defeating the U-Boats. The price was 64,000 highly skilled personnel, more than "the lost generation" of officers killed in the trenches in 1914-1918.[8] The only thing that can now be said for the campaign is that

it at least gave the Allies a force able to hasten the German collapse. This for the British was certainly something, but not enough to offset the errors of previous years, shaped by circumstances but worsened by dogma. In the end, this was a relative blunder, one which ironically helped reduce the already slim chance of victory through "wear down."

Nevertheless, the full impact of "wear down" can only be seen in the context of the vision that subsumed it, the course of OVERLORD. The OVERLORD campaign did not unfold as the British had hoped, but did prove to be a justifiable risk. Allied deception schemes, airpower, logistic efforts, German blunders, and the great Soviet offensives helped the Allied armies prevail in a vicious seventy five day struggle in Normandy. However, even then the German Army was able to recoup itself and establish a defensive position west of the Rhine. The Allies did not have the balance and strength to sweep it aside. After the failure to take Arnhem in September, Eisenhower turned from striving for quick victory to building up the strength for a methodical final blow. The war in Europe did not end in 1944, as all British plans had assumed. The British found themselves increasingly less able to influence Eisenhower's plans, and the Order of Battle underlines why. The number of British controlled divisions in Eisenhower's command never exceeded 25, some American. The AEF went from 56 divisions in October to 69 in December, 81 in February, 1945, and 99 at the time of the German surrender.[9] The fears of 1943 - a longer war and declined influence - indeed came to pass.

The greatest fear of all, however, defeat, had not come to pass. This leads inexorably back to the running debate over whether a "Second Front" could have been launched earlier and why it was not. The range of criticism remains most fully expressed in Dunn's work. Dunn's full thesis may be expressed in seven elements: 1) the Germans were weak in the west in 1942-1943 and known to be; 2) all their good reserves were pinned on the Eastern Front;[10] 3) the Allies had, overall, adequate forces mobilized and equipped; 4) the Atlantic situation was in hand by January 1943; 5) overall, the necessary landing craft were available, had they been concentrated; 6) the necessary airpower and logistics capability was available, if concentrated; 7) the Germans actually **narrowed** the gap in quantity and quality, and were at peak strength in 1944.

Dunn concluded, through his comparisons of absolutes, that the evidence did not support the Staff case. Therefore, "this leads us to search for other reasons..." for the Churchill-Roosevelt policy.[11] Leaving shoddy methodology aside, this argument collapsed under the weight of four points.

First, it is ridiculous to suggest that the Atlantic was **felt** to be "in hand" by January 1943 by those trying to peer through the fog of war to make its pivotal decisions. German U-Boats sank one Allied support ship off the Normandy beaches in June 1944.[12] The British were not prepared to move before such an outcome was fairly certain. Second, the Germans concentrated forces in 1944 because they saw an invasion coming. It is counterfactual to suggest that they would not have done the same earlier had the Allies adopted a different course themselves. Berlin was also free to change its mind.[13] That was especially the case because, thirdly, a vitally different state of affairs prevailed in one critical area, which can be summed up in one word: BAGRATION. Not until August 1943 was it clear that the Red Army would not lose the initiative. The destruction of Army Group Centre had a major impact on the struggle in Normandy, and it was inconceivable in 1943. The final point is, of course, the core of this study - the "rolling seminar's" perceptions of British combat power.

R.M. Leighton considered the charge that the British wanted OVERLORD to be a mop-up campaign "unproved." This is not so, because Leighton confused that point with the definitely incorrect charge that the British hoped not to invade northwest Europe at all. Ben-Moshe offered a more convincing explanation. OVERLORD proceeded even though the Germans did not collapse beforehand because the British no longer had the dominant voice in Allied grand strategy. The British were prepared to wait indefinitely for the "wear down" point, but their overriding interest was to stay in step with the Americans. Among a variety of reasons for this stance, one stood out: the fear that the Army could not meet the challenge, reinforced by fears of the cost. This argument was in this author's opinion borne out by the performance of the British Army in Normandy.[14] Whitehall's vision had always been the sort of campaign that ensued from February 1945 - one savage but short tussle with a nearly drained German Army. OVERLORD went at the right time for the Allies as a whole, given the overall situation.

For the British, however, it also demonstrated that the fear of relative weakness which had shaped their grand strategy had been well founded.

The other great concern that shaped British policy, the limits of structure, is the starting point for a brief analysis of why Allied policy shifted as it did. Scholars have rightly noted the very large degree of success in the British effort to mobilize for total war, absolutely and as compared to other powers. The U.K. managed to double its food production and national income, maintain an intense level of mobilization despite a drop of over 60% in exports and an external disinvestment of over £4 billion, and mobilize and maintain armed forces - at peak over five million strong - on a global basis. It also produced 69% of all Commonwealth munitions and, as Official Historians noted, gave out Reciprocal Aid equivalent in relative terms to the aid it received.[15] Here, however, the question was the absolute cost and comparative ability of the Allied structural effort.

The U.S. produced 21% of all Commonwealth munitions overall. In 1943 and 1944 the figures were 27 and 28%. Overall Lend-Lease aid to the U.K. reached a total value of $27 billion. Worse, the purchases made in the U.S. before Lend-Lease had cost $6 billion. The U.K. produced 123,819 aircraft from 1939-1945; the U.S. figure was 284,318. British purchases from Canada totalled $7 billion. The U.K.'s national income in 1945 was under $9 billion. In the end, the overall aid the U.K. received amounted to the equivalent of one full year of its own intense war effort. In abstract terms, that year was, of course, the extra year that Whitehall realized in 1943 the nation could not afford. The British had absolutely no choice but to integrate their war effort with the Americans, in order to allow it to reach and maintain its full potential. This position was weakened by the fact that, overall, British structure was less efficient than American structure. When success in field and factory fell short of expectations, this left the British vulnerable to an American agenda which included dismantling the global power structure of their friendly rival. The final collapse of the manpower pool left the British unable to alter the course of the final offensive.[16] This powerful undercurrent was the deepest propelling force in the shift in influence within the coalition. Allied policy

changed because the Americans wanted it to change **and** because the British were, in the end, unable to stop them.

As the reader will recall, the ambivalence that frequently dogged British thinking beyond fundamentals - and sometimes even then, especially where status was concerned - helped propel this process. This ambivalence can be seen in two other aspects of British policy never satisfactorily resolved by the British themselves, which will fill out the analysis of the policy shift. Both stemmed directly from the problem of demanding total victory against an enemy perceived to be militarily stronger. The whole vision of an "igniter" war, a continental implosion meant to replace conventional assault, never accurately reflected either the realities of military power or the political situation in Europe. The COS were unwilling to surrender the lead to SOE, and SOE and European resistance could not simply seize it. By June 1944, only 20 of nearly 300 German divisions were pinned down by resistance forces.[17] Resistance helped, but the Germans were defeated by regular armed forces, as the COS had always suspected would have to happen.

The basic problem remained, of course, the dual dilemma of the policy of victory coupled with the perception of relative weakness, which, as noted, crystallized in the unconditional surrender debate. There were many doubts expressed about the wisdom of the unconditional surrender policy, inside and outside the corridors of power. A long effort was made to "clarify" the policy, on the grounds that it would force the Germans to fight to the death in despair. This is unconvincing. Churchill and Roosevelt made it quite clear that the policy did not relieve the Allies of the duty to act as civilized states. In any case, the spectre of the advancing Red Army, seen in German eyes as an Asiatic horde, seems to have had far more effect on German behaviour.[18] When the time came the Germans surrendered willingly enough to the western Allies; the final policy of the last German government was to hold in the east and flee to the west.

There was also continued concern that the Allied policy would rule out any chance of a successful coup against Hitler, thereby forcing the Allies to launch a bloody ultimate campaign. This struck at the very core of Allied war policy. In fact, there was a coup, but it failed. This, plus the Allies opinion of the German resistance, explains

why the compromise solution was not seen as a serious option.[19] As noted, this left the British in a dilemma - committed to a grand strategy whose most logical outcome was ruled out by their own prejudices, and to a war policy whose optimum grand strategy was seen as unsafe. The problem was resolved by default with the launching of OVERLORD and the failure of the 20 July plot, and the British were pulled along in Roosevelt's wake. Some observers felt that the unconditional surrender policy was a reckless escalation which would grievously hinder the chances of arriving at a stable post-war settlement. Even given the nature of the foe, these fears were not groundless.[20] The utter defeat of German power did indeed leave a vacuum of power in Europe, which contributed to the collapse of hopes for an amicable post-war reorganization. Yet it also left Allied power in a not unfavourable situation, as the Americans had always suspected. The root problem was unavoidable from 1940, it reflected the very essence of the British position, and it was perhaps the tragedy of this century. At a critical point in history, the western liberal democracies found themselves too weak to crush, without perilous delay, one irreconcilable and barbaric regime without the assistance of another.

The final yardstick by which to measure a grand strategy is to determine whether its course was sensibly adapted to changing conditions and whether it successfully achieved ultimate national objectives. This can best be done by tracing the evolution of British grand strategy itself, assessing the roles and impact of those who made it, and placing all this in the ultimate relative context. In 1939 the British went to war convinced that the Allies would have to build up strength in measured steps, and fend off then greater German power in the process, but confident that their greater staying power would ultimately prevail. These assumptions were exploded in 1940 by the fall of France, and the new policy of total war required a new vision of how to fight it. This new vision borrowed from the old, with its stress on economic attrition, air defence, and coalition warfare, but was based on a new fundamental assumption of relative weakness. The outline was a concept this author has termed the "wear down" vision - to "wear down" overall German power by a combination of bombing, blockade, raids, subversion

and sabotage, peripheral campaigns, and a coup de grace assault. At first the final assault was to be a series of "igniter" invasions, as Allied forces sparked resistance uprisings. This gave way to a more traditional vision of assault by conventional means, but the focus remained "knocking away the props" that held up the enemy armed forces.

This outline was militarily unrealistic as a plan to defeat Germany, but it filled the desperate need for a policy, a broad plan, to which all efforts could be related in harmony. Henceforth, however, the fundamental assumptions on which it was based were only reinforced by events. As a result, while over the next crucial years the balance, emphasis, and specific thrust of British grand strategy changed a great deal, its essence did not. The "wear down" pattern remained a common ground of shared assumptions, a vision which held basically intact in British thinking into 1944. The situation further changed in 1941 with the emergence of a new, stronger, but awkward coalition. Again, two key assumptions developed at the time remained constant into 1944: the Soviets were the new "grinding agent," whether they liked it or not, for **military** reasons; the American alliance now made "wear down" realistic, but was **not** enough to warrant a full scale departure. The close relationship between Churchill and Roosevelt, the undeniable interdependence of the two leading western Allies, and the initial British lead in effective power available helped implant "wear down" in Allied policy. But the Americans were never convinced that it was the approach that best suited ultimate Allied capabilities and interests.[21] That made its fate a race between American mobilization and Allied success in the field.

Although "wear down" prevailed throughout 1942, that was the year it really came apart below the surface. The British felt, during and after the war, that the American agenda was a combination of inexperience, over-optimism, unwarranted suspicion, and especially a determination to "succeed John Bull."[22] All these elements were indeed present. But the biggest cause of the undermining of "wear down" was what had shaped it in the first place - the inability of the Imperial armed forces to meet their objectives quickly and cheaply enough. This was worsened by the fatal decision to emphasize an "offensive" campaign in the air, which could not deliver, at the expense of one which had to, the "defensive" campaign at sea. The British took stock

accordingly in late 1942. They redesigned "wear down" as a sequence of campaigns designed to harmonize the bomber offensive, Mediterranean efforts, and the "Second Front." This vision prevailed by default at Casablanca, which shaped the course for 1943. The cost was the American resolve to reshape the fundamental Allied approach once and for all.

After Casablanca, the British fought a rearguard action to try and preserve the essence of "wear down" - challenge the German Army in western Europe only if German power had already visibly declined - as the basic Allied approach. The Germans now again played a deciding role. Their response to Allied efforts kept the British vision in play, but their ability to delay Allied forces convinced the Americans that these forces were now being unreasonably detoured. By autumn 1943, "wear down" had become a very specific operational outline. The Americans no longer cared. The Soviets, naturally, never had. "Wear down" was far from a total military failure, and the Allies did not progress only in spite of it. But by the end of 1943, it had been extended as far as it would go. Even then the British did not feel able to let it go. Cohen was right to note that British influence in grand strategy depended on three factors: 1) the structural load they carried; 2) their share of Allied forces engaged; 3) their leaders' skill in debate. However, he was wrong to argue that in 1943 the third held the line, and therefore:

> "...Churchill and his advisers were able to have their way on virtually every major strategic decision until the end of June 1944..."[23]

The decline of the first two factors, as Cohen noted, plus the failure of "wear down" to **succeed** rather than **progress,** shifted the balance. The British lost the initiative at QUADRANT, and were forced underground at EUREKA. Their policy no longer made sense on a **coalition** level.

Was this final eclipse, and its consequences, enough to term "wear down" a mistake? Were British failures the fault of any individual, or group, or method, or just circumstances? The answers cannot be categorical. The dynamics of the "rolling seminar" were not ideal. Churchill had his share of blunders - the bomber program, Force Z, the Aegean fiasco, to name but three. The COS contributed by their own squabbling, especially over inter-service efforts. There was also a constant tension

between the two over balance and emphasis, sometimes spreading inside the COS, and a recurring tendency to think dogmatically. One suspects that without Churchill, the COS might have approved an offensive by the late 1940's, while without them he might have marooned the Army in northern Norway! Together, however, as has long been noted, the established machinery, the method of deciding by consensus, and the men involved were the best any major combatant boasted for the central direction of war.

This study can now add that the most useful of the ties that bound was the ability to forge and maintain a clear and widely understood consensus regarding the fundamental grand strategic approach. The principals did not refer to the "wear down" outline in noun form. It existed nevertheless, as a shared concept with which they battled the fog of war. The deepest end result was of historic importance: the British never, after 1940, made the one huge grand strategic blunder - say total neglect of the Atlantic, or a premature attempt to launch a "Second Front" - that might have left the Allies potentially unable to win the war. On the other hand, the Germans launched BARBAROSSA, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour, and then they proceeded to fight independent wars against a stronger coalition with an invulnerable arsenal. A clear consensus fundamental vision was a critical reason for the difference.

From 1940 to 1943 the British had an opportunity, perhaps their last, to shape the very course of world history, by influencing the policy of the anti-Axis coalition. Given the British situation, their grand strategy was the most sensible possible overall approach, in the critical days of heavy odds and uncertainty. British errors did contribute to its eventual eclipse, while the British war effort, while impressive, left the U.K. standing as a first rate power on the sufferance of its leading ally. Ironically, however, British war policy - the bold stand by choice in 1939-1941 - and its great success - the crucial time this stand bought - earned the U.K. a continued claim to at least the status of a first rate power, if not the substance.[24] The pretensions of the governments of its major enemies were destroyed, largely because of their grand strategic folly. The sober and responsible overall vision expressed in "wear down," on the other hand, gave British aspirations a chance to survive. That was no small achievement.

Endnotes to Conclusion

1. Dilks, Retreat from Power, vol.2, vii.

2. CCA, Slim Papers, 3/2, Slim to Kirby, 24/4/59; Callahan, Burma 1942-1945, 114-122.

3. Cohen, in Kennedy, P. Grand Strategies in War and Peace, 64, offered a more convincing analysis of Churchill's role than Higgins, The Soft Underbelly, 34, 216-222; Alexander, 138-139, confirmed that by June 1944 the Soviet advance was a major concern.

4. Frankland & Webster, vol.3, 3, 124-139. Bomber Command finally deployed a front line force of 1,609 bombers in 1945.

5. Frankland & Webster, vol.3, 140; Werrell, 707.

6. LHCMA, Liddell Hart Papers, 382/295, J.F.C. Fuller to Liddell Hart, 28/4/43; McLaine, 165-166, noted that even during the war Information avoided the topic of the objective of area bombing; Frankland & Webster, vol.3, 117, feebly split that particular hair; Terraine, 677-679.

7. Frankland, N. "Some Reflections on the Strategic Air Offensive 1939-1945," JRUSI, vol.107, #626, 5/1962, 108; Werrell, 710.

8. Werrell, 708-712; Frankland & Webster, vol.3, 285-287. As for the effect on morale, German soldiers' fears about the destruction in their homeland did not prevent them from fighting with their familiar grim determination well into 1945. Overall, this is not a moral criticism of area bombing. This author agrees with Frankland's argument - see Terraine, 683 - that given the circumstances of 1940-1941 the greater immorality would have been to abstain from the only direct attack possible. This criticism is focused on the dogmatic strategic focus on the "offensive" from late 1941, and the consequences discussed in earlier chapters.

9. Ehrman, J. vol.VI, 18, 31; Howard, British Intelligence, vol.5, 119-122; Matloff, 532, considered that the formulation of grand strategy was complete by autumn 1944, the rest being mere execution.

10. Dunn, 185-197, writing with, as he admitted, no written evidence, charged that the British were well aware of both these points because they were probably constantly reading the bulk of German command traffic sent over teleprinter, not radio, and that they withheld these insights from the pooling of Ultra with the Americans. Subsequent work on this problem has made the issue as clear as mud. Hinsley's team devoted an entire appendix, #2 in vol.3, to the Geheimschreiber teleprinter, codenamed FISH by the Allies. They only managed

to make clear (through the fog of "weeding?") that these uncited intercepts, very high level traffic primarily from the Eastern Front, were very unevenly and uncertainly intercepted and read. Bennett, in Ultra and the Mediterranean, 356-364, 405, offered no further light, except to warn that the evidence was fragmentary and circumstantial. Dunn did not understand either Ultra's limitations or the COS preconceived views. Almost certainly, whatever FISH revealed would not have convinced the COS that Berlin would be unable or unwilling to run great risks to crush a "Second Front."

11. Dunn, 33, 73, 166, 227-249, 258, 267-274.

12. Costello & Hughes, 297.

13. As pointed out, ironically, by Morison in Strategy and Compromise, 9.

14. Leighton, "OVERLORD Revisited...," in Greenfield, Command Decisions, 937; Ben-Moshe, 528-537; Hastings, M. OVERLORD, London, 1984, 14, 29, 173-175, 220-231; Murray, W. "British Military Effectiveness," in Millett, A.R., Murray, W. Military Effectiveness: The Second World War (vol.3), Boston, 1988, 92-130, for a powerful analysis of British operational performance in general.

15. Milward, 251; Stevenson, J. British Society 1914-1945, London, 1984, 448-449; Hall, 432-433; Hancock & Gowing, 366-369; the U.S. Armed Forces peaked over 11 million, the German over 10.

16. Hall, 424-433, 472-481; Parker, 232-233, considered the final manpower redistribution successful, from a narrow administrative perspective; Ehrman, vol.V, 21; Harrison, M. "Resource Mobilization for World War II: the U.S.A., U.K., U.S.S.R and Germany, 1938-1945," EHR, 2nd serial, vol.61, #2, 1988, 181-189; Bullock, Ernest Bevin, 341, noted that in relative terms British national wealth in 1945 was at the lowest level since the Napoleonic Wars.

17. Stafford, "The Detonator Concept," 209; Keegan, The Second World War, 487-495.

18. See, for example, CCA, Hankey Papers, 13/9, article on unconditional surrender, 28/4/43; LHCMA, Liddell Hart Papers, 352/64, Liddell Hart to Hankey, 26/9/43; Balfour, 366-368; Wheeler-Bennett, The Semblance of Peace, 62-64; Willmot, H.P. The Great Crusade, New York, 1989, 453-455.

19. Cave-Brown, 820, for a typically half considered reflection; Campbell, "Franklin Roosevelt and Unconditional Surrender," in Langhorne, 232.

20. CCA, Hankey Papers, 13/8, article on unconditional surrender, 20/4, addendum comment, 22/4/43; LHCMA, Liddell Hart Papers, 352/64, Liddell Hart to Hankey, 26/9/43; Campbell, "Franklin Roosevelt and Unconditional Surrender," in Langhorne, 222-234.

21. Jacob, I. "The High Level Conduct and Direction of World War II," JRUSI, vol.101, #603, 8/1956, 369; Barnett, C., Terraine, J., Steedman, A. "Problems of Coalition War," JRUSI, vol.126, #3, 9/1981, 8; LHCMA, Brooke Papers, 10/3/1, Brooke's classic comments for the Official Historians, dated 1/1962, of the American attitude as opposed to his own.

22. CCA, Grigg Papers, 9/8/36, Grigg to Montgomery, 6/12/44, for an admittedly strong but consistent view of American intentions; Roskill, vol.3, 6, for a blistering critique of American views of British grand strategy.

23. Cohen, in Kennedy, P. Grand Strategies in War and Peace, 50-51.

24. A good, recent discussion of this point is Watt, D.C. How War Came, London, 1989, 622-623. A final perceptive comment from an Official Historian seems fitting: "...Despite better management from London perhaps than ever before, the war left Britain weaker in the world than any previous war for a long time..."; Ehrman, vol.VI, 337. It should also be noted that **at the time** it left Britain's enemies even weaker. See the articles by Ziemke, E.F., Cushman, J.H., and Weigley, R.F., in Millett and Murray, Military Effectiveness, for an appraisal of British performance in relative comparison.

Appendix A

Representative Orders of Battle, major formations of British Controlled Ground and Air Forces 1940:

September 1940

Home Forces (Field Formations)[1]	
Armoured Divisions	1
Infantry Divisions	23
Tank Brigades	2
Infantry Brigades	7

1 - Includes 1st Canadian Division, the only fully equipped formation in the command.

Middle East Command[2]	
Armoured Divisions	1
Infantry Divisions	10

2 - Formations include division equivalents

Far East (Malaya and Hong Kong)	
Infantry Brigades	5

Fighter Command[3]	
Active Squadrons	66

3 - 19 Spitfire equipped, 28 Hurricane

Bomber Command	
Active Squadrons	38

Coastal Command	
Active Squadrons	20

Army Co-Operation Command	
Active Squadrons	13

RAF Middle East Command[4]	
Active Squadrons	36

[4] - Includes 9 Fighter and 5 "Heavy Bomber" formations

RAF Far East Command	
Active Squadrons	8

November - December 1940

Home Forces (Field Formations)[5]	
Armoured Divisions	1
Infantry Divisions	23
Tank Brigades	2
Infantry Brigades	7

[5] - Includes 1st and 2nd Canadian Divisions

Middle East Command[6]	
Armoured Divisions	2
Infantry Divisions	9

[6] - One division listed as "Cavalry to be mechanized"
Infantry formations include division equivalents

Far East (Malaya and Hong Kong)	
Infantry Brigades	6

Fighter Command	
Active Squadrons	66

Bomber Command	
Active Squadrons	38

Coastal Command	
Active Squadrons	20

Army Co-Operation Command	
Active Squadrons	13

RAF Middle East Command[7]	
Active Squadrons	36

[7] - Includes 9 Fighter and 5 "Heavy Bomber" Formations

RAF Far East Command	
Active Squadrons	8

Sources: PRO, CAB65/14, War Cabinet minutes, confidential annex, 31/7/40; CAB66/11, WP(40)362, 4/9/40; CAB120/338, correspondence regarding RAF Orders of Battle; CAB84/24, COS(40)48(O)(JP), 12/12/1940.

Appendix B

Representative Orders of Battle, major formations of British Controlled Ground and Air Forces 1941:

June 1941

Home Forces (Field Formations)[1]	
Armoured Divisions	5
Infantry Divisions	23
Tank Brigades	5
Infantry Brigades	11

[1] - Includes 1st and 2nd Canadian Divisions

Middle East Command[2]	
Armoured Divisions	2
Infantry Divisions	12

[2] - Infantry formations include division equivalents

Far East (Malaya and Hong Kong)	
Infantry Divisions	2

RAF Middle East Command	
Active Squadrons	48

RAF Far East Command	
Active Squadrons	12+

Home Forces (Field Formations)[3]	
Armoured Divisions	6
Infantry Divisions	24
Tank Brigades	7
Infantry Brigades	11

3 - Includes 3 Canadian infantry divisions, 5th Canadian Armoured Division, and 1st Canadian Tank Brigade

Middle East Command[4]	
Armoured Divisions	3
Infantry Divisions	10
Armoured & Tank Brigades	5
Infantry & Miscellaneous Brigades	7

4 - Includes 1 Armoured Division, 5 Infantry Divisions, 3 Tank Brigades and 2 Infantry Brigades in Eighth Army.

Far East Command	
Infantry Divisions	3
Infantry Brigades	5 (2 equivalents)

Fighter Command[5]	
Active Squadrons	79

5 - 54 Spitfire equipped

Bomber Command[6]	
Active Squadrons	55

[6] - 6 equipped with 4 engined types, 21 with Wellingtons

Sources: PRO, CAB70/3, Tank Returns, 6/11, 4/12/41; CAB84/31, JP(41)444,14/6/41; CAB80/59, COS(41)154(O), 31/7/41; PREM3/29/4, Metropolitan RAF Order of Battle, 7/11/41; WO212/12, Home Forces Orders of Battle, 6/41, 12/41; 212/60, 1st Canadian Corps Order of Battle, 12/41; 212/405, Middle East Command Order of Battle, 12/41; 212/393, Far East Command Order of Battle, 12/41.

Appendix C

Representative Orders of Battle, major formations
of British Controlled Ground and Air Forces 1942:

April-May 1942

Home Forces (Field Formations)[1]	
Armoured Divisions	7
Infantry Divisions	25 (9 "Lower Establishment")
Tank/Armoured Brigades	10
Infantry Brigades	20

[1] - Includes First Canadian Army - 3 Infantry Divisions, 1 Armoured Division, 1 Tank Brigade

Middle East Command[2]	
Armoured Divisions	3
Infantry Divisions	11
Tank/Armoured Brigades	6
Infantry Brigades	7

[2] - Includes 2 Armoured Divisions, 4 Infantry Divisions, 1 Tank Brigade and 3 Infantry Brigades in Eighth Army

India[3]	
Armoured Divisions	1
Infantry Divisions	7
Tank Brigades	1
Infantry Brigades	7

[3] - Includes 4 Infantry Divisions and 4 Infantry Brigades in Eastern Army

Fighter Command[4]	
Active Squadrons	104

[4] - 59 Spitfire equipped, 2 Mosquito

Bomber Command[5]	
Active Squadrons	47

[5] - 5 Lancaster equipped, 6 Halifax, 17 Wellington

Coastal Command[6]	
Active Squadrons	38

[6] - 1 Liberator equipped

Army Co-Operation Command	
Active Squadrons	15

RAF Middle East Command	
Active Squadrons	56

RAF India	
Active Squadrons	21+

Home Forces (Field Formations)[7]	
Armoured Divisions	8
Infantry Divisions	25 (6 "Lower Establishment")
Airborne Divisions	1
Tank/Armoured Brigades	13
Infantry Brigades	9

[7] - Includes First Canadian Army - 3 Infantry Divisions, 2 Armoured Divisions, 1 Tank Brigade - and 1st Polish Armoured Division;
- 6 Armoured Divisions were now rated "New Model," with one organic Infantry Brigade;
- 5 Infantry Divisions were now rated "New Model," or "Mixed," with one organic Tank Brigade

Middle East Command[8]		
Eighth Army	Armoured Divisions	2
	Infantry Divisions	6
	Armoured Brigades	3
Iran/Iraq	Armoured Divisions	1
	Infantry Divisions	4

[8] - Includes 1st Polish Division

India[9]	
Armoured Divisions	2
Infantry Divisions	12
Tank/Armoured Brigades	6
Infantry Brigades	6

[9] - Includes 6 Infantry Divisions, 3 Infantry Brigades and 1 Tank Brigade in Eastern Army

Fighter Command[10]	
Active Squadrons	111

[10] - 59 Spitfire equipped, 5 Mosquito

Bomber Command[11]	
Active Squadrons	48

[11] - 9 Lancaster equipped, 9 Halifax, 1 Mosquito, 14 Wellington

Coastal Command[12]	
Active Squadrons	43

[12] - 3 Liberator equipped

Army Co-Operation Command	
Active Squadrons	20

RAF Middle East Command[13]	
Active Squadrons	62

[13] - Includes 25 Fighter and 3 "Heavy Bomber" formations

RAF India[14]	
Active Squadrons	27

[14] - Includes 12 Fighter formations

November-December 1942

Home Forces (Field Formations)[15]	
Armoured Divisions	8 (5 "New Model")
Infantry Divisions	21 (3 "Mixed")
Airborne Divisions	1
Tank/Armoured Brigades	13
Infantry Brigades	10

[15] - Includes First Canadian Army - 3 Infantry Divisions, 2 Armoured Divisions, 1 Tank Brigade and 1st Polish Armoured Division

Allied Forces Headquarters (TORCH)	
British Formations	
Armoured Divisions	2
Infantry Divisions	4
Squadrons	24
U.S. Formations (initial wave)	
Infantry Divisions	2
Armoured Divisions	1

Middle East Command[16]	
Armoured Divisions	3
Infantry Divisions	10
Tank/Armoured Brigades	6
Infantry Brigades	11+

[16] - Includes up to 2 Armoured Divisions, 7 Infantry Divisions, 4 Armoured Brigades and 1 Infantry Brigade in Eighth Army, rotated with GHQ Reserve

PAIQ Command[18]	
Armoured Divisions	1
Infantry Divisions	11
Infantry Brigades	1

[18] - Includes 3 Polish Divisions, reforming

India[19]	
Armoured Divisions	2
Infantry Divisions	11
Tank/Armoured Brigades	2
Infantry Brigades	3

[19] - Includes 7 Infantry Divisions, 1 Tank Brigade and 1 Infantry Brigade in Eastern Army

Fighter Command[20]	
Active Squadrons	95

[20] - 47 Spitfire equipped, 6 Mosquito

Bomber Command[21]	
Active Squadrons	55

[21] - 13 Lancaster equipped, 10 Halifax, 2 Mosquito, 14 Wellington

Coastal Command[22]	
Active Squadrons	41

[22] - 4 Liberator equipped

Army Co-Operation Command	
Active Squadrons	27

Sources: PRO, CAB70/5, Tank Returns, 9/4, 19/8, 19/11, 2/12/42; CAB80/35, COS(42)183, 22/3/42; 80/37, COS(42)349, 18/7/42; 80/65, COS(42)309(O), 14/10/42; PREM3/29/4, Metropolitan RAF Order of Battles, 6/3, 1/5, 3/7, 4/9, 6/11/42; 3/294/9, Jacob to Churchill, 12/9/42; WO212/13, Home Forces Order of Battle, 4/42; 212/14, Home Forces Order of Battle, 8/42; 212/15, Home Forces Order of Battle, 12/42; 212/61, 1st Canadian Army Order of Battle, 4/42; 212/69, Home Forces Order of Battle, 8/42, 1st Canadian Army Order of Battle, 12/42; 212/425, Middle East Command Order of Battle, 4/42; 212/49, 8th Army Order of Battle, 8/42; 212/49, Iran/Iraq Order of Battle, 8/42; PAIQ Command Order of Battle, 12/42; 212/431, Middle East Command Order of Battle, 12/42; 212/358, India Order of Battle, 4/42; 212/359, India Order of Battle, 8/42; 212/361, India Order of Battle, 12/42.
UW, JCS Papers, Europe, Reel 2, "Troop List, Allied Forces," 3/10/42.

Appendix D

Representative Orders of Battle, major formations of British Controlled Ground and Air Forces 1943:

April-May 1943

Armoured Divisions	8
Infantry Divisions	21 (2 "Mixed")
Airborne Divisions	1
Tank/Armoured Brigades	13
Infantry Brigades	11

[1] - Includes First Canadian Army - 3 Infantry Divisions, 2 Armoured Divisions, 1 Tank Brigade - and 1st Polish Armoured Division

18th Army Group (British controlled forces)[2]	
Armoured Divisions	3
Infantry Divisions	8
Tank/Armoured Brigades	2
Infantry Brigades	1

[2] - Includes 1st Free French Division

Middle East Command[3]	
Armoured Divisions	1
Infantry Divisions	8
Armoured Brigades	3
Infantry Brigades	9

[3] - Includes 2 Free French and 2 Greek Infantry Brigades

PAIQ Command[4]	
Infantry Divisions	7
Tank/Armoured Brigades	2

[4] - Includes 3 Polish Infantry Divisions and 1 Polish Tank Brigade

Fighter Command[5]	
Active Squadrons	91

[5] - 47 Spitfire equipped, 11 Mosquito, 6 Typhoon

Bomber Command[6]	
Active Squadrons	65

[6] - 20 Lancaster equipped, 11 Halifax, 3 Mosquito, 14 Wellington

Coastal Command[7]	
Active Squadrons	42

[7] - 4 Liberator equipped

Army Co-Operation Command	
Active Squadrons	26

RAF Mediterranean and Middle East Commands	
Active Squadrons	113

RAF India	
Active Squadrons	52

Home Forces (Field Formations)	
Armoured Divisions	2
Infantry Divisions	12
Tank/Armoured Brigades	7
Infantry Brigades	9

21st Army Group[8]	
Armoured Divisions	6
Infantry Divisions	10 (3 "Mixed")
Airborne Divisions	1
Tank/Armoured Brigades	3
Infantry Brigades	1

[8] - Includes First Canadian Army - 2 Infantry Divisions, 2 Armoured Divisions, 1 Armoured Brigade - and 1st Polish Armoured Division, plus Czech Brigade

15th Army Group (British controlled forces)[9]	
Armoured Divisions	1
Infantry Divisions	8
Airborne Divisions	1
Tank/Armoured Brigades	4
Infantry Brigades	1

[9] - Includes 1st Canadian Division

Fighter Command/TAF[10]	
Active Squadrons	127

[10] - 48 Spitfire equipped, 12 Mosquito, 19 Typhoon (6 in TAF)

Bomber Command[11]	
Active Squadrons	56

[11] - 22 Lancaster equipped, 14 Halifax, 3 Mosquito, 9 Wellington

Coastal Command[12]	
Active Squadrons	40

[12] - 6 Liberator equipped

RAF Mediterranean and Middle East Commands	
Active Squadrons	115

RAF India	
Active Squadrons	60

December 1943-January 1944

Home Forces (Field Formations)	
Armoured Divisions	1
Infantry Divisions	6
Infantry Brigades	3

21st Army Group[13]	
Armoured Divisions	6
Infantry Divisions	12
Airborne Divisions	2
Tank/Armoured Brigades	6

[13] - Includes First Canadian Army - 2 Infantry Divisions, 1 Armoured Division - 1st Polish Armoured Division, 1 Armoured, 1 Airborne and 2 Infantry Divisions in transit from 15th Army Group, plus Czech Brigade

15th Army Group (British controlled forces)[14]	
Armoured Divisions	2
Infantry Divisions	9
Airborne Divisions	1
Tank/Armoured Brigades	4

[14] - Includes 1st Canadian Division, plus 5th Canadian Armoured Division and 1st Canadian Army Tank Brigade in transit from 21st Army Group, and 1 Polish Division

Middle East Command[15]	
Armoured Divisions	2
Infantry Divisions	4
Tank/Armoured Brigades	4
Infantry Brigades	8

[15] - Includes 1 Polish Division, 1 Polish Tank Brigade, 1 Free French Brigade, 1 Greek Brigade

PAIQ Command	
Armoured Divisions	1
Infantry Divisions	2
Infantry Brigades	2

India[16]	
Armoured Divisions	1
Infantry Divisions	13
Tank/Armoured Brigades	4
Infantry Brigades	4

[16] - Including 7 Infantry Divisions, 2 Armoured Brigades and 1 Infantry Brigade in Fourteenth Army

AEAF[17]	
Active Squadrons	132

[17] - 45 Spitfire equipped, 22 Mosquito, 23 Typhoon

Bomber Command[18]	
Active Squadrons	66

[18] - 35+ Lancaster equipped, 19 Halifax, 6 Mosquito

Coastal Command[19]	
Active Squadrons	45

[19] - 7 Liberator equipped

Sources: PRO, CAB80/68, COS(43)186(O), 12/4/43; 80/71, COS(43)394(O), 21/7/43; 80/75, COS(43)634(O), 18/10/43; CAB70/6, Tank Returns, 1/4, 8/7, 12/8/43, 15/1/44; PREM3/29/4, Metropolitan RAF Orders of Battle, 5/43, 7/43, 9/43, 11/43, 1/44; WO212/15, Home Forces Order of Battle, 4/43; 212/70, Home Forces Order of Battle, 12/43; 212/237, 21st Army Group Order of Battle, 7/43, 212/239, 21st Army Group Order of Battle, 12/43; 212/284, 15th Army Group Order of Battle (British Controlled Formations), 7/43; 212/285, 21st Army Group Order of Battle (British Controlled Formations), 12/43; 212/414, Middle East Command Order of Battle, 4/43; 212/417, Middle East Command Order of Battle, 12/43; 212/449, PAIQ Command Order of Battle, 4/43; 212/455, PAIQ Command Order of Battle, 12/43; 212/364, India Order of Battle, 12/43.

Appendix E

US Army and USAAF Overall Overseas Deployment by Personnel

	12/42	12/43	9/44	Peak and date reached
UK/Europe	119,702	768,274	2,053,417	3,065,505 (4/45)
Mediterranean	227,092	597,658	712,915	742,700 (8/44)
Africa/Middle East	24,943	21,796	9,354	40,654 (6/43)
Persian Gulf	5,907	28,757	27,739	29,691 (2/44)
China-Burma-India	17,087	94,560	149,014	199,035 (5/43)
Pacific	350,720	696,847	1,102,422	1,522,303 (9/45)
Alaska	96,061	121,535	63,495	148,167 (8/43)
Caribbean	119,286	91,466	70,556	119,286 (12/42)
TOTAL	960,798	2,420,893	4,188,912	

Source: Matloff, M. Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare 1943-1944.

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CAB69* - War Cabinet Defence Committee (Operations), minutes and papers
CAB70* - War Cabinet Defence Committee (Supply), minutes and papers
CAB71* - War Cabinet Lord President's Committees, minutes and papers
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CAB119 - Joint Planning Staff, papers
CAB120* - Minister of Defence, Secretariat files
CAB122 - Joint Services Mission, Washington Office files

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PREM4 - Confidential papers (dealing largely with civil and political issues)

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WO259 - Secretary of State's Office, papers

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AIR14 - Bomber Command, papers
AIR19 - Private Office, papers

Admiralty Papers (ADM series)

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ADM 199 - Various papers, including 1st Lord's office files
ADM 205 - 1st Sea Lord's papers

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FO 371 - Political Correspondence, various papers
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Miscellaneous

DEFE 2 - Combined Operations Headquarters, papers
DEFE 3 - "Ultra" intercepts, signals intelligence papers
AVIA 9 - Minister of Aircraft Production, papers
LAB 8 - Ministry of Labour, Central Register
LAB 25 - Minister of Labour, Papers

The vast collection of mainly official records in the PRO is the starting point for any serious research on British policy in the Second World War. An invaluable aid is:

> PRO, The Second World War: A Guide to Records in the Public Record Office, London, HMSO, 1972.

The established machinery and habits of governance in Whitehall, coupled with the reorganization of 1940 on, made it possible to identify and trace the evolution of ideas in a well defined "inner core" of officials and agencies. These records are marked *, and constitute the most important group of records consulted for this study. See also records marked * below.

Christchurch College (Oxford) Archives (CCCA)

Portal Papers* - a valuable collection, largely copies of various papers from Portal's service as Chief of Air Staff selected for the record, but a wide and varied selection

Nuffield College (Oxford) Archives (NCA)

Morrison Papers
Cripps Papers
Cherwell Papers* - a massive and very valuable collection, especially the papers relating to the work of the Statistical Branch and the correspondence with Churchill

Churchill College (Cambridge) Archives Centre (CCA)

A.V. Alexander Papers
Attlee Papers - a small collection, largely notes for autobiography
Bevin Papers
Cadogan Papers* - manuscript version of diary with intelligence and other sensitive references excised from published version
A. Cunningham Papers - small collection, see below
P.J. Grigg Papers
Hankey Papers*
Margesson Papers
Pound Papers - a small collection, mostly post-facto, most originals apparently destroyed after the war
Bracken Papers
Knatchbull-Hugessen Papers
Lewin Papers
Ramsay Papers
Robinson Papers* - an extremely valuable collection, regarding the work of the Economic Section of the Cabinet Office and the Ministry of Production
Roskill Papers
Slim Papers
Somerville Papers
Strang Papers
Van Sittart Papers

Also of note is the Hickleton collection, 2 reels of microfilms containing selected papers of Lord Halifax, from 1937-1946.

The Churchill College collection is already an indispensable stop for any study of British policy in the 20th century. The staff proved very congenial and helpful and were only less than cordial, offering no explanation, regarding the restriction on the Churchill Papers. Once this restriction is lifted, the collection's status can only be enhanced.

British Library Manuscript Collection (BL)

Andrew Cunningham Papers

House of Lords Record Office (HLRO)

Beaverbrook Papers* - a veritable treasure trove, managed by an outstanding staff grappling with impossible conditions, voluminous records on most aspects of Beaverbrook's wartime activities, with some glaring exceptions

Imperial War Museum (IWM)

Montgomery Papers - a large collection, but concentrated on the 1944-45 campaigns

Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College (London) (LHCMA)

Brooke Papers* - a large collection, with the indispensable manuscript version of the diary plus Brooke's post-war comments
Brook-Popham Papers
Davidson Papers
De Guinguand Papers
Dill Papers - a small collection, largely WWI papers
Ismay Papers - a selective and only occasionally useful collection
Liddell Hart Papers
Pownall Papers
Stern Papers

London School of Economics Library (LSE)

Dalton Papers* - a large collection, various papers, including the original manuscript diary

Miscellaneous

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American and Allied

University of Waterloo (UW)

Joint Chiefs of Staff Papers, Microfilm (JCS series)

JCS Meetings, Part 1, 1942-1945* - minutes, 2 reels
JCS Papers, Strategic Issues, Part 1, 1942-1945 - various issues, 13 reels
JCS Papers, The European Theatre (Europe), Part 1, 1942-1945 - 14 reels
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